REZAH

By EVELYN SWAN

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"NO, mother, I cannot. I would do almost anything for you and the others, but this I cannot."

"I can't see why you're so unreasonable, Rezah. Your common sense, that you're so fond of talking about, might at least show you the advantages of acting in a common-sense way now. You'll be sorry enough when you're my age and have children of your own. You'll understand then the difference between money and no money."

"I understand it now, mother, well enough," said the girl, a tall, dark, clever-looking, clear-eyed girl, with an air of great self-reliance about her. "I don't grumble at having to work for my living; on the contrary, I like it, and wouldn't do otherwise if I had the chance; but I know also how hard the work sometimes is, sweet though the pay-days are when they come round. I love working for you, mamsie—but I can't sell myself, dear." She kissed her mother's worn, troubled, fretful, worried face. "You look very tired."

"You'll look tired if ever you have five children all wanting to be fed, and clothed, and educated, and little or no money to do it all with. I can't think how I manage as it is. It's well for you that your work takes you out of the house all the day, and out of the fret and worry of it all at the same time."

"Isn't that a little hard, mother?"

"Well, I can't see for the life of me why you won't marry Mr. Mitchell," answered the mother, with more relevance than the words appeared to imply. Rezah's refusal to do this was, indeed, the cause of all Mrs. Warrender's irritation.

"I think you can, dear, if you try to think. There is only one reason. I don't love him, and I do love Frank. I should hate myself if I married one man when loving another." She spoke with a momentary air of proud self-confidence; and then, a moment later, a light of mischief and a laugh came into her eyes, and catching her mother round the waist, she said: "Why, mother, I declare positively that if Frank were as rich as he is poor I should still love him and marry him just the same."

But Mrs. Warrender was only irritated by the little jest, and moved away.

"I wish you would be serious, Rezah," she said, petulantly.

"As serious as my most tragic name, eh? If I were going to marry old Mr. Mitchell, I'm afraid I should be serious enough. But this evening, and now, I can't be serious, mamsie; for Frank's coming for me, and we're going for a walk; and I declare I haven't seen him for a whole three days."

"Well, I hope you'll never have cause to be sorry you've decided as you have."

"I should probably be very sorry if I decided any other way. Ugh! what would life be as Mrs. Mitchell, rich, demure, and cold? I should have to grow fat, flabby, and colorless," and the girl made a gesture suggesting impossibility and repugnance.

"He is one of the kindest men on earth, child. There's nothing in his power to give you that he'd refuse."

"Why, mother dearest, what we women want most is to be denied things. If I thought Frank never meant to deny me anything, I should—oh, it would be horrid! Of course, he mustn't say he means to, but I must know it, all the same. If life were all just ask and get, there'd be nothing to live for."

"You're the most contrary girl on earth, Rezah."

"And you're such a tyrannical, hard-hearted, brute-force mother that if I married Mr. Mitchell to please you, and then came to you at the end of half a year and said: 'Mother, this is a mistake,' you'd be fit to cry your eyes out to think you'd had a hand in making the match," and she smiled lovingly into her mother's face and kissed her again.

"I want nothing but your happiness, child," said the mother, giving way.

"Happiness doesn't lie that way, mamsie. I want someth'ng more in my life than the sober colors of gentleness and kindness. I want the warm, glowing tints of love—my Frank's love. I'll take the storm for the sake of the after-calm; but all calm would be intolerable. I'll tell you this, however. If I wanted to live a life of nothing but good works; if I sought a shelter in the arms of a dear, kind, stanch friend; if I were done with the battle of life and sought only rest and relief—I would choose no life more readily than to be Mr. Mitchell's wife. But as it is I'm going to marry Frank." And she kissed her mother, and was running out of the room when the latter called her back.

"Before you go, Rezah, there is something you ought to know." Her voice had a husk of nervousness in it. "You don't know all Mr. Mitchell's kindness. I—I am in—I mean, I have had to borrow money from him, and I owe him more than I can ever pay. I have lost a lot of money lately. I couldn't help it." She began to speak with hurried and rather unsteady tones. "You don't know what the expenses are with all the children. There are so many things to pay that I can't pay them all out of the small amount of money your father left me. I was obliged to have money from somewhere, and there was no one else to whom I could go but dear Mr. Mitchell."

