

THE BABY'S CHARMS.

Come here, my drowsy-eyed darling, and cuddle in mother's arms. While she makes up a song for bedtime about her baby's charms.

CAPTAIN GLOSE

BY CAPTAIN CHARLES KING.

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XV.

Those were the days which but foreshadowed the letter de cachet episodes of the winter of 1870-71. Never an ornamental, never a social, and often an embarrassing feature of garrison life, the first lieutenant of Company G had been laboring under the further disadvantage of a six months' absence from the post of the regimental colors.

Now, old Braxton knew almost as little of Close as did they. He asked his adjutant and one or two captains what they thought; he had a letter written to Close telling him of these allegations and calling for his version of the matter. It did not come, and another letter—a "chaser"—was sent, demanding immediate reply, and nearly a week elapsed before reply came.

The day after Christmas, therefore, and before the official copy of the order was received at the barracks (as, oddly, often happened in those times, until the leak was discovered and duly plugged),

the New Orleans evening papers contained the following interesting item: "A general court-martial of unusual importance is to be held at the barracks, the session to commence at ten a. m. on the 2d of January, for the trial of Brevet Capt. J. P. Close, of the —teenth infantry, on charges seriously reflecting upon his character as an officer and a gentleman. The detail for the court comprises officers of several other regiments, as it is conceded that there is a widespread prejudice against the accused among his comrades in the —teenth. Even the light battery has been drawn upon in this instance, an unusual circumstance, as officers of that arm generally claim exemption from such service in view of the peculiar and engrossing nature of their battery duties.

"Well, may I be kissed to death!" exclaimed Capt. Lively, of the Foot, as he burst into the messroom that evening. "Just listen to this, will you! Old Close to be tried by court-martial—with New Clothes for judge advocate!" "New Clothes," be it understood, was a name under which Mr. Waring was beginning to be known, thanks to his unwillingness to appear a second time in any garment of the fashion of the day.

"Fair play be damned, and you fellows, too! What fair play has the man had at your hands? It's my belief that he never would get it but for the fact that Waring is detailed."

The sensation Kinsey's outbreak created was mild compared with that caused by Close's appearance before a grave and dignified court in the week that followed. On the principle of "a clean sweep," it had been determined to arraign him on charges covering the allegations as to his official misconduct in failing or refusing to support the federal authorities during the late disturbances. "Might as well get rid of him for good and all," said old Brax.

Parmelee was the first witness to flatten out and go to pieces, and the only one who had anything but "hearsay" to offer on the score of official neglects. The widows were the next. They began truculently and triumphantly enough, but the cross-examination reduced them to contradictions and tears. It became evident that most of Stone's company fund went north with one of them, that the alleged diamonds were paste and that both Stone and Tighe had been gambling and drinking for months previous to their fatal seizures.

Then when it came to testimony as to war and other service, Close sat there, blind, bandaged, scarred, and little Pierce, who had volunteered as "amycuss" anyhow, unrolled one letter after another and laid them on the table, and they went the rounds of the court until old Pike choked them off by saying they couldn't well attach the accused's scars and wounds to the records, any more than these letters: he was ready to vote, unless the gentleman himself desired to say something—had some statement to offer. How was that, Mr. Judge Advocate? And Waring turned to Pierce, who was beginning to unroll a batch of manuscript, to which he had devoted two sleepless nights and in which he had lavished satire and sarcasm by the page upon all enemies or accusers of his client. Pierce meant it to be the sensation of the day, and the court was crowded to hear him read it, despite the significant absence of Brax and his now confounded advisers.

But it was not to be. Old Close put forth a bandaged hand and restrained

him. "I've been thinking that all over," he said, "and I'll just say a word instead." With that he slowly found his feet and the green patch over his eyes was brought to bear on the court. The silence of midnight fell on the crowded room, as, leaning on the back of his chair, the accused stood revealed in the worn old single-breasted coat, the coarse trousers and shoes, so long associated with him. He cleared his throat and then faltered. He did not know how to begin. At last the words came—slowly, and with many a hitch and stumble:

