THE CRYSTAL MAN.

Rapidly turning into the Fifth avenue from one of the cross streets above the old reservoir, at quarter past eleven o'clock on the night of November 6, 1879, I ran plump into an individual coming the other way.

It was very dark on this corner. I could see nothing of the person with whom I had the honor to be in collision. Nevertheless, the quick habit of a mind accustomed to induction had furnished me with several well-defined facts regarding him before I fairly recovered from the shock of the encounter.

These were some of the facts: He was a heavier man myself, and stiffer in the legs; but he lacked precisely three inches and a half of my stature. He wore a silk hat, a cape or cloak of heavy woollen material, and rubber overshoes or arctics. He was about thirty-five years old, born in America, educated at a German university, either Heidelberg or Freiburg, naturally of hasty temper, but considerate and courteous in his demeanor to others. He was not entirely at peace with society; there was something in his life or in his present errand which he desired to conceal.

How did I know all this when I had not seen the stranger, and when only a single monosyllable had escaped his lips? Well, I knew that he was stouter than myself, and firmer on his feet, because it was I, not he, who recoiled. I know that I was just three inches and a half taller than he, for the tip of my nose was still tingling from its contact with the stiff, sharp brim of his hat. My hand, involuntarily raised, had come under the edge of his cape. He wore rubber shoes, for I had not heard a footfall. To an observant ear, the indications of age are as plain in the tones of the voice as to the eye in the lines of the countenance. In the first moment of exasperation at my maladroitness he had muttered "Ox!" a term that would occur to nobody except a German at such a time. The pronunciation of the guttural, however, told me that the speaker was an American German, not a German American, and that his German education had been derived south of the river Main. Moreover, the tone of the gentleman and scholar was manifest even in the utterance of wrath. That the gentleman was in no particular hurry, but for some reason anxious to remain unknown, was a conclusion drawn from the fact that, after listening in silence to my polite apology, he stooped to recover and restore to me my umbrella, and then passed on as noiselessly as he had approached.

I make it a point to verify my conclusions when possible. So I turned back into the cross street and followed the stranger toward a lamp part way down the block. Certainly, I was not more than five seconds behind him. There was no other road that he could have taken. No house door had opened and closed along the way. And yet, when we came into the light, the form that ought to have been directly in front of me did not appear. Neither man nor man's shadow was visible.

Hurrying on as fast as I could walk to the next gaslight, I paused under the lamp and listened. The street was apparently deserted. The rays from the yellow flame reached only a little way into the darkness. The steps and doorway, however, of the brown-stone house facing the street lamp were sufficiently illuminated. The gilt figures above the door were distinct. I recognized the house; the number was a familiar one. While I stood under the gaslight, waiting, I heard a slight noise on these steps, and the click of a key in a lock. The vestibule door of the house was slowly opened, and then closed with a slam that echoed across the street. Almost immediately followed the sound of the opening and shutting of the inner door. Nobody had come out. As far as my eyes could be trusted to report an event hardly ten feet away and in broad light, nobody had gone in.

With a notion that here was scanty material for an exact application of the inductive process, I stood a long time wildly guessing at the philosophy of the strange occurrence. I felt that vague sense of the unexplainable which amounts almost to dread. It was a relief to hear steps on the sidewalk opposite, and, turning, to see a policeman swinging his long night club and watching me.

II.

This house of chocolate brown, whose front door opened and shut at midnight without indications of human agency, was, as I have said, well known to me. I had left it not more than an minutes earlier, after spending the evening with my friend Bliss and his daughter Pandora.

The house was of the sort in which each story constitutes a domicile complete in itself. The second floor, or flat, had been inhabited by Bliss since his return from abroad; that is to say, for twelvemonth. I held Bliss in esteem for his excellent qualities of heart, while his deplorably illogical and unscientific mind commanded my profound pity. I adored Pandora.

Be good enough to understand that my admiration for Pandora Bliss was hopeless, and not only hopeless, but resigned to its hopelessness. In our circle of acquaintance there was a tacit covenant that the young lady's peculiar position as a flirt wedded to a memory should be at all times respected. We adored Pandora mildly, not passionately—just enough to feed her coquetry without excoriating the seared surface of her widowed heart. On her part, Pandora conducted herself with signal propriety. She did not sigh too obtrusively when she flirted; and she always kept her flirtations so well in hand that she could cut them short whenever the fond, sad recollections came welling up.

It was considered proper for us to tell Pandora that she owed it to her youth and beauty to put aside the dead past like a closed book, and to urge her respectfully to come forth into the living present. It was not considered proper to press the subject after she had once replied that this was forever impossible.

The particulars of the tragic episode in Miss Pandora's European experience were not accurately known to us. It was understood, in a vague way, that she had loved while abroad, and trifled with her lover; that he had disappeared, leaving her in ignorance of his fate and in perpetual remorse for her capricious behavior. From Bliss I had gathered at times a few sporadic facts, not coherent enough to form a history of the case. There was no reason to believe that Pandora's lover had committed suicide. His name was Flack. He was a scientific man. In Bliss's opinion he was a fool. In Bliss's opinion Pandora was a fool to pine on his account. In Bliss's opinion all scientific men were more or less fools.