"Well, mother dear, I suppose you told him the condition of things, and he has been able to estimate for himself the chances of getting it back again? If he was so kind as to lend it, he will not be so unkind as not to wait for the repayment till he can get it."

"You don't understand these things, Rezah," replied her mother testily. She had something much more unpleasant to say yet, and she was afraid of what her daughter would think. "You think everything must be going all right just because you don't see it going wrong. You don't suppose, do you, that any one would lend me money for the mere asking? That's not the world, I can tell you. Of course, I knew what Mr. Mitchell wanted about you—"

"Stop, mother," cried the girl sharply, as one in pain. "Don't, please, tell me that you stooped to borrow money from Mr. Mitchell by leading him to think that there could possibly be any chance of his marrying me. You don't really mean that, do you?" She caught her mother by the hands, and looked eagerly into her eyes. She read there the confirmation of her fears. "Have you taken any of this money since I've been engaged to Frank?"

"I don't know what the world's coming to when girls take to judging their parents in this way. One would suppose you were mother and I daughter, Rezah."

"Our positions are a little reversed, mother, I'm afraid. It's you who've done wrong, and I who am ashamed. Of course, Mr. Mitchell must be told at once; and if you've not told him by the next time I see him, I shall tell him. You'd better write." And without saying any more, but feeling bitterly humiliated, the girl went out of the room.

She hated everything that was underhand, she burned at the idea that she should have been made the subject of such a bargain. And the smart of the thing was all the worse because she felt sure that it was not Mr. Mitchell, but her mother, who had made the terms. It galled her to come in contact in this sharp, rugged manner with what she knew to be her mother's failings. But she could not excuse her in this; and she feared, moreover, that even now she did not know all the truth.

She was right enough in this. As soon as she was alone Mrs. Warrender sat down, and, taking a letter from her pocket, read it twice through again, though she knew the contents almost by heart already; and she puckered her forehead in sheer perplexity how to answer it.

It was from Mr. Mitchell, asking whether she thought he might yet propose to Rezah, and reminding her of the many things she had mentioned of the girl's inclination toward him. What to say she could not think. She had, in truth, completely deceived him, and she was now overwhelmed with the fear that when he found out the truth he would make her repay him everything at once. It was characteristic of her that she put all the blame for the trouble on her daughter. That was her first comfort; her next was to put off the writing of any letter until the following day.

Meanwhile Rezah was sorely troubled on her own account, and went about with so anxious a look that her mother, setting it all down to the debit of her own act, was inclined to be angry with the girl for making so much of it.

Rezah's trouble was of the heart, however. Her lover had not met her as he had promised; but instead had sent a telegram vaguely worded, and hinting at coming mischief, and afterwards had written saying that something had come to his knowledge; something affecting him only that made it impossible for him to see her until he knew more. And the girl carried this about in her heart for three days till the pain was like to break it.

On the fourth the blow fell. A letter came from her lover, short, crushing, deadly.

Dearest: I can still write "dearest," though all is, and must be, over between us. We must never meet again. I have deceived you as much as I have been deceived myself. Seven years ago, when little more than a lad, I was married—lured, cheated, fooled into it; but married. My wife left me after a while, and I believed that she was dead. Honestly believed it, Rezah, as I know you will believe; and then I asked you to marry me. Four days ago, to my horror, I had news indirectly of her, and now she has returned to claim me. My great pain in all this is to have wrecked your life, as I fear I have; my one consolation in it all, the knowledge that I have been loved by you. But we are parted for ever. Oh, my dearest! God bless you. FRANK.

The girl met the blow like the brave soul that she was. All the morning she did her work at her office with regularity, and only a little absent-mindedness. In the afternoon she took a holiday, and went in search of her old lover. She wanted to hear the truth from his lips, and to be absolutely certain that everything was as he said.

But she could not find him. At his office they told her he had left; and one of the clerks, knowing her, came out after her and told her he thought he had gone abroad.

