

A TALE OF THE RED PIKE.

"I thought I should find you with the girls, Mr. Godwin. You should have been with us. We've had such a scramble over Honister Crag, and brought back no end of flowers for Gertrude. But one thing I must say—that fellow Losford is a jolly muf, though he doesn't look it. Just a funk, girls, and nothing else. Will you give me some tea, Mrs. Godwin?"

"What nonsense you talk, Bob!" cried his sister, conscious by some feminine instinct that her friend's face was hotter than a moment before. "You are a perfect mauvais enfant bursting in like that. I wish Mr. Losford would teach you manners."

"I'd like to see him try. It would take a pluckier man than he is. Why, he wouldn't come within a yard of the edge, Mrs. Godwin?"

"He showed his usual good sense, Master Robert," was the lady's tart reply. She had her reasons for looking favorably upon Walter Losford, of Losford Court, Monmouthshire, by no means the least honored guest at Mr. Godwin's lake villa. And they were a very cheery and pleasant party—the pleasantest set, Gertrude thought, that her mother had ever got together, and Gertrude was a young lady of decided tastes and somewhat difficult to please. Even Bob Marston, when he was not saying malapropos things, and appearing where he was not wanted at inopportune moments, was as amusing as any other Eton boy. Nevertheless, at this moment two people at least were ardently longing to make his ears tingle.

"And what is the programme for tomorrow, Mr. Godwin," resumed the young gentleman, not a whit daunted by the unfavorable reception of his last remark. "Can we picnic at Red Pike? It would be jolly fun."

The host hummed and hawed; he rather preferred an open-air entertainment at a place accessible in an open carriage. But if you have a home among the mountains, up them you must go. The climbing disease is infectious, and there is no evading it until by a permanent residence you become proof against its attacks. Mr. Godwin would have to succumb sooner or later.

"Yes, Bob," said Gertrude, suddenly laying down the fan with which she was playing, "we will go to Red Pike to-morrow."

And Bob, who thought that, in his own language, he had rather "put his foot in it," was comforted, and knew that to the Red Pike he would go.

Gertrude's face, as she went up to dress for dinner, was thoughtful. "He showed his usual good sense," Mrs. Godwin had said, and the words kept ringing in her daughter's ears until her lips began to curl with scorn. If there was one thing which Gertrude admired it was courage; was she beginning, almost more than beginning, to like a man who could be called a coward even by a boy? It made her cheeks tingle with shame and anger. Proud and high-spirited herself, good sense of the kind Mrs. Godwin meant was not in high esteem with her. And, alas, the insatiable climbed in with other things. Walter Losford was hardly one to please a romantic girl at first sight. Cold, sensible and wanting in enthusiasm even in his ambition, trying reason with impartial severity, he would have made a just and not too merciful judge. Living by rule of plumb, no wonder that he looked older than his thirty years, or that he repelled chance acquaintances, who called him a prig. Generally reticent, he would sometimes tell the truth with rule-abruptness. Altogether his friends said, a little wanting in charity; too practical, too master-of-fact. And yet, poor Gertrude! when she met him at dinner, the butler she assumed melted away, and she blushed and smiled at his glance; for what is so fascinating as the homage of one who seems utterly, almost contemptuously, careless of all beside? If Walter had spoken that evening he would have assuredly gained his object, and Mrs. Godwin, been made a happy woman.

The Red Pike was red indeed in the evening sunlight, every cliff that buttressed its rugged top burnished to ruddiness, and yet the party lingered, reluctant to abandon the view of sea and land from Fort to Windermere that held them entranced. Tea was over and the servants had started downward with the baggage, yet the party, which all day had wandered separately or in pairs at their several wills, still sat together on the top. Bob was on the move, skirmishing hither and thither untrillingly.

"I say, Gertrude, here's a specimen for you? Here's a blue gentian growing on this cliff, and a rare good climb it will be to it."

The party hastened to the edge of the cliff; in a cranny of the rock about twelve feet down, grew the flower Gertrude had been long seeking to obtain. A slight opening in the wall of the cliff made it just feasible, if somewhat dangerous, to reach it.

"Robert, don't go too near!" cried Mrs. Godwin.

Gertrude turned with her face a little

flushed to Losford. "Can you get it for me, Mr. Losford?" she said gently, and with something of appeal in her voice.

