

MYSTERIOUS "JACK."

"Jack" he had been when he was chubby and rosy. "Jack" he was at 20, and "Jack" again at 30, when the world had toughened his mental fiber, and when wine and late hours no longer signified a headache for the morrow. After 30 years like years flying over dusty battlefields, only gave added character to his personality. If at 20, or 25, he had been less bald, or his skin had not been drawn so closely, even then his eyes certainly were not clearer. Nor at 50 was his laugh lacking; possibly it was a trifle louder over a story of the delicate, after-dinner kind or a morsel of gossip. The youngsters of the club felt vaguely that their fathers, perhaps even their grandfathers may have heard the same peal of mirth. The impression, however, only ran fleetingly over the immature brains of these budding rascals. Yet, since the mind works by variable rules, these peals of mirthful pleasure, had seen in a glimpse the truth that gossip is changeless; such a glimpse as was the intuition of Newton at seeing the fall of the apple, of Franklin at the view of the jagged line of light across the setting of black clouds. Fifty-ninth street at present may be like the Twenty-third street of twenty years ago. New York is no more lavishly in display; their victorias, drags, jehus may be of the London, Parisian, Roman pattern, as against the amazing provincialism of the period of the same texture as that entering into the descriptions by Trojan dames of the escapades of fair Helen. Doubtless Mr. Darwin's monkeys would show the mental nudity of gossip. Doubtless their chatter, if it could be translated into the words of articulate speaking men, would be simply: "Have you heard that amazing story about Jack?" The club youngsters might add: "How does he live?" In the same tone their fathers has asked the question about Jack. If the card rooms or an occasional flurry in Wall street might hint at the story, still that was only a part. He lost as often as he won. Then they passed to other subjects—a girl, a dance, the play, a horse, the flirtation of a married woman. Jack's round red face was always there, like the little canvass by Millet of which the club was bragging. Every night at the same hour you could see him sitting over his whisky and water. In season, you might meet him in the park beside a stout gray cab. His name appeared among the first-nighters. Often his thick-witted censure has been reflected in the columns of those critics who deal more in the world's ups and downs than in the cuban observation which has hit comments. The old fellows knew more. Well, Jack Landon came from some town up in the state. Walking with the De Remarkables and the Van De Remarkables in the class of '99 at Yale, he had been established in town by these distinguished patrons. "He was too slow to marry," declared the gynecists. Nor had he ever "done anything," as the verb "do" is conjugated. Last year Jack lived in an apartment on Twenty-seventh street, just off the avenue, where Tommy Van De Remarkables first placed him. He is no longer to be found there. One evening last year he came to his room as usual; the chiffonier was one of those yellow envelopes signifying a "wire." "How long has this been here?" said Jack, impatiently. "For three hours, sir," replied the boy, deprecatingly. A mist gathered over Jack's eyes. Like an automaton he repeated the words: "Come; he cannot live." He walked savagely across the room. Then he pushed the button. "A cab! Double quick!" Rolling some minutes later over the irregular paving stones he thought, as a man will at such a moment of his life. For the first time it seemed not only ridiculously little, but criminal. Back beyond all ways he kindly face which rendered his career possible. "For God's sake, drive faster," he cried to the man. On the West Shore train he had no "cabby" on hand; the nearest was the white cab from self-deceiving. Only he kept repeating: "If he should die before I reach him!" That night he reviewed a long panorama as if through a fog; the faces in the train, the rural chatter, the trim brick station of the little town where he was born—and at last he leaped over the thin, wadded, yet still practical face which had been the face of a dying man, who in life had made a little money as a country grocer. In later life Simeon Landon had cherished a single passion, and that was to make the life of his son the career of a gentleman. "You are sick?" said Jack, faintly. "Not now, that you are here," said the other. When the voice could no longer speak these words rang in Jack's ears like the bitterest reproach. Nor, strange as it may sound to those who know him, was the regret because the regular remittance would come no longer. For the man was changed; he seemed to have lost the enviable trait which makes regret or remorse improbable. The change was seen in his appearance. And wrinkles, which had lain in wait for mental perplexity, now declared themselves. "Look at old Jack!" the youngsters muttered. As gaiety shuns sadness, since his laugh was no longer hearty, he was avoided. The waiter found him at 1 o'clock in the morning, bolt upright, staring into space. Nor was the apoplexy and whisky to be seen at his elbow. A terrible loneliness, like that of the last man in a dead world, like the dreariness of an unknown wanderer in the throng of the city, tormented him. In the chaos of his thoughts only one thing was clear—only the father whose single passion had been "Jack," who never in the later years had intruded his personality lest he might hamper his boy. Late one afternoon in December, 1888, Buttons knocked at his door. No answer. He pushed the door open. Startled, he noted that the gas was burning. Jack was seated at his desk, his head bent forward on his arms. For a moment he paused. Through the window entered the rumble of the town. "Extra!" sang out a newsboy, rancorous and persistent. "Mr. Landon," said the boy. Then suddenly, "Oh, Lord!" and he ran out for help. The morning afterward many men noted a paragraph in the Sun: "John Landon, a familiar figure at several clubs and about town for many years, died yesterday of heart disease at his lodging in West Twenty-seventh street. Mr. Landon was a bachelor and leaves no relatives." In the little town in the country they counted it an evidence of metropolitan distinction that he should be mentioned at all.—New York Evening Sun.

