A GOOD STORY.

BY THE BAIE DES TREPASSES.

[The Cornhill Magazine.]

It is an eerie corner of the great Bay of Storms, that haven of the lost, where almost day by day the Atlantic gives handsel of its widely-gathered harvest of death. Even when the great green waves roll in unburdened by their ghastly freight, and the passionate gray gulls are circling and screaming over no gristlier *trouvaille* than some stray flotsam and jetsam of weed or wreck, there is always a grim sense of expectation, a haunting consciousness of that weird procession of the dead, drifting ever slowly, night and day, one by one, hither.

Of course it is the stranger only who is thus affected. To Jacques Bonhomme and his very *bonne femme*, and the dozen or so of *jolis gars* and *braves fillettes* who flounder about among the rocks and pools like so many young seals, this peculiar harvest of their own peculiar sea is very much as other harvests are to other Jacques Bonhommes and their belongings elsewhere. "Que m'sieu ne se 'range pas. C'n'est qu'un cadav' qu'arrive." The minds of Jacques Bonhomme and his belongings are not troubled, nor their nervous organization distressed, by any vision of grim converging files of the victims of the deep with his particular shore-built threshold for their rendezvous; any such feat of the imaginative faculty would only lead in his case to speculations as to how far it might be possible to anticipate the arrival of the grisly guests, and so insure that any stray ear-rings or lockets, or other such articles, should be properly looked after before the arrival on the scene of M'sier le Brigadier and his wearisome *proces-verbal*. Man and boy, Jacques has been employed gathering in this harvest for some half a century or so, and regards it with a single eye to what it will bring in.

But just now the monotony of an existence which commonly varies from day to day only in its daily record of "Un cadavre," "Deux cadavres," "Point de cadavre," and so forth, has been broken in upon by an incident of unusual interest—real practical interest—for one of its most prominent features has been the descent upon Jacques Bonhomme and his family of a perfect shower of thoroughly practical "pieces de cent sous." If our Lady of the Shore will only continue to foster the eccentric fancy in the breast of the tall, silent Anglais, who pays so handsomely for an early introduction to each new "arrival," Jacques's fortune is made.

The stranger's motive? Eh! but that makes nothing to Jacques Bonhomme. A Bonapartist spy? Allons donc! It is by that route that Badinguet will return? Ah, but—"c'est egal. Les Anglais, vois-tu, non vieux? M'sieu est amateur de cadav's V'la tout!"

"Charles Stavert, rentier, Londres." That is the description of the mysterious "amateur de cadavres," duly entered by himself in the strangers' book of his hotel. The days of passports and *signalements* are over, and those who remember them will probably agree in the opinion that, from the descriptive point of view at all events, their loss is not serious. There are cases, however, in which even a Foreign-Office clerk could hardly fail of producing a recognizable portrait, and the case of Mr. Charles Stavert was certainly one of them.

Nearer seventy than sixty would be your first verdict as you noticed the white hair and bent figure and lean, trembling hands. Then, as you looked a second time, a little more closely, a strange and, if you were at all soft-hearted, a somewhat painful feeling would come over you as you noticed that the face, though almost as blanched as the hair, was quite smooth and unwrinkled, except for a drooping line on either side of the rarely-opened mouth and one deep furrow between the delicate black eyebrows. Save when looking eagerly seaward for some expected "arrival" the eyes beneath them are but very seldom raised from the ground. Once a young English couple on their wedding trip had landed for some reason from their yacht, and stopped him with a question. Then he had lifted his eyes to the bright, fair face of the happy young bride, and the brightness of the smiling features had died away as the smile faded to a piteous little quiver of the sweet, sensitive lips, and presently, all English as she was, the girl hid her face upon her husband's shoulder and burst into tears.

That was a fortnight ago now, and the Davenants were still there. Something, it seemed, had gone wrong with the yacht, which had been sent back to Cherbourg for repairs. Archie Davenant had suggested a run inland till she returned, and had been half inclined to a *soupçon* of jealousy over that keen interest in the white-haired stranger on which his wife openly based her preference for remaining where they were. But Archie Davenant was a good fellow, and still quite sufficiently in love to be more than commonly tender-hearted. So Carrie's feeling for "that poor Mr. Stavert" soon extended itself to his own breast, and presently he became as interested in the sad-eyed "amateur de cadavres" as Jacques Bonhomme himself.

Hitherto, however, the acquaintance had made but little progress. Mr. Stavert was polite, but unapproachable—not so much, as it would seem, from any active desire to hold aloof as from a simple absence of all responsiveness, which appeared to be almost as much physical as mental. He was not deaf, for there were certain words which would always catch his ear even if spoken in the merest whisper, and he was not wilfully discourteous, for when his attention had once been aroused his manner, especially to the young bride and bridegroom, was gentle almost to tenderness. But the arousing of his attention was a difficult task, hardly to be accomplished save by an amount of importunity verging on annoyance. Mechanically indeed he would respond to any direct appeal, moving out of the way, handing anything at table, and so forth; but the mind, as Carrie Davenant said, was evidently far away, and bringing it back was a painful effort.

One appeal, however, and one only, would meet at any moment with prompt and unfailing response. It was just four words whispered, no matter how low, in the hoarse voice of Jacques Bonhomme.