III.

That year I ate Thanksgiving dinner with the Bisses. In the evening I sought to astonish the company by reciting the mysterious events on the night of my collision with the stranger. The story failed to produce the expected sensation. Two or three odious people exchanged glances. Pandora, who was unusually pensive, listened with seeming indifference. Her father, in his stupid inability to grasp anything outside the commonplace, laughed outright, and even went so far as to question my trustworthiness as an observer of phenomena.

Somewhat nettled, and perhaps a little shaken in my own faith in the marvel, I made an excuse to withdraw early. Pandora accompanied me to the threshold. "Your story," said she, "interested me strangely. I, too, could report occurrences in and about this house which would surprise you. I believe I am not wholly in the dark. The sorrowful past casts a glimmer of light—but let us not be hasty. For my sake probe the matter to the bottom."

The young woman sighed as she bade me good night. I thought I heard a second sigh, in a deeper tone than hers, and too distinct to be a reverberation.

I began to go down stairs. Before I had descended half a dozen steps I felt a man's hand laid rather heavily upon my shoulder from behind. My first idea was that Bliss had followed me into the hall to apologize for his rudeness. I turned around to meet his friendly overture. Nobody was in sight.

Again the hand touched my arm. I shuddered in spite of my philosophy.

This time the hand gently pulled at my coat sleeve, as if to invite me up stairs. I ascended a step or two, and the pressure on my arm was relaxed. I paused, and the silent invitation was repeated with an urgency that left no doubt as to what was wanted.

We mounted the stairs together, the presence leading the way, I following. What an extraordinary journey it was! The halls were bright with gaslight. By the testimony of my eyes there was no one but myself upon the stairway. Closing my eyes, the illusion, if illusion it could be called, was perfect. I could hear the creaking of the stairs ahead of me, the soft but distinctly audible footfalls synchronous with my own, even the regular breathing of my companion and guide. Extending my arm, I could touch and finger the skirt of his garment—a heavy woollen cloak lined with silk.

Suddenly I opened my eyes. They told me again that I was absolutely alone.

This problem then presented itself to mind: How to determine whether vision was playing me false, while the senses of hearing and feeling correctly informed me, or whether my ears and touch lied, while my eyes reported the truth. Who shall be arbiter when the senses contradict each other? The reasoning faculty? Reason was inclined to recognize the presence of an intelligent being, whose existence was flatly denied by the most trusted of the senses.

We reached the topmost floor of the house. The door leading out of the public hall opened for me, apparently of its own accord. A curtain within seemed to draw itself aside, and hold itself aside long enough to give me ingress to an apartment wherein every appointment spoke of good taste and scholarly habits. A wood fire was burning in the chimney place. The walls were covered with books and pictures. The lounging chairs were capacious and inviting. There was nothing in the room uncanny, nothing weird, nothing different from the furniture of every-day flesh and blood existence.

By this time I had cleared my mind of the last lingering suspicion of the supernatural. These phenomena were perhaps not inexplicable; all that I lacked was the key. The behavior of my unseen host argued his amicable disposition. I was able to watch with perfect calmness a series of manifestations of independent energy on the part of inanimate objects.

In the first place, a great Turkish easy chair wheeled itself out of a corner of the room and approached the hearth. Then a square-backed Queen Anne chair started from another corner, advancing until it was planted directly opposite the first. A little tripod table lifted itself a few inches above the floor and took a position between the two chairs. A thick octavo volume backed out of its place on the shelf and sailed tranquilly through the air at the height of three or four feet, landing neatly on top of the table. A finely painted porcelain pipe left a hook on the wall and joined the volume. A tobacco box jumped from the mantelpiece. The door of a cabinet swung open, and a decanter and wineglass made the journey in company, arriving simultaneously at the same destination. Every thing in the room seemed instinct with the spirit of hospitality.

I seated myself in the easy chair, filled the wineglass, lighted the pipe and examined the volume. It was the *Handbuch der Gewebelehre* of Bussius of Vienna. When I had replaced the book upon the table it deliberately opened itself at the four hundred and forty-third page.

"You are not nervous?" demanded a voice, not four feet from my tympanum.

IV.

This voice had a familiar sound. I recognized it as the voice which I heard in the street on the night of November 6, when it called me an ox.

"No," I said. "I am not nervous. I am a man of science, accustomed to regard all phenomena as explainable by natural laws, provided we can discover the laws. No, I am not frightened."

"So much the better. You are a man of science, like myself"—here the voice groaned—"a man of nerve, and a friend of Pandora's."

"Pardon me," I interposed. "Since a lady's name is introduced it would be well to know with whom or with what I am speaking."

"That is precisely what I desire to communicate," replied the voice, "before I ask you to render me a great service. My name is or was Stephen Flack. I am or have been a citizen of the United States. My exact status at present is as great a mystery to myself as it can possibly be to you. But I am, or was, an honest man and a gentleman, and I offer you my hand."