DEAD FOR THREE DAYS.

A Petrean Barber That Took a Lot of Killing.—And Still Alive. From the San Francisco Examiner. "How does it feel to die? Well, I guess I can answer that question if any one can. Yes, and I can tell you how it feels to be dead, too—so dead that they put me on ice to keep me." The speaker was Ferdinand Alvarez, a barber at 1526 Kentucky street. There had been a discussion in the shop as to whether death was painful or not, and this startling statement was thrown out as the barber put the finishing touches to a customer's mustache. "I'd better tell you the whole story," he said, when pressed for an explanation. "In the winter of 1896 I was hunting near Grizzly Flat, in El Dorado county, with Tom Herland. As you may know, that county is all set on edge, and we were in almost the worst part of it. "The mountains were covered with frozen snow and I felt you had to go pretty easy to keep from breaking our necks. Well, we were scaling along the side of a steep gulch and Tom was a hundred yards ahead of me, when I slipped. It was 100 feet to the bottom and I knew I was going the whole distance. I tried to yell but I was going too fast. I was only a second or two before I reached the bottom, but it seemed a long time. I saw the jagged rocks below me, and I felt dead sure that when I reached them it would be all day with me. I knew I was falling, but every time I hit the bank I seemed less conscious. I reached out my hand, and then I struck bottom. I felt my arm break—it did not hurt, but I felt the shock—and then something hit me across the eyes, and that was all. The last sensation I remember was a feeling of nausea that was worse than all my bruises. "The next thing that came to my mind was some one lifting me up. I knew that I had been lying still for some time, and that it was awful cold, but I was not conscious of my surroundings. Then I felt my feet a burning up, and then I got to know that they had me before a hot fire and I was suffering more torture than I ever thought it possible for a man to stand and live. "I had gone out hunting on Friday; it was Monday night when I found my scotch before the fire. What happened in the meantime I gathered after I got well. I wouldn't believe it for a long time, but they proved it to me in one way or another, and I learned the whole story. I had been dead more than three days and three nights. "This is what they told me: "It seems that I landed not hear or see me before the fire, but after he had gone half a mile he shouted for me, and not getting any reply went back looking for me. He found my tracks in the snow and followed them until he came to a slide in the snow. That was where I slipped. In going down I left a regular trench. He followed it with his eye and saw at the end my body jammed in head down among the boulders. He tried to get down to me, but could not without going around a great many miles. He watched me for an hour, but as he made no motion and the slide where I came down was all bloody, he at last concluded that I was dead and he left me and went along. "We were a long way out, and he could not have seen me after dark. It was night when he got to an Italian goat ranch, where he camped. During the night he told the ranchers of my death. They suggested that possibly they could get my body out, though it would be a hard job, and the next morning they started out with a burro and a lot of ropes. They found me at the bank down which I had tumbled the Italians wanted to leave me there, but some one said that my folks ought to have a chance to bury me decently, and so they determined to get me out. There was no way of driving the burro to where I lay, so they tied a rope around the waist of the smallest man in the party and lowered him down to me. He tied the rope around my ankles, and gave the word to hoist. They pulled, but my body had become frozen to the ground so solidly that they could not get it moving. They threw the prospector's pick down to the man in the canyon and he dug my body nearly clear of the snow and ice. They gave the word to pull again. They hitched the burro to the other end of the rope and started him up. They pulled me clear of the frozen stuff, though my coat stuck there, and dragged me to the top of the hillside up the hillside a hundred feet or more. Then they threw me across the pack-saddle with which the jackass was provided, strapped me on like sack of flour and started for camp across the hills. There was no trouble until the party reached the river. It was frozen over, but the ice was quite thin and they were able to cross. The combined weight of me and the jack would be likely to break through, so they unpacked me and drove the burro across alone. Then they put me to the end of a rope again and hauled me across the ice. On the other side they loaded me onto the burro again and began to climb the hills toward the camp. There are lots of slick places along the side of the canyon and there were lots of narrow escapes. Once the hitch slipped and I fell off. They packed me on again, however, and went on until we were within five miles of the camp. Then they struck just such a nasty place as I went over. The burro got scared and balked. They lickered him and poked him until he started on, but he had hardly gone a dozen steps when he slipped a id down we went, rolling over and over until we reached the middle of the gorge. The fall killed the burro, but they cut me loose and hoisted me up to the trail again. "By that time it was nearly night, and they could not go to camp for another animal and return for me. While they were discussing what to do they heard the howl of a coyote. They knew that if they left my body on the trail the coyotes would not leave a bone of me. So they hoisted me up to a limb of a small pine tree, out of the reach of the coyotes, and left me. The next morning the came out with a pack mule and brought me into camp. "Sometimes I wake up nights now and think of me or my body hanging in the wind all that night from the tree, while the coyotes sat around and howled because they couldn't get at me, and I got sick and almost faint away. "But, as I said, I was still hanging there when they came for me in the morning, and they carried me into a cabin near Colma. Herland came to the city to hunt up my people, so they could send up a coffin to bring me down. They put me in an ice house that day, so that I would keep until they had time to force all that night and a good part of the next day. The weather, however, got warmer, and that must have started my life again. "At about 3 o'clock in the afternoon some man came into the ice house. He didn't stay there a minute, but rushed to the cabin where the other people were, yelling that the dead man had moved. He said that while he was in there my leg, which had been doubled up, slowly straightened out. He was scared to death and would not go back. The others, however, laughed a bit and swore he had the jim-jams. But he was so earnest about it that some of the men went into the ice-house. Sure enough, I had moved. One of the men had presence of mind to force the mouth of a whiskey flask between my teeth and pretty soon I was kicking lively. They carried me into the cabin, and I was