"V'la encore un, m'sieu."

In an instant a flash of eager anticipation would pass over his features, to be instantly succeeded by a sharp spasm of pain. And then, with set teeth and a deep furrow between the brows, more deeply lined than ever, he would stride away to the water's edge, and stand there waiting till the "new arrival" lay at his feet. A look, a sigh, a shake of the head, and then his steps would be retraced again—not with the swift, firm stride of a little while before, but slowly, almost totteringly, with bent head and wavering, purposeless foot that stumbled at every little stone in the path. And as he passed the rough fishermen would stand aside, lifting their hats in unnoticed courtesy, and the women would cross themselves and murmur a prayer to the Sainte-Mere des Douleurs.

For all foolish talking about Bonapartist spies and so forth had died away long since, and no one had much doubt as to the white-haired Englishman's errand now. Nor was Archie Davenant very long in arriving at the same conclusion. He was a frank-hearted fellow, was Archie, always ready for a friendly chat with any one, and he had not been twelve hours in the place before he had heard the whole story from Jacques Bonhomme.

"Ah, pauvre—fellow—garçon," he had commented in his somewhat halting French, "vous croyez qu'il—what's 'to wait,' Carrie?—ah—qu'il attend quelque cho—ne—quelqu'un?"

And the old boatman shook his head and corrected gravely:

"Que'qu-*une*, m'sieu."

And now five days had gone by without a single "arrival," and with the sixth came back the English yacht. Stavert had grown very restless, constantly making his way to the highest point within reach and gazing out through his glass upon the blue expanse of ocean, now smooth as a lake and glittering oilily in the August sun. Nothing, however, was to be seen except a few white sails in the offing—not even a handful of wreck or weed for the passionate gulls to circle round and scream at. In his restlessness he had perhaps grown more alive to external objects; certainly the arrival of the yacht had attracted his attention, and all through dinner his eyes had from time to time been fixed upon Carrie Davenant with that strange, pitiful gaze which had gone so straight to the young bride's heart at their first meeting. Once, when in the course of conversation, Archie had mentioned Rio de Janeiro as the probable ultimate destination of the yacht, Stavert had uttered a sharp exclamation as of sudden pain, and had let fall the glass he was in the act of raising to his lips.

Dinner passed and evening came, and the young couple, who were to resume their voyage in the morning, strolled down for the last time to the shore for a breath of fresh evening air. Their talk turned naturally upon the mysterious Englishman; and as they talked a slow footfall approached unnoticed on the soft sand, and the Englishman himself stood beside them.

"Pray pardon me. I did not mean to startle you."

The words were simple and commonplace enough, but there was a scarcely repressed excitement about the tone which at once attracted attention. Archie Davenant replied in some words of course. Carrie held out her hand silently, making room for the new comer on the broad rock on which she and her husband were placed.

He took the proffered seat with a silent bow, then remained for some minutes without speaking, his features working as with strong emotion and white to the very lips. Then, suddenly rising, he laid his hand on Archie Davenant's arm and led him aside some half dozen paces, out of earshot of his startled bride.

"You are going to—to—"

"To Rio? Yes. We hope so, ultimately."

"To take—her?"

"My wife? Yes, certainly, if I go."

"You must not go. No. Forgive me; I don't mean to be rude, and I am not mad—no, not mad—though my head burns still, and I seem to lose count of time." He paused a moment, looking out seaward with a troubled, wistful, half-puzzled expression. Then he pressed his hand a moment on his eyes and went on. "Forgive me once more. If my manner be strange, pardon it. I have been—ill, you know. And—well, I am going to speak of that of which I have never yet had courage to speak. Will you listen?"

"Listen, my dear sir! Of course I will. But if it's painful—"

Stavert checked him with a quick, half-impatient gesture, and went on:

"You are connected with—the shipping trade, I think?"

"Not personally. My wife's family are engaged in it, and—"

"Did you chance to hear anything of the loss of the—the Titan?"

"The Titan! She was one of Carrie's uncle's ships—Boscawen Brothers. Went down in the North Atlantic only the other day in a collision."

Stavert shook his head.

"No, not in a collision."

"Well, nothing is known absolutely for certain, of course; but one of her head-boards was picked up with her name on it among a lot of other wreck; and within half a mile or so an old man was found insensible, floating on a top-gallant yard which certainly didn't belong to the Titan, because it was painted black, and all Boscawen's ships use white paint aloft. So there were two of them anyway."

"Two of them? Ah! yes, yes; there were two."

"But what—I beg your pardon, but you seem to know more than—"

He paused; but the other made no reply. He was clasping both hands over his eyes, as though to shut out some terrible vision; and his lips were pressed together into one gray line. Archie resumed:

"We were particularly anxious to know the truth about it, for one of Carrie's great uncles was lost in her."

Stavert looked up for a moment as though recalling some distressing memory, and answered slowly:

"Yes, of course—Mr. Wilson Boscawen."

"Exactly. In fact, it is partly about his affairs—but, pardon me, how—"

"How did I know this?" replied the other as Archie paused a moment, a little puzzled and doubtful. "Did you not say just now there was 'an old man' saved?"

"Yes—from the other ship."