I saw no hand. I reached forth my own, however, and it met the pressure of warm, living fingers.

"Now," resumed the voice, after this silent pact of friendship, "be good enough to read the passage at which I have opened the book upon the table."

Here is a rough translation of what I read in German:

As the color of the organic tissues constituting the body depends upon the presence of certain proximate principles of the third class, all containing iron as one of the ultimate elements, it follows that the hue may vary according to well defined chemico-physiological changes. An excess of hæmatine in the blood globules gives a ruddier tinge to every tissue. The melanine that colors the choroid of the eye, the iris, the hair, may be increased or diminished according to laws recently formulated by Schärfi of Basel. In the epidermis the excess of melanine makes the negro, the deficient supply the albino. The hæmatine and the melanine, together with the greenish-yellow biliverdine and the reddish yellow urosacine, are the pigments which impart color character to tissues otherwise transparent, or nearly so. I deplore my inability to record the result of some highly interesting histological experiments conducted by that indefatigable investigator, Fröhiker of Freiburg, who is said to have achieved amazing success in the way of coloration and discoloration of the human body by chemical means.

"For five years," continued my unseen companion when I had finished reading, "I was Fröliker's student and laboratory assistant at Freiburg. Bussius only half guessed at the importance of our experiments. We reached results which were so astounding that public policy required they should not be published, even to the scientific world. Fröliker died a year ago last August.

"I had faith in the genius of this great thinker and admirable man. If he had rewarded my unquestioning loyalty with full confidence I should not now be a miserable wretch. But his natural reserve, and the jealousy with which all savants guard their unverified results, kept me ignorant of the essential formulæ governing our experiments. As his disciple I was familiar with the laboratory details of the work; the master alone possessed the radical secret. The consequence is that I have been led into a misfortune more appalling than has been the lot of any human being since the primal curse fell upon Cain.

"Our efforts were at first directed to the enlargement and variation of the quantity of pigmentary matter in the system. By increasing the proportion of melanine, for instance, conveyed in food to the blood, we were able to make a fair man dark, a dark man black as an African. There was scarcely a hue we could not impart to the skin by modifying and varying our combinations. The experiments were usually tried on me. At different times I have been copper colored, violet blue, crimson, and chrome yellow. For one triumphant week I exhibited in my person all the colors of the rainbow. There still remains a witness to the interesting character of our work during this period."

The voice paused, and in a few seconds a hand fell upon the mantel was sounded. Presently an old man with a close-fitting skull cap shuffled into the room.

"Kaspar," said the voice, in German, "show the gentleman your hair."

Without manifesting any surprise, and as if perfectly accustomed to receive commands addressed to him out of vacancy, the old domestic bowed and removed his cap. The scanty locks thus discovered were of a lustrous emerald green. I expressed my astonishment.

"The gentleman finds your hair very beautiful," said the voice, again in German. "That is all, Kaspar."

Replacing his cap, the domestic withdrew, with a look of gratified vanity on his face.

"Old Kaspar was Fröliker's servant and is now mine. He was the subject of one of our first applications of the process. The worthy man was so pleased with the result that he would never permit us to restore to his hair its original red. He is a faithful soul, and my only intermediary and representative in the visible world.

"Now," continued Flack, "to the story of my undoing. The great histologist with whom it was my privilege to be associated next turned his attention to another and still more interesting branch of the investigation. Hitherto he had sought merely to increase or to modify the pigments in the tissues. He now began a series of experiments as to the possibility of eliminating those pigments altogether from the system by absorption, exudation, and the use of the chlorides and other chemical agents acting on organic matter. He was only too successful!

"Again I was the subject of experiments which Fröliker supervised, imparting to me only so much of the secret of his processes as was unavoidable. For weeks at a time I remained in his private laboratory, seeing no one and seen by no one excepting the Professor and the trustworthy Kaspar. Herr Fröliker proceeded with caution, closely watching the effect of each new test, and advancing by degrees. He never went so far in one experiment that he was unable to withdraw at discretion. He always kept open an easy road for retreat. For that reason I felt myself perfectly safe in his hands, and submitted to whatever he required.

"Under the action of the etiolating drugs which the Professor administered in connection with powerful detergents, I became at first pale, white, colorless as an albino, but without suffering in general health. My hair and beard looked like spun glass and my skin like marble. The Professor was satisfied with his results, and went no further at this time. He restored to me my normal color.

"In the next experiment, and in those succeeding, he allowed his chemical agents to take firmer hold upon the tissues of my body. I became not only white, like a bleached man, but slightly translucent, like a porcelain figure. Then again he paused for a while, giving me back my color and allowing me to go forth into the world. Two months later I was more than translucent. You have seen floating those sea radiates, the medusæ or jelly fish, their outlines almost invisible to the eye. Well, I became in the air like a jelly fish in the water. Almost perfectly transparent, it was only by close inspection that old Kaspar could discover my whereabouts in the room when he came to bring me food. It was Kaspar who ministered to my wants at times when I was cloistered."