"You see, it's this way, Gen. Pike and gentlemen of the court. I never knew anything about what was expected of a regular officer, 'r I wouldn't have tried it. All I knew was what I'd seen durin' the war, when they didn't seem to be so different from the rest of us. I was bred on the farm; never had no education; had to work like a horse ever since I was weaned, almost, not only for my own livin', but—but there was the mother, and, as I grew up, the hull care of the farm fell on me, for my father never was strong, and he broke down entirely. When he died there warn't nothing left but a mortgage. There was the mother and four kids to be fed on that. For 20 years, from boy to man, there never was a time a copper didn't look as big as a cartwheel to me; and when a man's been brought up that way he don't outgrow it all of a sudden. I've built the mother a home of her own, and paid off the mortgage and stocked the farm, and educated the youngsters and seen them married off, and now I 'low they'll expect me to educate the children. When a hull family grows up around one bread-winner it comes natural for the next generation to live on him too. I couldn't ha' gone to the war only Billy—he's the next boy—was big enough to take care o' things once the mortgage was paid, and afterwards I jined the army—the riggle-ers—because it looked to me like they got bigger pay for less work than any trade I ever heard of out our way. I'm sorry I did it, 'cause so long there's no more fightin' I seem to be in the way; but I don't want to quit"—and here the rugged old fellow seemed to expand by at least a foot—"and I don't mean to quit except honorable. There ain't a man livin'—nor a woman either—can truthfully say I ever defrauded them of a cent."

And then Close felt for the chair from which he had unconsciously advanced, and which Pierce hastened to push for-



He slowly found his feet.

ward to him, and abruptly sat down. Court adjourned sine die just at luncheon time, and some of the officers of the infantry mess invited the members to come over and have a bite and a sup. They all went but Cram and Waring, Cram saying he had asked a few friends to his quarters, and Waring audibly remarking that it would take away his appetite to have to sit at meat with so and so; and so being the officers who were mainly instrumental in working up the case against Close. The telegram sent by Mr. Newton Lambert that afternoon was on his own responsibility, because neither judge advocate nor member of the court could reveal its finding, but it bore all the weight of authority and it brought untold relief to an anxious household; not, as might be expected, to the immediate friends and relatives of the accused in the distant north, for never until days afterwards did they know anything about it, but to a little family—latently in rebellion and holding in abhorrence Capt. Close and all his kin; for the dispatch was addressed to Mrs. Walton Scroggs, Pass Christian.

XVI.

The honorable acquittal of Capt. Close proved, as was to be expected, a thorn in the flesh of certain of his accusers, and stirred up trouble in the gallant —teenth. This was a matter Close didn't much mind. He was granted six months' leave on a surgeon's certificate of disability, which meant on full pay, and he took it very hard that some means were not devised to send him north under orders, so that he could draw mileage. He and Lambert went back to Tugaloo together and packed up, for "G" company was ordered relieved by another, and Close was there made the happy recipient of a pass to Chicago, while the old company, after seeing their ex-commander safely aboard the sleeper, went on down the road to New Orleans and took station once more with regimental headquarters.

Here Mr. Lambert found means of getting occasional brief leaves of absence and of employing his two or three days in visits to his erstwhile neighbors of Walton hall, now comfortably domiciled in a picturesque but somewhat dilapidated old cottage close to the tumbling waves of the gulf. It had been the property of a near relative before the war, and was reclaimed and put in partial order for their use, apparently, through the efforts of their old physician and the energies of Mr.

Barton Potts. Here the warm, soft, salty breezes seemed to bring new lease of life to the beloved invalid, though it was plain to one and all she could never be herself again. Scroggs, her kinsman son-in-law, was rapidly mending and eagerly casting about for employment. Floyd, restored to duty without trial, was serving patiently and faithfully with his regiment in Texas, bent evidently on making good his words. The two events which seemed to bring general cheer and rejoicing to the household were those which three months before would have been promptly derided as absurd and impossible; one was the weekly letter from a trooper in the union blue, the other a much rarer visit from a Yankee subaltern, whose profession was not to be disguised because he was in "cits." On the occasion of his first appearance in that garb Miss Walton did him the honor to say: "Ah never did like you, but Ah do think those clothes wuise than the others." This was rather hard, because, as the spring came on, Lambert's lot at the barracks was not as pleasant as it might have been, and his comfort consisted in running over to see how Madam Walton was doing.