"No, no, not from the other ship. Ah! my God! no! no one from her! no one from her!" And the speaker bent his head upon his hands while his whole frame shook with emotion.

Davenant waited a few moments, then strode back hastily to his wife's side.

"Carrie," he began abruptly, "I don't know what to make of this. You remember the Titan and the old fellow who was picked up and had brain-fever, and then just as he was getting well and they were going to question him bolted? Look here, little woman, I don't like it a bit. It seems to me there's been foul play somewhere—"

"Oh, hush! hush!"

But Stavert was already at their side, and now spoke, calmly enough, but with an evident effort at self-control.

"No, Mr. Davenant, there was no foul play. I am the rescued passenger—God help me!—from the Titan. Not an old man, as you see; twenty-five next birthday—twenty-five. Yes, I got away from them. It was weak, perhaps, not to be able to talk of it, but I could not then, and there was no good to be done. Ah, no! Now the hearing may, perhaps, deter you and your—and madame—from encountering a similar danger. Listen:

"I was engaged to be married. My—she—was living in Rio. I need not go into details which have no direct bearing on my story. But it seemed impossible at the moment that I should be able to spare time for the voyage to South America to fetch her, and it was arranged that she should come home to some friends in England. She was to come in the Fire King, a large screw steamer sailing on the first of the following month.

"I was in the wilds of Cornwall, spending some time with an invalid uncle who had always been very kind to me. He had already had one stroke of paralysis, and was in almost daily expectation of another, which, as the doctors plainly said, would certainly be fatal; so, when, on the day week before the Fire King was to sail, the death of a distant relation, whose heir I was, suddenly made me my own master, I could not possibly leave him until my promised ten days' visit was ended and my cousin had returned to take my place. So I wrote to a friend in town asking him to call on my solicitors and do all that was needful, and especially to secure a passage for me in the first ship for Rio. At the same time I wrote a telegram announcing my change of plan, and pinned a check to it ready to take it over myself, with the letter, to the post-office, five miles off. I had hardly finished it when I was summoned hastily to my uncle's bedside. The end had come; but it was evening before all was over, and I of course could not leave him. But it was of consequence. Jack Daly, I knew, would send the telegram from town, so I got the old housekeeper to put it into the letter which I had left open in my writing-case, and send it off by the gardener's lad.

"The next evening brought me a telegram from Jack Daly to the effect that all I wanted had been done, and my passage taken; and on that day fortnight I was on board the Titan, bound for Rio."

The speaker's voice broke. He turned abruptly away and strode off into the gathering dusk. In a few moments he returned and resumed his story:

"Everything went well at first. We made a good run down channel and across the bay, and were expecting within the next day or two to pick up the northeast trade, when the wind fell light and finally left us. Orders were given to get up steam; but just as they were going to lower the propeller a strong breeze sprang up again from the northward, and the fires were ordered to be banked and all sail made. I stayed on deck for some time watching the cloud of studding sails spread gradually, alow and aloft, on both sides of the ship, and then went below to write letters.

"I had just got out my writing-case when there came a sudden shock, which would have flung me to the deck had I not saved myself just in time by clinging to the sleeping-berth with both hands. For a moment the ship seemed brought to an absolute stand-still, as though she had run bodily ashore, the next she began to gather way again, but with a very different movement from the free, bounding motion of a few minutes before.

"I rushed on deck, as did every one else who was below, and there we soon saw the reason of the change. The sudden stop had been too much under the press of canvas we were carrying. The studding-sail booms, fore and aft, had snapped like so many carrots, and the maintop gallant-mast itself had gone, springing the head of the maintop-mast as it went. The whole mass of 'flying kites' was in the water, and of course acted as drags, still further checking the ship's way.

"For some minutes all was confusion. The Captain himself, though perfectly cool and collected, was evidently puzzled. We were hundreds of miles from any danger laid down on the charts, and were, moreover, in the regular track of all outward and innumerable homeward-bound vessels, and in some thousands of fathoms of water. It was of course possible that we had come into collision with some floating wreck. But no crash had been heard save that of our own breaking spars, and there was no sign of any wreck or wreckage save our own. His first order had been to send a hand over the bows and another into the fore peak. But the word had scarcely been passed when the mate of the watch came aft, accompanied by a tall, handsome young fore-topman, his tanned features many shades less red than usual, and his shirt and trousers dripping with sea water. He had been on the dolphin striker at the time of the occurrence, putting a new service on the stay, and had been fairly shaken from his foothold by the shock, only escaping by means of some of the studding sail-gear as it dragged in the water alongside. His report made it quite clear that the ship had not struck on anything, while the sharp black stem, showing clearly through the transparent water without dent or scratch, fully confirmed his statement. Only one possible explanation remained. There must have been a shock of earthquake, and a sharp one."

The speaker paused again. The evening had closed in now, and a film of cloud shut in the stars and rendered it quite dark. But the two listeners could hear the other's heavy breathing, scarcely to be distinguished from a sob; and almost, Carrie Davenant fancied, the labored beating of his heart.

"I went below again," he continued after awhile, "to write my letters. There lay the writing-case just where I had dropped it, the contents scattered broadcast over the cabin deck. I stooped to gather them up. The first on which I laid my hand was—my telegram to Rio, with the check still fastened to it!"