"But your clothing?" I inquired, interrupting Flack's narrative. "That must have stood out in strong contrast with the dim aspect of your body."

"Ah, no," said Flack. "The spectacle of an apparently empty suit of clothes moving about the laboratory was too grotesque even for the grave Professor. For the protection of his gravity he was obliged to devise a way to apply his process to dead organic matter, such as the wool of my cloak, the cotton of my shirts, and the leather of my shoes. Thus I came to be equipped with the outfit which still serves me.

"It was at this stage of our progress, when we had almost attained perfect transparency, and therefore complete invisibility, that I met Pandora Bliss.

"A year ago last July, in one of the intervals of our experimenting, and at a time when I presented my natural appearance, I went into the Schwarzwald to recuperate. I first saw and admired Pandora at the little village of St. Blasien. They had come from the Falls of the Rhine, and were travelling north; I turned around and travelled north. At the Stern Inn I loved Pandora; at the summit of the Feldberg I madly worshipped her. In the Höllenpass I was ready to sacrifice my life for a gracious word from her lips. On Hornisgrinde I besought her permission to throw myself from the top of the mountain into the gloomy waters of the Mummelsee in order to prove my devotion. You know Pandora. Since you know her, there is no need to apologize for the rapid growth of my infatuation. She was charming. She flirted with me, laughed with me, laughed at me, drove with me, walked with me through byways in the green woods, climbed with me up acclivities so steep that climbing together was one delicious, prolonged embrace; talked science with me, and sentiment; listened to my hopes and enthusiasms, snubbed me, froze me maddened me—all at her sweet will, and all while her matter-of-fact, papa dozed in the coffee rooms of the inns over the financial columns of the latest New York newspapers. But whether she loved me I know not to this day.

"When Pandora's father learned what my pursuits were, and what my prospects, he brought our little idyl to an abrupt termination. I think he classed me somewhere between the professional jugglers and the quack doctors. In vain I explained to him that I should be famous and probably rich. 'When you are famous and rich,' he remarked, with a grin, 'I shall be pleased to see you at my office in Broad street.' He carried Pandora off to Paris, and I returned to Freiburg.

"A few weeks later, one bright afternoon in August, I stood in Fröliker's laboratory unseen by four persons who were almost within the radius of my arm's length. Kaspar was behind me, washing some test tubes. Fröliker, with a proud smile upon his face, was gazing intently at the place where he knew I ought to be. Two brother professors, summoned on some pretext, were unconsciously almost jostling me with their elbows as they discussed I know not what trivial question. They could have heard my heart beat. 'By the way, Herr Professor,' one asked, as he was about to depart, 'has your assistant, Herr Flack, returned from his vacation?' The test was perfect.

"As soon as we were alone Prof. Fröliker grasped my invisible hand, as you have grasped it to-night. He was in high spirits.

"'My dear fellow,' he said, 'to-morrow crowns our work. You shall appear—or rather not appear—before the assembled Faculty of the University. I have telegraphed invitations to Heidelberg, to Bonn, to Berlin. Schrötter, Haeckel, Steinmetz, Lavalle will be here. Our triumph will be in presence of the most eminent physicists of the age. I shall then disclose those secrets of our process which I have hitherto withheld even from you, my colaborer and trusted friend. But you shall share the glory. What is this that about the forest bird that has flown? My boy, you shall be restocked with pigment and go to Paris to seek her, with fame in your hands and the blessings of Science on your head.'

"The next morning, the nineteenth of August, before I had arisen from my cot bed, Kaspar hastily entered the laboratory.

"'Herr Flack! Herr Flack!' he gasped, 'the Herr Doctor Professor is dead of apoplexy.'

V.

The narrative had come to an end. I sat a long time thinking. What could I do? What could I say? In what shape could I offer consolation to this unhappy man?

Flack, the invisible, was sobbing bitterly.

He was the first to speak. "It is hard, hard, hard! For no crime in the eyes of men, for no sin in the sight of God, I have been condemned to a fate ten thousand times worse than hell. I must walk the earth, a man, living, seeing, loving, like other men, while between me and all that makes life worth having there is a barrier fixed forever. Even ghosts have shapes. My life is living death; my existence oblivion. No friend can look me in the face. Were I to clasp to my breast the woman I love, it would only be to inspire terror inexpressible. I see her almost every day. I brush against her skirts as I pass her on the stairs. Did she love me? Does she love me? Would not that knowledge make the curse still more cruel? Yet it was to learn the truth that I brought you here."

Then I made the greatest mistake of my life.

"Cheer up!" I said. "Pandora has always loved you."

By the sudden overturning of the table I knew with what vehemence Flack sprang to his feet. His two hands held my shoulders in a fierce grip.

"Yes," I continued; "Pandora has been faithful to your memory. There is no reason to despair. The secret of Fröliker's process died with him; but why should it not be rediscovered by experiment and induction *ab initio*, with the aid which you can render? Have courage and hope. She loves you. In five minutes you shall hear it from her own lips."