Cram and his battery, with Waring, Pierce, and all, had been ordered away, and then for the first time Lambert realized, what his regimental comrades had marked for months, that he preferred the companionship of the battery men to that of the men who wore the bugle, the badge of the infantry on those bright days. Old Brax concluded he had had enough of garrison life, and sought a long leave. Maj. Minor took command of the regiment and post, and the adjutant and quartermaster took command of Maj. Minor. It had neither been forgiven nor forgotten by these staff officials that Lambert had been equally outspoken in defense of Close and denunciation of his accusers, and the further fact that he preferred to spend his leisure hours with his fellow-graduates of the artillery rather than with his uncongenial brethren of the —teenth gave the offended ones abundant material to work on. Minor was a weakling—a bureau officer during the war days, a man who could muster and disburse without a flaw, but never set a squadron in the field without a "flake." Lambert was a capital drill-master and tactician, and "G" company, under his instruction, was rapidly overhauling every other in the regiment, even those of Kinsey and Lively, the two real soldiers among the captains. Minor hated the sight of a page of tactics, and never even held dress parade. Lambert had a clear, ringing voice, and Minor couldn't make himself heard. One morning the orderly came to Lambert at company drill with "the major's compliments, and please to take company 'G' outside the garrison, or make less noise." It was the adjutant's doing, as things turned out afterwards, but it angered Lambert against the commander.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FOR POOR SPELLERS.

Consolation for Those Who Are Weak in Orthography.

A perfect mastery of orthography is not essential to goodness of heart or strength of intellect, but it is eminently desirable, nevertheless, and all young people should be taught so to regard it. And yet, if a man is one of the unfortunates who possesses no spelling gift, it may not be wrong for him to console himself with the knowledge that he is by no means alone in his infirmity. Editors of all men, know that weakness of that kind may consist with much learning and an excellent English style. Some of their favorite contributors—school-teachers, professors and even college presidents—are given to expressing their most original thoughts in equally original orthography. In part this may be due to hasty writing, but when the same word is misspelled in the same ingenious way throughout an entire manuscript some less charitable explanation is forced upon the reader.

In old times, as is well known, the most scholarly men spelled very much as they pleased. Dr. Samuel Johnson was perhaps the first—certainly he was among the first—to "set orthography on a sure footing," and it is the more surprising, therefore, to find him one of the worst offenders.

Dr. Hill, in his edition of Dr. Johnson's letters, remarks upon this singular fact, and cites a long list of examples, worthy of a very dull schoolboy: "Persuance," "I cannot butt," "happyest," "Fryday," "pamflets," "inventer," "barel," "acknowledgement," "distresful," "Pimouth," "imbecility," "enervating," "devide," "ilness."

We quote these, not that any youthful reader should excuse his own ignorance by an appeal to the great lexicographer's example, but as a curious instance of human frailty, and as a possible comfort to elderly scholars from whom nature has withheld an orthographical memory.—Youth's Companion.

Irrelevant Questions

Here is a story told by a relative of Lady Langford, the original of Lady Kew in Thackeray's "Newcomes": "Lady Langford had only once seen her cousin, Lord Langford, when he came to visit her grandmother, and the next day the old lady told her she was to marry him. 'Very well, grandmamma—but when?' 'I never in my life heard such an impertinent question,' said the grandmother; 'what business is it of yours when you are to marry him? You will marry him when I tell you. However, whenever you hear me order six horses to the carriage, you may know that you are going to be married.' And so it was."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

You Know What Followed.

Mrs. Browne (in great haste to go to his office)—Where on earth is my razor? I can't find it anywhere! Browne, Jr.—If you mean your whisker knife, papa, I know where it is, and it's awful sharp, 'cause it cuts boards dandy.—Up-to-Date.

CREATURES KEPT IN DARKNESS.

Scientific Efforts Made to Make Their Eyes Gradually Disappear.

A subterranean laboratory, which is to serve a purpose of the greatest scientific interest and importance, was inaugurated recently at the Jardin des Plantes. Certain animals are to be placed there and deprived of all light, with the object of noting the slow transformation which it is expected they will undergo under their changed conditions of life.

The underground passages which are being employed for this strange purpose were discovered only last year and date from Roman times. The idea of using them as a laboratory is due to Armand Vire, who has made numerous researches on the subject of cave-dwelling animals, notably in the Jura district.