"Oh, Mr. Stavert," broke in Carrie Davenant with a little cry, "and she would not know, and you would cross upon the road!"

"No," came back the answer in a voice which had sunk to little more than a hoarse whisper; "no, she did not know; she did not know."

"Oh! go on. Please—please—go on."

"I went on deck again, too much annoyed to think of letters home just then; and as I reached the top of the companion there came another shock, if anything sharper than the first. No damage, however, was done this time, the ship being under short canvas, but she rolled and lurched heavily. The passengers were getting scared. Even the captain seemed a little startled, and went below to consult his barometers. There was no sign from them, and he returned, shaking his head and laughing. The next moment he was serious again, snatching up his glass with an exclamation which was very like an oath. All eyes were drawn to the object at which he was looking—a large steamer, three or four points on our starboard bow, which for the last hour or more had been heading straight for us, but which had suddenly starboarded her helm and was now standing away to the westward, loosing sail after sail as she swung around before the wind.

"Just then the chief officer came up to report that steam was up and the propeller connected. For a moment the captain made no reply. He was still looking intently through his glass—not now at the steamer, but at a point in the offing right astern of her as she now lay, and very nearly dead ahead of us. I followed with my eyes the direction of his glass, and recognized a curious, mirage-like effect—a sort of dint in the sharp circle of the horizon like a chip out of the edge of a plate.

"I had hardly had time to notice this when the captain dropped his glass and turned sharply to the mate with the question:

"'Is the wreck clear'?

"'Pretty well, sir,' said the mate; 'nothing over the side that can foul the screw.'

"'Then tell Mr. Armstrong to go ahead full speed, and send all hands aloft; shorten sail. Don't stop to furl or clew up, sir. Cut everything adrift, fore and aft.'

"And before the mate had time for a word he had sprung aft, twitched the wheel out of the quartermaster's hands, and put the helm hard over. The ship came slowly up to the wind, more quickly as the remaining canvas fell under the blows of fifty sharp knives, and the screw began to revolve at full speed. In a very short time we were heading right back to the northward under bare poles.

"In the mean time the mirage-like dint in the horizon had widened and was widening rapidly. It had already spread beyond the steamer of which I spoke just now, and which, though still heading under full steam at right angles to our course, seemed yet to have drifted bodily some miles nearer to us, and had a look of being what sailors call 'down by the stern.' I looked from her again to that ominous depression in the horizon. It was spreading still, had reached to ourselves, and as it did so the leaping motion of the waves ceased, giving place to a smooth broad 'swirl' right across our track.

"There was no questioning now; no need to whisper or to point. The white faces that clustered thickly about the taff-rail, gazing in speechless horror down that steadily-narrowing and deepening valley, were gazing straight into the jaws of death. And for some time—minutes, hours, seconds, I cannot tell you which—they gazed on in silence, too awe-stricken to utter a sound. Then suddenly the steam began to roar out through the escape-pipe, and the noise seemed to break the spell. Yes," he went on in a low, dreamy tone, half answering to the sudden movement with which Carrie Davenant hid her face in her hands, as though to shut out some actual scene of horror—"yes, it was a terrible sight for the time. It might have haunted me, I think, if there had been nothing worse."

The slowly-rising moon broke through a rift in the heavy veil of cloud and gleamed on the girl's face of horror and astonishment as she looked wonderingly up with the startled exclamation:

"Worse?"

Her husband put his arm round her and drew her closer to him, while Stavert continued, though with evident effort:

"We were losing ground; that was clear. The Titan was not a full-powered steamer, only a sailing ship with an auxiliary screw; not capable of doing more than five or six knots an hour at her best, and now deeply laden. Presently the engineer forced his way aft through the crowd of frightened passengers and made some suggestions to the captain, of which I only caught the words 'safety valve.' The captain shook his head, but the engineer urged his request, jerking his thumb emphatically in the direction of the whirlpool, and saying energetically, 'That sort of thing can't go on forever, you know, skipper. Must let up some time. One extra minute might do us, you know, if we only could get it.' 'Well, well, Armstrong,' was the answer, 'have it your own way. It can't do much harm anyhow.' And before he had finished speaking the engineer was gone, and in a few more minutes the roar of escaping steam ceased and the laboring screw revolved more rapidly. The ship gathered way, and for the moment a thrill of hope shot through the breasts of that pale, horror-stricken throng. The captain had laid aside his glass, and was standing intently observing the horizon through his sextant. Very few indeed among that surging, frightened crowd could have even guessed the meaning of his employment; but all instinctively watched him with a dim consciousness that he was somehow reading their fate. Presently he laid the instrument quietly down and once more shook his head.

"As he did so the cries and wailings, which for a few moments had been stilled, broke out afresh. But at this moment the mate in his turn forced his way to the captain's side, and, touching his arm, drew his attention to the other steamer. We had none of us even thought of her for a long time, and to our surprise she was now almost close aboard of us. Needless to say that she, like ourselves, was straining every nerve. The smoke was pouring out of her two great red funnels, the steam roaring from her escape-pipes, and she was tearing through the smooth, swirling water at the rate of three feet to our one.

"'She'll scrape clear, sir, by Heaven!' cried the mate, half grudging, half sympathetic.