"Not without a rope," he answered calmly; "we will bring one up to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" cried Gertrude, with sudden heat. "I want it now. Bob would get it for me in a moment if I asked him, Mr. Losford."

"Bob's head is perhaps, steeper than mine," answered the other, keeping at a safe distance from the edge. He was in no way discomposed until, as he finished, his eyes met the girl's, full of contempt and anger. Stung by the look, he took a hasty step toward the edge of the cliff and bent down to make the attempt. For a moment he remained in that position as if entranced, scanning the depth below, a sheer three hundred feet, and then a green hedge, and then, far beneath, pale-blue Crummock Water. With a quick shudder he passed his hands across his eyes and recoiled, white to the lips.

"I can't get it for you," he said hoarsely, falling back, while the others looked at one another in astonishment.

"And quite right, too, Mr. Losford, don't try any such foolhardiness, I beg," cried Mrs. Godwin, loudly. Loudly, but not so that he failed to hear the one word "Coward!" or to distinguish the tone of contempt in which it fell from her daughter's lips as she turned away. The next instant he was his old calm self again, but he knew that he had his dismissal.

As for the bit of blue gentian, Bob brought it up in a twinkling, and chattered on in such a way as to earn every one's gratitude. Yet it was a dull party that wended its way down the hill, and clear it was to more than one that a budding romance had come to an end over the little blue flower which nestled so harmlessly in Gertrude's fair hair. Yet mothers are sanguine, and Mrs. Godwin's face grew scarlet with anger when the spray appeared again at dinner conspicuously fastened in the bosom of her daughter's dress.

If it was only an awkward hour at dinner that Mrs. Godwin feared, Fate was to save her hospitality from, to do her justice, an unwelcome slur.

"Where is Robert?" she said, pettishly, after helping the soup. "Do you know, Violet?"

Miss Marston did not. Bob was not wont to be punctual, and she was about to say so when the butler, who had been called from the room entered hastily and whispered something in the master's ear. Mr. Godwin rose quickly.

"My dear, this is bad news. There has been a fall at the lead-works."

"How unfortunate! I am thankful the men were not at work. Or even worse, we might have been viewing them, as Robert has been plaguing us to do, and been all crushed together like any common laborers! Shocking! But where can Robert be?"

"I am afraid, ma'am," put in the butler in a low voice which every one broke in, with preternatural distinctness, "that Master Robert—leastwise he went that way when he came back—is in there. John has gone to the village for help."

There was a dead silence round that fair show of linen and glass and gleaming silver, as if the hand which warned Belshazzar had appeared upon the wall. Then Gertrude glided to her friend's side, and put her arm round her. The gentlemen hurried from the room, but almost as soon as they reached the scene the women appeared there also. The poor boy's sister could not be restrained, and Mrs. Godwin, whose woman's heart was sound within her, sighed to Gertrude to let her go. Anything was better than inaction.

Mr. Godwin's wad-hole and works were hardly a quarter of a mile from the house, though hidden from it by a steep shoulder of the hill. He guessed at once that the boy, anxious to exhibit to the ladies the wonders of the wad-hole, had taken the private key, which generally lay upon the study mantelpiece, and had gone, it might be, to make some preparation, whereby his darling effects would be enhanced. A servant seeking him when dinner was ready, discovered the accident, and, after giving the alarm in the servants' hall, had gone on to the village.

"Is there any hope?" said Gertrude, in a low voice, with Violet Marston's hand tight clasped in hers. "Are they digging?"

The flaring light of the pine-knot fire, just kindled in the little inclosure at the mouth of the hole, fell upon a score or two of strange-looking figures, chiefly women. Some were moving to and fro before the blaze, but most of them stood still and impassive. The shining clothes of the men proclaimed their trade, as they brushed, all distinctions forgotten, against the gay dresses of the house party.

"No," replied her father, with a groan. "The props at this end are gone, and the men say the whole hill is coming down. We must wait for help from Keswick."

Gertrude was turning to the group indignantly, but one was before her.

"Now, men, I can handle a pick, though I am a Londoner. I'm pounds to every man who joins me! Don't let them say that the Cumberland men left their master's guest to perish because they were cowards."

The cold impassive face was aglow with energy and excitement. Was it Gertrude's fancy, or was it that word in his voice really struck her like a whip.