No wail of pain that I ever heard was half so pathetic as his wild cry of joy.

I hurried down stairs and summoned Miss Bliss into the hall. In a few words I explained the situation. To my surprise she neither fainted nor went into hysterics. "Certainly, I will accompany you," she said, with a smile which I could not then interpret.

She followed me into Flack's room, calmly scrutinizing every corner of the apartment, with the set smile still upon her face. Had she been entering a ball room she could not have shown greater self-possession. She manifested no astonishment, no terror, when her hand was seized by invisible hands and covered with kisses from invisible lips. She listened with composure to the torrent of loving and caressing words which my unfortunate friend poured into her ears.

Perplexed and uneasy, I watched the strange scene.

Presently Miss Bliss withdrew her hand. "Really, Mr. Flack," she said, with a light laugh, "you are sufficiently demonstrative. Did you acquire the habit on the Continent?"

"Pandora!" I heard him say. "I do not understand."

"Perhaps," she calmly went on, "you regard it as one of the privileges of your invisibility. Let me congratulate you on the success of your experiment. What a clever man your Professor—what is his name?—must be. You can make a fortune by exhibiting yourself."

Was this the woman who for months had paraded her inconsolable sorrow for the loss of this very man? I was stupefied. Who shall undertake to analyze the motives of a coquette? What science is profound enough to unravel her unconscionable whims?

"Pandora!" he exclaimed again, in a bewildered voice. "What does it mean? Why do you receive me in this manner? Is that all you have to say to me?"

"I believe that is all," she coolly replied, moving toward the door. "You are a gentleman, and I need not ask you to spare me any further annoyance."

"Your heart is quartz," I whispered, as she passed me in going out. "You are unworthy of him."

Flack's despairing cry brought Kaspar into the room. With the instinct acquired by long and faithful service, the old man went straight to the place where his master was. I saw him clutch at the air, as if struggling with and seeking to detain the invisible man. He was flung violently aside. He recovered himself and stood an instant listening, his neck distended, his face pale. Then he rushed out of the door and down the stairs. I followed him.

The street door of the house was open. On the sidewalk Kaspar hesitated a few seconds. It was toward the west that he finally turned, running down the street with such speed that I had the utmost difficulty to keep at his side.

It was near midnight. We crossed avenue after avenue. An inarticulate murmur of satisfaction escaped old Kaspar's lips. A little way ahead of us we saw a man, standing at one of the avenue corners, suddenly thrown to the ground. We sped on, never relaxing our pace. I now heard rapid footfalls a short distance in advance of us. I clutched Kaspar's arm. He nodded.

Almost breathless, I was conscious that we were no longer treading upon pavement, but on boards and amid a confusion of lumber. In front of us were no more lights; only blank vacancy. Kaspar gave one mighty spring. He clutched, missed, and fell back with a cry of horror.

There was a dull plash in the black waters of the river at our feet.

The Ghosts.

From the Cincinnati Gazette.

She sits in the window embrasure,
She has rimlets and rawish curls;
Her teeth have that ghastly glitter—
You see, they are borrowed pearls.

On her cheeks is a satin of crimson,
An autumn of heroic red;
And under, in the hollows,
The summer roses lie dead.

She sits in the window embrasure,
Angular, acid, and lean;
She smiles with a bitter sadness
Upon the joyous scene.

A crushed pleasure, a talking,
A laughing, a dancing, shrieks
Of half heard singing—a party;
One crosses to her and speaks.

A sardonic and world-worn visage,
Cold, with a frozen sneer,
Breaking in icy derision
To meet her and greet her here.

Are they talking of youth, my darling,
Of love long mocked away?
Let us make up that quarrel
We had the other day.

Let us sit in the window embrasure,
There is nothing here, you see,
They were Presentimental Phantoms,
The ghosts of what might be!

W. D. HOWELLS.

A Couple of Magpies.

From the Boston Transcript.

I rode in a horse car the other day
With some girls who ran on in this sort of way:
"Good heavens! what a stranger you are.
I'm awfully glad you took this car.
I'm going down town for a little spree.
Where were you going? Can't you come with me?"

"No; I just came out for a bit of a lark
And a little shopping; but keep it dark.
I've been so busy I'm almost dead.
And I've a million things to do," she said.

"It's horrid walking, but it's warm as spring;
I think it's too lovely for anything;
But the days so short it will soon be dark."
And her friend replied, "I should so remark."
"I wish you'd join our school mission;
It is in a flourishing condition;
We have more than forty nice little girls,
And one of them has the loveliest curls.
One of my friends has a class of boys;
I don't like them—they make too much noise;
I suppose their heathen minds must be fed,
But sometimes it is enough to turn one's head."

"Have you seen Salvini? Oh, you ought to go:
He's perfectly splendid—you'd like him, I know;
Did you see Bernhardt?" "Yes, I saw her twice;
I think her costumes were awfully nice."