"The captain nodded; and for a few moments our people almost forgot their own danger as they watched the progress of their unknown companion in peril.

"She was well abreast of us now, and being no longer on an inner circle of the whirlpool, had ceased to drift toward us, when suddenly there was a cry and a confusion on board of her, and the lashing screw under her counter ceased to revolve. There was a cry of horror from both ships as the stranger first lost her headway and then began to drop slowly but steadily back toward the vortex. As she did so her head swung off from us for a moment, and I saw the name upon her stern—'Fire King!'"

Once more the speaker paused. Carrie was sobbing unrestrainedly, and Archie Davenant had an uncomfortable sensation in his throat, which made him for the moment unwilling to speak. The clouds had closed again over the moon. The long ground swell of the ever-restless Atlantic rolled slowly up the bay, and broke at intervals with a dull, mysterious booming upon the beach, and every now and then came through the still, sultry air the far-off scream of the sleepless gulls.

The silence lasted so long that Archie Davenant at length left his wife's side and crossed to where the tall figure of Stavert could be dimly traced, leaning against a tall, weed-draped rock, his left hand pressed hard upon his heart.

"I am afraid you are ill?"

"No, no; only—"

He stopped and seemed to struggle for breath, then with a strong effort mastered his voice and went on, but slowly and gaspingly:

"There is not much more to tell you. Indeed, I know but little more. I remember how we whirled on in a horrible circle that grew each moment narrower and swifter. I remember how the wall of smooth, clear water rose and rose till the light shone on us through it as through ice. I remember how the sun went down, crimsoning the clear pale-blue ice-wall into living, swirling blood, and how, as we were sucked slowly down—down—the ever-steepening side, we saw the whirling abyss opening right under us and heard the dull, distant roar rolling up from the riven sea-bed miles below.

"But all that has come back upon my memory since. I saw nothing then but the great black hull of the disabled Fire King as it drifted swiftly to the doom we were laboring to escape. Presently her engines began to work again, but slowly—ah, Heaven, how slowly! She could do but little more now than just hold her own with the Titan. And so we drifted on and on, laboring, despairing, praying—praying aloud some of us, our English shyness all swept away in the extremity of peril; some stricken voiceless with horror, kneeling, clinging to each other, praying only with dumb hands and eyes; some uttering wild curses instead of prayers.

"I saw it all, heard it all; but I neither cursed nor prayed. I had but one thought—her!—not our love, not our peril—not even her peril—simply her!

"And then I saw her.

"Again the two ships were rapidly approaching each other, and the end for both was approaching as rapidly. Already we hung over the yawning, bellowing gulf as on the side of a steep hill. The chasm now was not a mile in width. The upper portion of it towered high over our mast-heads. Each moment the whirling speed grew visibly swifter, and the glassy declivity sensibly steeper, and the thunderous roar came up more loudly from the ocean-bed.

"Then the moon rose, gleaming through the towering wall of water, and full in the cold, ghastly glare—I saw her—a pure white figure, kneeling silently, with white, uplifted hands.

"Then suddenly a thought flashed through me, and I prayed—ah! how I prayed!

"We were nearing each other every moment. A very little while and the Fire King would pass right under us—close—striking us probably as she passed. Oh! how I prayed that it might be so—that I might reach her deck and fold my darling once more in my arms, and go, what matter where?—together.

"And it seemed as though Heaven heard my prayer. Nearer and nearer drifted the Fire King. Another minute and her bows must foul our quarter. I had marked the exact spot for my spring, and thrown off shoes and coat in readiness, still praying, praying with my whole soul.

"Ah! Heaven! Too late! Even as I watched her, gathering footing for my spring, and praying, praying, even in that moment the ship lost her hold upon the steepening watery bank and shot—down—down!

"Ah, Nell! Nell! Nell!"

The hoarse, trembling voice rose to a wild cry, then sank and ceased. And through the gloom came echoing wildly back the scream of the hungry sea-gulls close at hand.

A step came swiftly over the soft sand, and the hoarse whisper of the old fisherman gave words to the wild sea-birds' cry.

"M'sieu! v'la encore un."

But for once there is no answer, and the hoarse whisper comes again, yet more hoarsely:

"M'sieu! c't fois—c'est une dame!"

Then there is a cry; but it is from the lips of Jacques Bonhomme, and the old fisherman passes his arm round the tall, dark figure, drooping motionless against the rock, and lifts the weary head to his shoulder.

"Enfin!" he murmurs, uncovering solemnly his own grizzled locks, "il l'a retrouvee!"

Treed by One Bear; Rescued by Another.

[Port Jervis Gazette.]

George W. Parker, who works in a circular saw-mill near the village of Lebanon, encountered a very large black bear on last Saturday morning while he was going to his work. Mr. Parker covers the distance between his residence and the saw-mill twice every day, and is thoroughly acquainted with every step of the ground. Between the two points is a marshy piece of woods extending diagonally some six or seven miles. When about midway in the woods on the day mentioned Mr. Parker was startled by the sudden appearance of the bear not more than a hundred yards away. The bear was walking directly toward him, and raising its head and spying Mr. Parker came to a sudden halt. It is needless to say that Parker did likewise.