"The hill is on the move, master, and he be dead, too," said the foremost man, but shame-facedly.

"Hush, his sister be there!" put in a woman softly.

There was an instant's hesitation

while all watched the big miner; then, after a glance at their faces:

"We're with you, master," cried he, seizing the tool at his feet like a giant aroused.

The spell was broken; and who then so reckless as the Cumberland men? Losford soon had to check them, and assist the foreman to compel them to underpin, and take other proper precautions as they worked. In time, more flocked from neighboring pits to the spot, and the task was carried on by gangs. Notwithstanding Mr. and Mrs. Godwin's entreaties, the poor girl most concerned would not leave; and hour after hour, while seemingly countless loads of earth were wheeled or carried from the deepening entrance, she walked to and fro, or lay with Gertrude's hand in hers on the wraps laid in a corner formed by two walls. How each shining worker was gazed at as he came from the darkness into the blaze of the fire and deposited his load! Whoever worked by spells, the figure Gertrude knew best did not appear. But, when the faint lingering hope was dying away, one of the other men staying in the house came quickly up to Violet.

"Miss Marston, do not be too sanguine. There is hope yet, however. The fall is only partial, and he may be in the main workings. Some of the men fancy that they have heard him knocking."

Violet made no reply. She was sobbing on Gertrude's shoulder.

"Is anyone hurt?" asked the latter, eagerly.

"No, hardly at all. A few cuts from stones."

Another hour passed, while the crowd thickened and listened all breathlessly to the dull, muffled sound of the tools and the creaking of the barrows. A fresh gang was at work, and they came out more quickly. The sky was growing gray, and men's faces looked so, too, as the fire burned with a paler light and the hilltops came out in cold majesty.

Suddenly the tools ceased; a barrow on its way out stopped inside the entrance. The crowd outside drew closer and breathed more quickly, and women hid their faces as the sound of low murmuring voices came from the passage. Then a little crowd of men pressed out, and in their midst Walter Losford, stained and ragged, with the boy's form in his arms. He laid him quickly on the wraps by the women. The blood was trickling slowly from the cut in his own forehead and his face, where it was not lead-grimed, was paled with fatigue.

"He has only fainted," he said, as the doctor bent over the boy.

"Just so," said the latter cheerily.

"He only wants a glass of sherry," Gertrude rose from the boy to thank the bearer, her eyes dim with happiness. But he had turned away.

The worst time was just before they broke in. Gertrude thought the earth must fall again, or something happen to prevent them reaching me," confided Bob to her when she visited him next day in his room. The whole matter went to Master Bob one of pure congratulation, and he spent his time in rehearsing a graphic account of his adventure for the benefit of his dame's house. "But that fellow Losford is no end of a trump. He's been up to say good-bye, and I told him what an ass I'd made myself about him. That's a comfort. I heard his voice first of all, do you know, and Mrs. Godwin says that he wouldn't have got me out but for him."

The likelihood of this alternative appeared to give him unmixed satisfaction.

"I don't think they would," murmured Gertrude, eagerly presenting him with a large bunch of grapes from a side-table. "I'll get you some more, Bob."

"You bet your boots they wouldn't. It's a pity he can't climb. Fancy a fellow like that with what the doctor calls 'constitutional vertigo'! I can't make it out."

And Bob fell into a brown study, which passed into a doze, and thus refreshed he was enabled to chatter without ceasing all dinner time.

Gertrude stole out of the room, and running down stairs, found him in the hall. He had mislaid a favorite stick, "Mr. Losford," she began hurriedly standing before him, in she knew not what attitude of pretty humility. "I said something yesterday, the memory of which is burning me with shame. I can not forgive myself; but will you say you do? Bob has made amends. Let me do so. What a foolish girl said can not have hurt you?" she pleaded, as he made no answer.

"Rather, should not have hurt me," he replied gravely; "yet it did cruelly, Miss Godwin. But for the chance occurrence of last night you would be thinking so still. It was ungenerous as well as thoughtless."

Gertrude winced under each almost contemptuous word. She had not bargained for this. Too much hurt for tears, she murmured as she turned away: "I am sorry."

"A moment, please. From any other woman I should have accepted the apology without a word. I have scolded you that you might know what it was like before I asked you to give me the right to do it. Gertrude, will you be my wife?"