"Your sack is lovely—such a pretty make—
I really think it takes the cake;
And your hat is just the fashionablest style."
And the other one answered, "Well, I should smile."

A Boat Club Ditty.

From the National Republican.

A bettcher loved a tender maid,
To woo her were his designs,
And he sent her copies of gushing verse,
In fact, real tenderisms.

The girl, alas! he could not suit,
She would love him as a brother;
But when implored to marry said:
"Trips, please, and find another."

The butcher still pursued the girl,
His pleas became much bolder;
The girl at last, to find relief,
Gave to him a cold shoulder.

He knew then that his hopes were vain,
But as he loit her and:
"Since you have cattled me such distress
I'll haunch you when I'm dead."

He pined and grew so thin and pale
He felt his end was nigh;
But his woe was such he did not know
Whether to liver die.

He tried to drink to drown his cares,
And there found no relief,
But daily grew more wobegone,
You never sausage grief.

At last his weary soul found rest,
His sorrows now are o'er;
No tickle mind now troubles him,
Pork reacher, he's no more.

EDWARD MAUNDER.

I and My Sweetheart.

From the Buffalo Commercial Advertiser.

I and my sweetheart sojolt together,
Our ages were together ten.
How sad to waste the sweet spring weather
In the old dame's fusty den!
White blue, fragrant, graceful, cool,
Tapped at the window of the school;
Alas! too well our doom we knew—
There was a tremulous birch tree, too!

I and my sweetheart dwell together,
Many suns are our aces now;
Vanished is youth's gay violet weather,
Stays the old dame's frowning brow.
Dame Nature keeps the eternal school,
And grows keen twigs to flog the fool;
But looks away with pardoning eye
When we play truant, my love and I.

MORTIMER COLLINS.

Big Cattle Sale.

From the Trinidad Republican.

The largest cattle sale that has ever taken place, we venture to say, in the world, was consummated the other day by the Hall Brothers, the New Mexico cattle kings, who disposed of their ranch and stock in Colfax County for the enormous sum of $800,000. About a year ago one of the brothers, of whom there were then three in partnership, sold out to the other two his interest, receiving, if we remember correctly, $100,000 and 6,000 head of cattle. He then removed to Texas, where he still is. The two other brothers continued the business till the present time, and may now retire to private life with the snug little bank account of $200,000 each.

Short Log Crop.

From the Inter-Ocean.

OSHKOSH, Wis., Jan. 23.—It is estimated that the log crop this season will fall short of last winter's crop by about 2,000,000 feet, owing to the cold weather, which prevented the snow from packing, this making it difficult to haul the logs.

SOME NEW BOOKS.

Oliphant's Land of Gilead.

It is seldom that a book commends itself with almost equal force to the sympathies of Christian and of Jewish readers, and interests at once the archæologist, the philanthropist, and the politician. Nothing less, however, can be said of the work entitled the *Land of Gilead* by LAURENCE OLIPHANT (W. Blackwood & Sons). This volume presents a definite and practicable project for the repatriation of the Jews and the colonization of Palestine. It discusses in detail the economical conditions and political bearings of the enterprise, and, by way of demonstrating its feasibility, sets forth the observations of the author in the course of a journey undertaken last year through the district lying east of the Jordan. Parts of the region visited had not been previously explored by Europeans, and thus, although the traveller's aim was agronomical rather than antiquarian, he has thrown a good deal of light on obscure questions connected with Old Testament history and geography. Mr. Oliphant, however, does not assume to have entered on his tour in Gilead with the technical acquirements and appliances of a professional archæologist, and his suggestions made in that capacity are, as we have said, merely incidental to his main object. His business was to examine the present condition of the country and its inhabitants; and his researches have vindicated the entire practicability, so far as local conditions are concerned, of establishing a colony of Jews in the most fruitful section of the land of their fathers.

Let no man dismiss the scheme for the repatriation of the Jews as visionary and sentimental before he has scrutinized the facts and arguments submitted in this volume. It will not do to prejudge the soundness of the author's data or the cogency of his reasoning merely because his conclusions recall the high-flown rhapsodies of "Tancred," or the majestic aspirations announced by spokesmen of the Hebrew race in "Daniel Deronda." Neither are the intrinsic merits or shortcomings of the plan one jot affected by the existence of a widespread tradition or belief, current not only among the Jews, but among large sections of the Christian community, that the chosen people are destined to reoccupy Palestine. If, nevertheless, a scheme of Hebrew colonization can be shown to be feasible, if there is evidence forthcoming that it would be economically profitable and politically desirable, then its prompt and efficient execution might be not a little furthered by the pressure of sentimental considerations. It would seem, however, that Mr. Oliphant has been in no degree impelled by religious or sentimental motives, and that the colonizing project with which his name is now identified is advocated by him exclusively on grounds of public policy and commercial advantage.