He was between the horns of a dilemma. What to do he did not know. To advance meant a fight with bruin, and as he had nothing to defend himself with except his fists he quickly concluded that the bear would have decidedly the advantage in the struggle. His only hope from the clutches of the brute, who was closely eying him, was to retreat to his residence a mile back, and this he disliked to do, as he would be late on arriving at his work. While he stood weighing the chances *pro* and *con* bruin uttered a howl and dashed forward at a lively rate. That settled it. Parker took to his heels and made a bee-line for his residence. In his haste to get away he stumbled and fell, and as he regained his feet he hurled a large stone at the now infuriated animal, which was then not far enough away for comfort. Every time that Parker turned around he imagined that the bear was gaining on him. Large beads of sweat gathered on his forehead and he commenced to hope against hope. As he was nearing the edge of the woods he began to think whether it would not be better to climb one of the high trees which skirted the highway and wait for deliverance until some one passed along. This he decided to do, and accordingly jumped over the wall and was soon far up a friendly hickory-tree. When the bear arrived opposite the tree it raised itself on its hind legs and began to howl. Parker also began to shout, in hopes of attracting some one's attention, and between him and the bear they made more noise than was ever heard in that section since Brant's savage warriors passed a century ago.

Parker knew he was secure for the time being, but dreaded the ending, and continued to shout at the top of his voice. Bruin contented himself by pawing the earth and closely eying his prisoner. Parker's shouts had the effect of attracting the attention of another and much larger bear, which emerged from the woods a distance away from where he was. When he espied Bruin No. 2 he thought the jig was up, but instead the new-comer proved his deliverer. It gave a howl and began walking slowly in an opposite direction, and the first bear very reluctantly followed suit, occasionally looking back to see if there was any movement on Parker's part.

Mr. F. W. Clark has exhibited in London a new system of gas-lighting for private houses by means of recuperative lamps. By a ventilating arrangement the lamps consume their own smoke, and the burners are so formed that the requisite air is heated to a high temperature and admitted into the lamps at the point of ignition.

AMERICANS IN ROME.

LOITERING IN THE STUDIOS.

Some Noted Artists and Their Works—A Visit to Ezekiel—His Surroundings and What He is Doing.

A Rome correspondent of the *Tribune* writes: It chanced that the first Roman studio with which I renewed acquaintance this season was that of Charles Caryl Coleman—well known to New Yorkers, among whom he still counts himself, despite his long residence in Rome. A large picture of Capri was to be sent away the next day, and I wished to see it before its departure. The studio is in the old place, directly over that of Costa, in quiet Via Margutta, looking out upon a garden already sweet with summer scents and bright with summer bloom, thought it was but the first week in April.

Mr. Coleman's "*roba*" are very valuable. He is an enthusiastic collector, and he has a moderate fortune in bric-a-brac. Tapestries, bits of stained glass, wonderful old carvings, curiously-wrought brasses, old china—enough for a moderate-sized art-museum—adorn the studio, where the artist himself, with his Lenoardo da Vinci face, and dressed in a cap and blouse of bronze-gold velvet, seems the fitting *genius loci*.

The Capri picture was a bit of summer—a yellow wheat-field swept by a soft wind, with the blue southern sky above it, and a group of gayly-clad peasant girls in the midst. Coleman spent the summer of 1884 in Capri, and a number of Capri pictures, large and small, are the result. Beside these Coleman has several pictures of Venice. One was of Venice by moonlight, another was of the bronze horses over the entrance of St. Mark's. Some five or six years ago Mr. Coleman painted a picture of this same subject, which was much admired by art-lovers and purchased by Lady Ashburton, who has one of the finest private collections of modern pictures in London. The present painting—from a somewhat different point of view—is still finer than the former one. The horses seem fairly alive and ready to step off into space.

Mr. Coleman has done some strong things in black and white. One of them—"The Return from the Crucifixion"—seemed so strange a neighbor to the sunny scenes from Capri and the pictures of Venice—

"Where the merchants were the kings,
Where St. Mark's is, and the Doges used to wed the sea with rings,"—

that perhaps one was even more impressed with its profound earnestness, its depth of sorrow, than would have been the case elsewhere. In the far distance, on a low dark hill against a cold dark sky, the three crosses rose—the central one being the most prominent. Between this hill of the crosses and the spectator are other low hills, with outlines dim in the semi-darkness, and along them winds a sad procession of sorrowing men and women—whose grief has fallen on them heavily, whose hope has not yet dawned.

Mr. Coleman told some droll tales of artist life in Capri. It has become very common for American and English artists to fall captive to the charms of dark-eyed Capri maidens, and within a few years some ten or twelve have married their models—till at last to marry an artist has come to be regarded by a pretty Capri girl as her manifest destiny, and it is somewhat difficult to procure a model otherwise than by marrying her. Last year an artist saw a beautiful Capriote, with her mother, carrying stones on her head for the use of wall-makers. She was just suited for the picture the painter had in hand. He found by inquiry that she and her mother received exactly a franc and a half apiece for carrying their stone burdens from morning till night. It seemed a wretched business, than which anything would be better. He offered the girl ten francs a day to come and sit for him as a model. She coyly refused. He thought she might dislike to come without her mother; so he proposed to hire the mother also. Not at all. He was delicately informed that the only way to secure the model would be to marry her. The case was not desperate enough for that, and the fair Capriote goes on with her stone-carrying, pending the arrival of a more susceptible artist.