And Gertrude said, "Yes."

When she had fully satisfied him upon this point she asked:

"And you have quite forgiven me, Walter?"

"I shall have when you have done the penance I order." There was a twinkle of fun in his eyes a stranger

would not have believed could harbor there. "It is that you wear the bit of blue gentian at dinner this evening."

The sight of which harmless specimen caused Bob to blush the only blush he was guilty of in his school days.

GILT EDGE.

A Tiny Wrelette that Can be Easily Meant Before Breakfast.

"Can you believe it, my dear Bessie? At Saratoga this summer I actually danced with a hotel clerk. He was as handsome a fellow!"

Wilhelmina Wildmerding was reclining on a lounge in the parlor of a house in Fifth avenue. She put a smelling bottle to her nose as she spoke.

"How romantic!" said her friend.

"Do you really think so, Bessie? I have been in such an agony of doubt about him?"

"You didn't fall in love with him?"

"No, no, not so bad as that. But, whether or not, I should add his offer to my list."

"Every man counts," said Bessie, with a look of judicial gravity. "Whom else did you captivate, my dear cousin?"

"There was a young man slender and so sweet. He was over head and ears in love with me. What nights we had! The moon! Bessie, folks may laugh at the moon, but they can't laugh it down. We used to walk together, and his tail was just heavenly. And he danced like a cherub."

"Was there no one else?"

"There was a man who must, I think, have come from the west. He was a thumper; he was No. 3. He was just wild over my singing. Both of them are coming to visit me."

"Do you mean to say they didn't pop? What slow coaches."

"I had to come away in a hurry for my aunt's funeral. There is the bell. Oh, Bessie, it's Vincent's card; it's my second; it's No. 2. You must leave us alone; only I wish you could hear him talk; it's just music."

Bessie, however, left as the slender youth entered the room.

"Miss Wildmerding," said the young man, "I am so fortunate to find you alone. I have myself been alone since you left us. I never thought into what a mocking desert the absence of one charmer can turn a smiling world."

"Go on, Mr. Vincent. It is too lovely for anything to hear you talk."

"Wilhelmina, I love you! I have come to offer you my hand, my heart and my future."

"Your future! Mr. Vincent," said Wilhelmina, "are you a speculator in futures? Papa will never consent to my union with a grain speculator."

"What do you mean, Wilhelmina? I am not a grain speculator."

"What is your business, Mr. Vincent?"

"I am a poet."

"That's just a lovely business! I dote on poets. Why did you never tell me?"

"I never had the courage. I was afraid I could not satisfy your ideas of worldly grandeur."

"What nonsense! I have no ideas of grandeur. A house, a carriage—why, altogether, I couldn't spend if I tried, more than \$20,000 a year."

"Is that all?"

"That is all. I am sure you can easily spin that out of your poetry."

"I can in time," said Mr. Vincent with a touch of melancholy in his voice.

"How soon, Albert?" said Miss Wildmerding, in a trembling whisper.

"In 1,000 years."

"A thousand what?"

"Years, Wilhelmina. Good-by."

"Bessie! Bessie! Bring me my salts! Isn't it too bad? His talk was so lovely-dreaming like. The bell is ringing again. I feel too weak to speak!"

"Who was that shaking bag of bones that I met at the door," asked a strong, sturdy-looking man, entering the parlor.

"Mr. Longworth, is it you?" said Wilhelmina. "I thought you knew Mr. Vincent, the poet."

"Never set eyes on him before, miss. I reckon he don't move much in our circle. He must be a plebeian. But business is business. You're a prize at any fair. I love you and I must have you!"

"Mr. Longworth, you upset me entirely! You take my breath away. Mr. Vincent has just told me that he loves me."

"What! that bag of bones? Why, I have more need of him than you. He makes you an offer! I'll pay more for him than any one else will. A poet! Stuff!"

"Who are you?" said Miss Wildmerding, awed by his proud manner.

"I am the biggest vender and bone-pulverizer in Chicago," said Longworth.

"What!" cried Wilhelmina, with a look of wonder.

"Every day I boil down 10,000 hogs carcasses."

"Oh!" cried Wilhelmina, placing the smelling-bottle to her nose.

"My income is \$50,000 a year, and I'm a power in society and politics, I am!"