there before the fire when I regained consciousness. God, how I suffered when the head was thawing my frozen muscles. But I came through all right without losing as much as a limb. These scars on my face and my deformed feet are the only traces of my experience I have left. They sent a telegram from Placerville, signed with my name, countermanding that order for a coffin. "Maybe you don't think Tom Herland was a surprised man when he got it." Chased by a Bull. General Bumblethorpe is certainly a very big man—big in stature and bigger still in his own conceit, brimming over as he constantly is with his own importance, says the Boston Transcript. General Bumblethorpe was never in the army; he never was even in the militia. But he was surveyor-general once, a good while ago and has of course worn the title of general ever since, and has always insisted upon it. He has been a shade more overbearing since he became a general in this way though he was sufficiently overbearing before that. One fine afternoon last summer General Bumblethorpe was taking a walk through the outskirts of the country town which he had honored by choosing it as his place of summer sojourn. In the course of his wanderings he came upon a pair of hens leading into a grassy and inviting meadow. The hens he let down and walked into the meadow. He had but half crossed the meadow when he saw, to his horror, a great black and white Holstein bull emerge from the dark shade of an apple tree and advance toward him. General Bumblethorpe is not an active man, but the steady advance of this enormous animal stimulated him for the moment to great activity. And his own rapid flight also served to stimulate the bull, who followed him closely, charging ferociously, belowing the while. It was a mad chase, but General Bumblethorpe had some good rods of advantage in the start, and the opposite fence of the field was not far away. The general ran wildly and succeeded in turning a somersault over the fence just in time to escape the infuriated animal. And the General Bumblethorpe who was infuriated. From the safe side of the fence he stormed and raged at the bull, and, seeing a farm house far away, he stalked over to it. The farmer was choring around the barn when the general rushed up to him. "Is that your bull over there, sir?" exclaimed General Bumblethorpe. "Well, I guess 'tis," said the farmer. "Well, sir, do you know what I've been doing?" "Chasin' ye, mebbe." "Yes, sir, chasin' me; and it is an outrage I will not tolerate—an outrage, an outrage, I tell you, that I should be pursued and humiliated in this way!" "Well, sir," said the farmer, "it's a thing that bulls will do ye can't help it, ye know." "Help it!" said the general, black with indignation; "do you know who I am?" "No, I don't." "Well, sir, I am Gen. Bumblethorpe!" "Is—that—so?" said the farmer, with great deliberation. "So? Why in thunder didn't ye tell the bull, gen'ral?" Edison and the "Paupers." At Orange you can hear numberless stories of Edison, says the Electric Age. Every body likes him. One man, who had been for years in his employ as an experimentalist, told of a visit that a number of capitalists—including Jay Gould, Sidney Dillon, Sam Sloan and Cyrus Field—paid to Edison at his laboratory one day, to inspect the workings of some induction experiment in devising the scheme for telegraphing to moving trains. Edison came out of his work-room, where he was busy, and shook hands with Mr. Field. At that instant something popped into his head apropos of the experiment he was at work on. He never gives an idea his time to escape him. Without a word of excuse to the four magistrates he turned on his heel and hurried into his den again. They waited and waited, and by and by, out with delay, wended their way down stairs. Shortly afterward Edison came out and asked: "Where did those paupers go?" "Down stairs." "Did they walk?" "Yes." "That's right. I don't want 'em to wear the oil of my elevator." Then he stood around for an hour and swapped stories with the men in the shop. He is the greatest man living for stories, and it is a tradition among his employes that they can tell him the same story every day for a week and he'll never tire of it, nor in fact show any sign of having heard it before.

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