The next studio I chanced to visit was that of J. Rollin Tilton. It is within a stone's throw of the Villa Ludovisi, and overlooks the Ludovisi grounds. Mr. Tilton, as well as Mr. Coleman, is a true lover of Venice, and has painted many Venetian pictures. He has some charming ones in his studio, and one was quite unique in its way. It had been sketched from the top of a high tower, and looked down upon the Piazza of St. Mark's. The picture which most interested me, however, was a large Egyptian landscape, into which the artist said he had "put his heart." There was a wide plain, with distant hills in the background, and in the foreground the Temple of the Sun and the cities of Karnac and Luxor. Mr. Tilton has always the power of producing wonderful effects of light and air, and it seems to me that Egypt has also revealed her secret to him. Turning from the Egyptian picture, I caught sight of one of the Vermillion Tower of the Alhambra, and, presto, it was two years ago, and I was back in Spain. The sunset was dying on the Sierra Nevadas, and all Granada was at my feet, with cathedral and churches, and Gypsy-houses hollowed in the hillsides, all mud walls and front door. Besides his own pictures, Mr. Tilton has an art treasure that is priceless—a Magdalene by Titian. He is very mysterious as to how it came into his possession. When I asked him he said: "Ah, such things are sent me by Fate. This is the third Titian I have discovered." I am ready to affirm that it is the most beautiful Magdalene. Most of the well-known Magdalenes are anything but saints—anything, even, but penitents. This one wears her beauty solemnly. She rejoices in it no longer. Her uplifted eyes seek Heaven through their tears. The passion of her sorrow possesses her whole being—and yet no Venus could rival her sad loveliness. The coloring is Titian's best. It made a woman's head by Sir Frederick Leighton, hanging near by—and which I had admired before the Magdalene was uncovered—seem as if it were made of dough. Whence the Magdalene came, or what its varying fortunes since Titian painted it, I know not—whither it goes I know not—but I know that it is far more to be desired than the Koh-i-noor.

It is on a Sunday afternoon that guests are welcomed to the studio of Elihu Vedder—certainly, in point of situation, the most beautiful studio in all Rome. It is an apartment in the Villa Strohl-Fern, and to reach it you enter a gate just outside the Porta del Popolo, and side by side with the entrance to Villa Borghese. Then you wander on and on up a climbing path, quite overhung with roses, and revealing at every turn exquisite pictures of Rome lying below.

That Mr. Vedder is the most imaginative artist America has yet given to the world there can hardly be a question. If he were not a painter he must have been a poet; for his imagination is distinctly poetic and literary in its quality. His undeveloped ideas might be the fortune of a dozen other men. There is a sort of loft in his studio fairly piled with swift sketches, in which he has embodied the conception born of some inspired moment, which may or may not ever be worked out in finished pictures. The picture which most powerfully attracted me in his studio was founded on one of the Rubayat illustrations, and called "The Cup of Death." The "angel of the darker cup," his wings glorious with unfading light, offers his draught to a beautiful woman who is just bending to drink. The shadow of death is already stealing over her face, but you feel that her lips are unreluctant. She will drink willingly the cup that means rest from the pain of living, rest and long peace. A cartoon was there of that wonderful picture called "Identity," suggested by Aldrich's poem with that title—and another of "The Lost Pleiad" searching vainly for the star which has fallen from her brow. There was no picture there, great or small, which would not be known for a "Vedder" anywhere. It were as easy to mistake Browning's poetry or Wagner's music as Vedder's pictures.

Another American in whose studio I passed some pleasant hours was Ezekiel, the sculptor. Some of those amiable people who provide foreign books for us have published a translation of Carl Vosmaer's novel, "The Amazon," of which, under the name of "Aisma," Alma Tadema is the hero. The sculptor, who figures in the novel as "Askol," is Mr. Ezekiel, and Vosmaer gives a description of Ezekiel's studio as faithful as it is captivating. It is on the Piazza delle Terme, and it is a part of the half-ruined "Baths of Diocletian." You go up to it by an outer staircase, bordered with climbing plants and roses and bits of antique sculpture. The studio itself is a large vaulted apartment. On the walls the sculptor has painted boughs of blossoms and fruits in rich, deep colors, and here and there are beautiful bits of tapestry and choice carvings. One corner is a sort of *salon*. It has a grand piano, soft sofas, and sleepy-hollow easy chairs, and tables covered with curiosities. In this cosy corner Ezekiel chats with his friends over afternoon tea, and proves himself as charming as a companion as he is able as an artist. Before I went to his studio I had seen his head of Judith in this year's "*Belle Arti*"—a pearl of price, in a collection of modern art which, as a whole, makes one want to tear his hair and gives one a cramp in his mind. The "Judith" is glorious. Her face is full of exalted purpose—strong and noble and beautiful exceedingly. It was a fitting subject for a sculptor of Jewish descent; but what did surprise me when I went to the studio was to find there the absolutely ideal head of Christ—the only satisfactory one I have ever seen in sculpture. Christians have vainly striven to model for us the Divine "Man of Sorrows," leaving it to this Jew (a descendant of Spinoza) to find out the solemn secret, and reveal Him to us as we can really believe that He was.