There are certain questions which every practical man is sure to put regarding Mr. Oliphant's project, and which he is at pains to answer. Do the Jews want to return to Palestine? If they did, would a people notoriously averse to agricultural pursuits be able to support themselves by tillage? Does not the Holy Land, described as flowing with milk and honey, prove to be upon inspection a land of rocks and sand, unfit for other than the thinnest population? Suppose a fertile district could be found, what guarantees could the colonists obtain of security and order, what protection against predatory inroad or official extortion? To these pertinent queries Mr. Oliphant makes, it seems to us, a satisfactory reply, and no one will dispute the caution, circumspection and good faith with which his statements are put forth, who remembers that the journey recounted in this volume was made for no other purpose than to verify by personal survey the alleged fertility of Gilead.

As to the question whether Jews desire to return to Palestine, the answer is that many do not, while, on the other hand, many do. Just such a divergence of sentiment has existed ever since the Babylonian captivity, for even then some of the Jews preferred to remain in Mesopotamia, and it is affirmed that their descendants dwell there unto this day. So, too, after the voluntary emigration of Israelites for commercial ends, which followed the establishment of the Seleucid and Ptolemid monarchies, the sense of local attachment must have grown faint among the rich Hellenized Jews who controlled the commerce of the Levant from Antioch or Thessalonica, or prosecuted their researches into science and philosophy at Alexandria. Neither is it to be supposed that Jews in our time would care to leave Paris, London, or New York, where they are prosperous and influential, or even Berlin, where the very outcry against them attests the strength and dignity of the position they have won. But let us see how large a proportion of the Hebrew race is represented by these more fortunate members. The total number of Israelites is computed at between six and seven millions; of these about 500,000 live in Germany, 70,000 in Holland, 50,000 in England, almost as many in France, 35,000 in Italy, relatively few in Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal, and from 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 in America. These are the more happily situated Hebrews, among whom we might expect to find some echoes to a remark attributed to a Jewish banker in the French capital: "If the Messiah should come to restore us to Palestine, I would beg him to give me the post of his Judaic Majesty's Ambassador at Paris." This, says the *Jewish Chronicle*, the leading organ of the Hebrew race in England, is the "old story of the Israelites, returned from exile to their native land, longing for the hanging gardens, and the soft, sensuous delights of Babylon. When Jeshurun waxed fat he kicked, and he wanted to remain in his well-stored manger." But there are many of the children of Jeshurun who have not waxed fat. Such are the 2,621,000 Jews who reside in Russia; the 1,875,000 in Austria, of whom 575,000 are contained in the Galician province alone; the 274,000 credited to Roumania, and the 100,000 whose hard struggle for existence in Morocco the western European powers have lately sought to alleviate. There are also some 200,000 Asiatic Jews, of whom 20,000 are assigned to India and 25,000 to Palestine. It is further estimated that in European Turkey there are about 100,000, whose lot, however, is far happier than that of their coreligionists in Russia, Roumania, and the Slav countries generally.

In view of these statistics, it is plain that two-thirds of the Jewish race not only do not share the comfort and content of their brethren in western countries, but are still sorely tried by want and persecution. Mr. Oliphant does not expect that many Hebrew colonists would be furnished by England or Germany or the United States, but he is probably justified in expecting that Jewish capital would be forthcoming from those countries to further the emigration to Palestine of their needy and oppressed brethren in eastern Europe, provided such an enterprise could be shown to have the promise of economical success. The author would not propose, in the first instance, for colonization an area of land exceeding a million or a million and a half of acres, and "it would be hard," he says, "if out of at least 2,000,000 of prosperous Western Israelites attached to Palestine by the tradition of former possession enough could not be found to subscribe a capital of $5,000,000 for the purchase and settlement of land, and if out of the millions of ill-treated and discontented Hebrews in Slav countries a selection of emigrants could not be made, possessing sufficient capital of their own to make them desirable colonists." As a matter of fact, no sooner was Mr. Oliphant's scheme mooted than 100 Jewish families in Roumania came together, raised $8,000, and notified their coreligionists in England that they were ready to begin the work of colonizing Palestine.