The curator of the museum and about 50 guests were present at the inauguration of the laboratory. Access is gained to the catacombs by a number of stone steps which lead about 12 meters down until the principal room of the laboratory is reached, a curious, round chamber, the roof of which is supported in the center by an enormous column of stone. On all sides are stone tables on which are huge bottles and reservoirs, continually supplied with fresh water, in which are dozens of tritons, salamanders and fish of all kinds. Gallery after gallery is fitted up in a simple manner with stone tables and every moment something of interest catches the eye in the dim light from the candles. In curiously constructed cages are rats, pigs and other animals which are being put to the test of obscurity. Already they have apparently become accustomed to their new life.

The light from the candles frightens them and they scurry away for protection to the darkest corner of their prison. The visit which was paid to the catacombs of the Jardin des Plantes will be the last for many a day. Only very occasionally will an official descend into these underground passages with a red lamp to take food for the animals, and more rarely still will Armand Vire and his colleagues visit the laboratory. In the case of cave-dwelling animals very often the eye, having become useless, has totally disappeared, while antennae, or feelers, have developed. Unfortunately, scientific men have only been able up to the present to observe these extreme types—the normally constituted animal, the cave dweller. No intermediary type is known. The establishment of the subterranean laboratory of the Jardin des Plantes will, it is hoped, permit of the "creation" of these intermediary types, the minute study of the phenomena of transformation, the atrophy of certain senses and the hypertrophy of others.—N. Y. Herald.

EELS AND HORSESHOE CRABS.

Harvest for Fisherman Provided by Desire to Eat Without Labor.

Horseshoe crabs come up on sandy beaches at half tide, and bury or partially bury themselves in the sand, making holes or nests in which they deposit their eggs. Usually the crab goes out with the same tides, and mingles with the eggs in the nest and the tide washes it smooth across the top. In a beach half a mile long and 15 or 20 feet wide there might be thousands of nests of horseshoe crab eggs, no more visible to the eye, however, than if they were not there at all. If they are not disturbed the eggs hatch out and later the water along the edge swarms with tiny horseshoe crabs.

Eels are very fond of the eggs of horseshoe crabs, and they appear to know when and where the crabs deposit them. In the spawning season eels come in upon the beaches in great numbers with the tides, and when the water is deep enough to support them they stand on their heads and bore down into the sand in quest of the horseshoe crab eggs. Though there are many nests, a nest covering a space, perhaps, as big as the crown of a cap, the eel may not strike one the first time. Then it bores again. Finding a nest, it gets a mouthful of eggs and backs out of the hole and eats them. Then it puts its head down through the hole it has bored into the nest for another mouthful.

While the eel is thus seen to be familiar with the habits of the horseshoe crab, the fisherman is equally familiar with the habits of the eel. When the eels congregate to feed on horseshoe crab eggs, the fisherman fishes among them with a bob from above, and many a foolish eel has thought to provide itself with food without the trouble of working for it by biting at the tempting bob. Sometimes a fisherman catches a washtub full of eels at a single tide.—N. Y. Sun.

Teeth That May Take Root.

A Russian dentist has at length solved the problem of supplying us with false teeth which will grow into the gums as firmly as natural ones. The teeth are made of gutta percha, porcelain or metal, as the case may be. At the root of the tooth holes are made, and also in the cavity, and in a short time a soft granulated growth finds its way from the jaw into the holes of the tooth. This growth gradually hardens, and holds the tooth in position. It does not matter in the least, according to this enterprising Russian dentist, whether the cavity in which the tooth is placed is one from which a natural tooth has recently been drawn, or whether it has been healed for months or even years.—London Figaro.

Reasons for It.

"Your daughter has improved wonderfully in her studies during the last week." "Yes; that's just about the length of time her bicycle has been in the repair shop."—Chicago Post.

Distanced.

"I thought that your son was pursuing his studies at the university?" "So he was, but he concluded that he couldn't catch up with them."—Detroit Free Press.

HUMOROUS.

"Our cook is crazy about bicycling." "Does she ride much?" "Bide! She gets on her wheel to hang out the washing."—Detroit Free Press.

"You are destined to marry riches," the seeress said, "but—'But what?'" "Death will claim you two years before the event."—Town Topics.

"A Prim(e)val Joke.—Eve—"Did you eat that apple, Adam?" Adam—"I'm sorry to say I did." Eve—"And I was going to make a pie with it!" Adam—"Then I'm glad I ate it."