We found in his studio also a beautiful statue of Eve, which had for some Americans a sad and personal interest, since its lovely hands and arms were modelled from those of Sherwood Bonner, for two years now laid to rest in her far-off Mississippi home, with the magnolias blossoming above her bright head. Another work of great strength and beauty in Mr. Ezekiel's place is the statue of blind Homer, with the boy who used to lead him between his knees. The head is studied from the celebrated bust of Homer in the Naples Museum, but the figure with its pose, combining great dignity with the pathos of blindness, is wholly original. It is a group worthy of the highest praise. There was also in the studio an admirable portrait bust of Liszt, which the great musician himself considered the best representation ever made of him, besides various other interesting works too numerous to mention.

Not far from Ezekiel's studio is that of Mr. W. W. Story. I had heard various opinions expressed concerning his new Cleopatra, and I wanted to see it for myself. The Cleopatra of long ago was an old friend. I had become acquainted with it during my first visit to Rome and had never been able to see it quite with the eyes of Hawthorne, who pronounced it "a miraculous success—in a word, all Cleopatra—fierce, voluptuous, passionate, tender, wicked, terrible, and full of poisonous and rapturous enchantment." I should like to transfer this eloquent praise to the Cleopatra of the present. The first Cleopatra might have been a dozen other proud, passionate, implacable women as well—this one could be only Cleopatra. She is a reclining figure, beautiful but dangerous, stealthy, and with all the tiger passions in her. Under her couch was sculptured the skin of a great tiger, its head instinct with cruel life; and as Mr. Story led us up to his latest "Egypt," he said, "Here she is," and pointing to the tiger head underneath, "there's the tiger that she was." And then he told us how, in the midst of other work, a conviction came to him that the earlier Cleopatra was not quite the true one; and he found himself compelled to throw all else aside and mould her as she rose before him from the dust that had so long held her. And now, "here she is"—his legacy to the world, the Cleopatra whom Antony loved, and great Cæsar, whom Shakespeare discovered in his time, and Story has at last turned into marble.

There were whole rooms full of busts and statues in Mr. Story's great studio—busts of Robert and Mrs. Browning, of Keats and Shelley, of Shakspeare, Beethoven, and many another; statues of Medea, of Horace's with-like Canidia, of Ruth as she gleaned "amid the alien corn," and of Esther, who is even now growing under the sculptor's fingers—but it was the Cleopatra to whom I returned after I had seen all the others. Standing beside her and smiling benignly at our praises, Mr. Story told a droll tale of an old friend of his father's who, when the son had been some twenty years a sculptor, visited him in Rome. The visitor, himself a man of the law, had the profoundest respect for his own profession; and after he had gone through the studio he stood and regarded Story sorrowfully.

"Ah, William," he said, "to think you might have followed in your father's footsteps! You might have been a great lawyer—you had it in you—and you chose to stay on here in Rome and pinch mud!"

"Don't go away without seeing Greenough's Circe," said Mr. T. Adolphus Trollope, while paying me a good-by visit. Mr. Trollope is as clever and entertaining and as keenly alive as ever, though the 28th of this year's April was his seventy-fifth birthday. I was so sure that his advice was worth taking that I snatched an hour from my last afternoon in Rome to go to Mr. Greenough's studio. The sculptor himself was absent, but one of his disciples showed me about the rooms, and I saw the "Circe." What a beautiful creature she is! She sits, half reclining, in a sort of throne-like chair, under which crouches her familiar, a stealthy leopard with evil eyes. The Circe herself is a shape of the lithest loveliness. One hand holds a cup, and the other the vase from which she has just poured the fatal draught. Her eyes are full of subtle fascinations, and her whole face is kindled by the light of such a smile as I would never have believed it possible for art to impart to marble. The corners of her mouth are upturned. Refuse to taste that cup? No; not if one saw all one's predecessors in her pig-stye!

Near by was Nemesis—a strong woman, whose eyes were the awful eyes of fate—borne on the clouds, and with impassive, pitiless yet serene face. In one hand she holds a chaplet of bay-leaves, in the other a drawn sword. This was a mythological room; and an arch, smiling Cupid near by was quite unafraid of the sword of Nemesis or the cup of Circe. Next door was a Shakspeare room. Tricksy Puck was there, and noble Portia; Beatrice smiled there, archly tender, and young Juliet lifted her sweet eyes radiant with young love—and yet it was wicked Circe who holds my memory.

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a DIVIDEND OF 2½ PER CENT. on the capital stock of this company will be paid at the office of the company in the city of Richmond, Va., on and after the 1st OF JULY NEXT.

The transfer-books will be closed on the 25th instant until 1st of July.

M. W. YARRINGTON, Treasurer.

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OFFICE OF VIRGINIA FIRE AND MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY, RICHMOND, VA., June 19, 1885.

DIVIDEND NOTICE.

The Board of Directors of this company have declared a SEMI-ANNUAL DIVIDEND OF 5 PER CENT., payable to stockholders on and after JULY 1st NEXT (free of tax).

WM. H. McCARTHY, Secretary.

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