Now, as regards the alleged aversion of Israelites to become owners and cultivators of land, this aversion does not everywhere exist, and even where its existence is attested by observation, the phenomenon is susceptible of obvious explanation. The belief in the coming of the Messiah has at all times operated to prevent the Jews from sinking their accumulations in permanent investments and, moreover, until recently, the laws even of Western countries have made the acquisition of real property by Israelites difficult or impracticable. It is noteworthy that to this day the Hebrews of Bagdad and Hillah, who are believed to be descended from the Jews of the Captivity, rigorously abstain from buying land, and, as a rule, from building houses, so that when the expected summons to Jerusalem is heard they may not be delayed by the necessity of turning irremovable property into ready money. Mr. Oliphant reminds us that no objection to a rural life was observed so long as Palestine was mainly occupied by a Hebrew population, and he cites a number of facts indicating the facility with which the race, under favorable conditions, has reverted to agricultural pursuits. It is true that the agricultural school established at Jaffa by the Universal Israelite Alliance has not proved particularly successful, but this, our author thinks, is owing partly to the unfortunate choice of land already invaded by the sand dunes which bound the shores of Palestine, and partly to the absence of protection against the extortions of the local Government and the hostility of the native agriculturists—objections not applicable to a district as yet untilled, and to be settled under conditions providing for a semi-autonomous administration like that existing in the Lebanon. It is certain that many excellent cultivators are to be found among the Sephardim Jews in Palestine itself. At Lydda, near Jaffa, fifty-five Jewish families have recently established themselves on a tract of upward of 2,600 acres of land, which they have tilled with great success. Not far from Acre, Lieut. Kitchener came upon a village, the whole population of which were Jewish agriculturits, who maintain that their ancestors have occupied the same soil from time immemorial. In Morocco and other parts of Africa Jews are, to a considerable extent, employed in field culture, while in Russia agricultural colonies of Jews have been tried with satisfactory results. According to the London *Times*, the Russian Government, desiring to provide for the unemployed Jewish population swarming in Polish and Lithuanian towns, has recently resolved to found more farming colonies, those created several years ago having of late shown signs of prosperity. So much for the assumed inveteracy of Jewish dislike to agriculture, which, by the way, is contradicted by the readiness of the Roumanian families above mentioned to engage at once in the work of tilling the soil. Mr. Oliphant points out, however, that Hebrew small capitalists emigrating to a colony in Palestine would not necessarily have to rely upon Jewish labor, for he shows in his description of the tract which he recommends for settlement from what native sources a supply of cheap and efficient native labor might be drawn.

To the fundamental query whether any part of Palestine is really available for agricultural emigrants, a conclusive answer is given by the explorations whose results are recorded in this volume. As regards that part of the Holy Land lying west of the Jordan, it is true that the fertile portions are few and scattered, and that most of these are already occupied by resident cultivators. Concerning the country beyond Jordan, it used to be too hastily assumed that the whole of it deserved the Scriptural description of "The Land of Gilead; a hard, rocky region." Modern travellers, however, had done something to correct the latter impression and to propagate accurate notions of the district lying between the Jordan and the desert, and stretching from the Arnon on the south to the Yarmuk on the north. It was to verify their accounts, and enable himself to speak with absolute knowledge touching the agricultural aptitudes of this region, that Mr. Oliphant left England for Syria in February, 1879, and landing at Beyrout, proceeded in a southeasterly direction to Kuneiterih, now the seat of a Circassian colony, and situated about fifteen miles northeast of the Sea of Tiberias. From this point our author undertook a tolerably extended survey of Jaulan (as the district lying east of the lake just named is called), of Ajlun (as that part of Gilead lying between the Ajlun and Yarmuk rivers is designated), and finally of Gilead proper as far as the Shaib River; that is to say, nearly as far south as Heshbon and the point where the Jordan empties into the Red Sea. It is what he saw within the region earnestly recommended for settlement, and possibly destined, at no distant day, to receive a Jewish colony, to which we would invite particular attention.

The tract which Mr. Oliphant would propose for settlement in the first instance is the entire district of the Belka extending from the Arnon on the south to the Jabbok on the north—the Jabbok River, be it understood, entering the Jordan at a point about midway between the Red Sea and the Lake of Galilee. The territory of the colony would stretch eastward as far as the Hadj road from Damascus to Mecca, or at all events to the limit of the arable land, and if necessary would include such portions of the province of Ajlun to the north of the Jabbok as might be deemed the most desirable. The whole tract would comprehend at least a million, or at most a million and a half, of acres. The western boundary would, of course, be the Jordan and the western bank of the Dead Sea. The objection to including the whole of the Ajlun lies in the fact that a large portion of it is still village property, held under some kind of documentary title, whereas not an acre is so held in Belka. The latter district, being all Crown property, can be disposed of in block by the Turkish Government without infringing upon any private rights, excepting, possibly, at the town of Salt, which, with the cultivated land immediately surrounding it, should be dealt with separately.

The difference between eastern and western Palestine as regards the luxuriance of the vegetation, has not escaped the eyes of those who have visited the Dead Sea. Nothing can be more barren or uninviting than the rugged, waterless mountains which form the western rim of that singular sheet of water, whereas the eastern shores teem with trees, shrubs, and flowers in almost tropical exuberance. Here are palms in profusion, and jungles of terebinths, wild almond, and fig trees, poplars, willows, hawthorns, and oleanders, covering the steep hill sides, and fringing the streams of such picturesque ravines as those in which are situated the celebrated hot springs of Callirrhoe and the so-called wells of Moses. Included within the territory designated for a colony by Mr. Oliphant would be the plains of Shittim, which another traveller has described as by far the most extensive and luxuriant of any of the fertile lands bordering on the Dead Sea. This abundantly watered and tree-covered district stretches six miles from east to west, and ten or twelve from north to south. Lying, as it does, nearly 1,300 feet below the level of the sea, the plain is never visited by frost, and its winter climate is even more tempered than that of Egypt, while its intense summer heats adapt it to