"Miss Ruth Cutler, of New York, recently cleared a high-jump bar at five feet four inches." It is not stated whether the animal just behind her was a cow or a mouse.—Yonkers Statesman.

"She—"I have been shut up in boarding school so long that I feel very awkward and timid in company. I do not know what to do with my hands." He—"I'll hold them for you."—Boston Traveler.

"Freshby—"Professor, is it ever possible to take the greater from the less?" Prof. Pottery—"There is a pretty close approach to it when the conceit is taken out of a freshman."—Indianapolis Journal.

"Philadelphia is not maintaining its ancient reputation for quietness," remarked Mr. Hiland. "What is disturbing that city's calm repose?" asked Mr. Halket. "The Women's Whist congress."—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

"I'm going to be a contortionist when I grow up," said little Johnny, proudly. "I'm in training now, so I want you to tell me what is the best thing for me to eat." "Green apples, my boy," chuckled the old man.—Demorest's Magazine.

"Mother—"What did your father say when he saw his broken pipe?" "Innocent—"Shall I leave out the wicked words, mamma?" Mother—"Certainly." "Innocent—"Then I don't believe there is anything to tell you, mamma."—Dublin World.

"Just Before the Battle."—"Halt!" exclaimed the Turkish commander; "adjutant, call the roll." "Rudyard Kipling!" "Here." "Stephen Crane!" "Here." "Richard Harding Davis!" "Here." "All right! Let the word to advance be given."—Cleveland Leader.

THE TCHUKTCHIS.

A People Who Value a Wife at a Handful of Tobacco.

The English explorer, Harry de Windt, recently returned to London from the Siberian shores of Behring Strait. In a short time he will leave England for a lecturing tour in the United States. He was brutally treated by the Tchukhtchis at Oumwaidjik. In consequence of this the United States will, it is said, send a vessel to Oumwaidjik to punish the chief. The Tchukhtchis are nominally Russian subjects; but the only vessels ever in the neighborhood are American whalers and the United States revenue cutter. Mr. De Windt had an enforced sojourn of two months among the natives.

He says they are physically a far finer race than the Alaskan Eskimo races, and their women are better looking, but the Tchukhtchis are wholly devoid of morality, and will barter a wife for a handful of tobacco. Infidelity is no crime among them. They number altogether about 5,000, and along Behring Strait are seven settlements of perhaps 300 each. The others are scattered along the seaboard of the Arctic ocean, stretching away to the settlement of Nijni Kolymsk.

The most weird Tchukhtch ceremony is the "Kamitsk." This is simply the putting to death, with their free consent, of aged or useless members of the community. When a Tchukhtch's powers have decreased to an appreciable extent, a family council is held and a day fixed for the victim's departure for another world. Perhaps the most curious feature is the indifference shown by the doomed man, who takes a lively interest in the proceedings, and often assists in the preparations for his own death. The execution is preceded by a feast, where seal and walrus meat are greedily devoured and villainous whisky is consumed.—N. Y. Journal.

Insects Drowned in a Plant's Leaves.

There is a quaint plant, and a very pretty one, quite common in the northern states, that grows in peat bogs. It has large flowers with an odd, umbrella-like shield in the center. The shape of this has given it the name of side saddle flower, but it does not look very much like a side saddle. The most familiar name for the plant is pitcher plant, and it is sometimes called huntsman's cup, or purple trumpet leaf. This pitcher plant has leaves shaped like open cups, that stand up from the ground in a cluster. They are generally about half full of rain water, in which many insects are drowned. It is probable that these serve as food for the plant. The pitchers are gayly colored—green, with dark red or purple veining, and sometimes purple all over.—Thomas H. Kearney, Jr., in St. Nicholas.

The Modern Child.

"I sometimes feel," said the old gentleman, "like taking that four-year-old grandson of mine and slamming him against the wall."

"What has he done?" asked the man who was penned in the corner.

"I told him that beautiful 'sleeping beauty' story—about how, as soon as the princess was kissed, all the clocks began to go and the servants began to work and all that kind of thing, and then he said: 'Did some one press an electric button?'"—Cincinnati Enquirer.

"The Jersey Airship.

"Ah," said the new arrival at the Jersey resort, "I see they have a flying machine at this place."

"Flying machine nothing!" replied the all-year-round boarder. "That was one of the mosquitoes that just sailed by."—Philadelphia North American.