"Fifty thousand dollars!" said Wilhelmina. "I call. I mean show your hand to the Governor, and it's all right, I'll be your partner for the rest of the game. A thousand years, indeed. Mr. Longworth, I'll give you a tip. Don't offer Mr. Vincent too much for his bones. Ta, ta, love! Au revoir!"

Things in General.

Journalists have been excused from serving on juries in India, the Judge, in so deciding, following the precedent laid down by another Judge in Natal. He went so far as to say that all reporters should be excused from serving on a jury because, through their presence at preliminary examinations and inquiries, for the purpose of publishing the same as news, they might be in possession of facts which might come out in evidence, and probably they would have prejudged the case.

The theatrical business, so all the papers declare, has been very disastrous. This year companies have gone to pieces on all sides, and actors are walking back to New York from every direction. The theatres of the metropolis are doing badly enough, but outside of the city the business is even worse.

A deaf family in New Hampshire has been traced back to the Fourteenth century in England, and in all that time has regularly shown a succession of deaf mutes. In Maine there is a family in which there are ninety-five deaf mutes all of which are connected by blood or marriage.

The greatest depth so far discovered in the ocean is 29,850 feet, five miles, or about 2,200 feet less than the height of the world's loftiest mountain peak, Mount Everest, one of the Himalaya chain, which is found to be not less, and apparently a little more, than 29,000 feet above the sea level.

Rosewood trees are found in South America and in the East Indies and neighboring islands. There are half a dozen kinds. The name is not taken from the color of the wood as is generally supposed, but by reason of a rose-like fragrance which it possesses when first cut. Some of the trees grow so large that planks four feet broad and ten feet in length can be cut from them. The broad planks are principally used to make tops for pianofortes. The rosewood tree is remarkable for its beauty. Such is its value in manufactures as an ornamental wood that some of the forests where it once grew abundantly have now scarcely a single specimen. New plantations have been set out, so that the supply will not be exhausted.

In France, by a refinement of judicial cruelty, the date of execution is not known until the previous evening. Notices are then sent to the Governor of the jail, executioner, and chaplain. From the hour of his sentence the criminal is dead to the world. Enveloped by guards, he is taken to the cell with two beds, one of which is occupied by a mouton (prison spy). He is put into a suit of rough canvas shirt, woolen trousers, and felt shoes. A short waistcoat of canvas, opening behind and secured by leather straps, is fixed over his suit, and the long sleeves are attached to a cord which passes round the thighs, so that he cannot lift his hands beyond a certain height, and is almost helpless to perform the most ordinary movement. His food is taken with a wooden spoon. A warden and gendarme keep perpetual watch. He may sleep or smoke or eat, but no visitors are admitted nor any tidings from the outer world.

Birthdays in Germany are never neglected. From the first one, when the infant receives the presents from the god-parents, instead of at the time of the baptism, the thing goes on from year to year, and people of all ages and ranks consider themselves slighted if even an acquaintance does not duly appear with the usual congratulatory offering of flowers, etc. The custom is really a nuisance to many, for all members of a household consider themselves entitled to valuable gifts on their birthdays. Even servants expect to be substantially remembered, and, as on their entrance into the establishment they are legally obliged to render a full account of the time and place of their birth, there is no pleading ignorance as an excuse for neglecting to notice the day.

A resident of Ronkonkoma L. I., possesses a gold watch which formerly belonged to the ill-fated Marie Antoinette. It is about the size of a trade dollar in circumference, and is open-faced. On the back it bears the device of the French Queen, a cupid on a cloud, worked in gold and silver. The features of the boy god are nearly effaced by long wear. A wreath of Guinea gold and one of Roman gold surround the disk. The hours on the dial are marked in odd-looking Arabic numbers. The porcelain shows the ravages of time in minute cracks at the edges, and the silver hands nearly black with age, are thickly studded with diamonds. The legend the owner gives is that the watch was the gift of the Queen to the architect of the Tuilleries, who shot himself through the head on the day following her execution by the revolutionists. Its present owner was a near relative of a well-known American poet, now dead. The watch came into his possession through marriage, as a gift from his wife's father, who is a direct descendant of the original recipient.

Keep your buildings well painted. It is in the list of true economy, besides a village full of unpainted buildings looks dilapidated and improvident. Farms look hundreds of dollars better with nicely painted buildings.