She went straight to his rooms. There a very unpleasant experience awaited her.

She was speaking to the landlady, who was telling her that he had certainly gone away, somewhere abroad—to the colonies, she thought—when the wife appeared.

She was a flaunting, large-faced woman, gaudily dressed and much older than Frank or Rezah. She was red in the face, too, and looked as if she had been drinking.

"I know you," she said readily to Rezah. "You're the girl with the queer name that that blessed 'usband of mine thought he was going to marry. But he's mine, don't you see? I've got 'im; and, what's more, I mean to jolly well stick to 'im. See?" and she shook her head and leered with shallow, boastful cunning. "I ain't going to be made miserable for nothing."

Rezah looked at her steadily.

"I'm sorry your life has been an unhappy one," she said, quietly. "But that is no reason why you should be glad that others are also as unhappy as yourself." And she turned on her heel.

The little encounter did her good. It broke the monotony of her misery; and that night she reasoned the whole position out in her practical way.

More than once the words she had spoken to her mother about Mr. Mitchell recurred to her, and gradually the idea of doing what had seemed so repugnant to her appeared less and less distasteful and difficult. The real reason was probably that she longed for the excitement of some complete change from the usual life, and thus turned to the idea of marriage with a sense of relief.

"Mother, what have you told Mr. Mitchell?" she asked on the following day, much to her mother's surprise and annoyance, because Mrs. Warrender had put it off as a most unpleasant duty.

"I haven't seen him, shild. How could I tell him?" She spoke angrily to give herself courage.

"Do you very much wish what he wishes?"

Her mother looked up in keen, quick surprise.

"You're looking ill, Rezah. Is anything the matter?"

"I have had a blow. Frank and I are parted—for good."

Mrs. Warrender tried not to let her pleasure at the news overshadow her concern at the effect which she saw it had on Rezah.

"What is the matter? I am sorry." But her voice was a struggle to express sympathy.

The girl understood her well enough.

"It's a little hard that a blow that seems as if it would break one's life in two should give more pleasure than anything else to the only soul on earth where one ought to look for consolation." She sighed, and after a moment added: "Never mind, mother. You can't help feeling relieved that after all you may get out of this scrape with Mr. Mitchell," and she bent and kissed her on the forehead. "If this should ever be possible it will only be after Mr. Mitchell has had the whole truth told to him. And then, if he knows everything—mind, everything—and is willing to make me his wife, I shall be glad to marry him."

"You are a dear, sweet, obedient girl, Rezah." The daughter smiled at this most unexpected comment, but said nothing. "I'll tell Mr. Mitchell," added Mrs. Warrender.

Then, with a flash of great earnestness, the girl said:

"One word, mother. You must tell him everything—that my heart has been given to Frank; that I do not, and probably never shall, love him; that I come to him for rest; and that if it were not impossible to marry Frank I should do so. Mind, everything. And remember that I shall go over the whole ground again after you, and before the marriage, and shall tell him all myself, so that nothing will be gained by holding back even the veriest trifle now."

"Do you think I would deceive you or him in such a matter?" asked the mother, with the anger of a person whose thoughts have been clearly read and her intentions anticipated.

What was said in the first interview with Mr. Mitchell was not told to the girl, but her mother said that he readily agreed to all; and Mrs. Warrender was so jubilant that Rezah was rather inclined to believe there was much more than she had been led to think at any time.

But nothing could have been more kind and compassionate and tactful than Mr. Mitchell's conduct. He was a spare, reserved, self-contained man of nearly forty.

"Your mother has told me of your trouble, my dear," he said, taking her hand, when they met. "I like Frank Mowbray, as everyone must like him who knows him. A straight, honorable, clever, fearless man; and I know without your telling me that whatever the cause may be that separates you, there will be nothing in it that touches his honor. I cannot truthfully tell you that I would rather see you his wife than mine. But if it cannot be that you marry me, I would rather you married him than any one."

In this way he let her see that he knew the whole story, and he showed her how he wished matters to stand as between them. She liked this, especially when she came to see how little it left for her to say about her own feelings.

"Do you think that the feeling I can give to you will bring you happiness? It will be little more than friendship. No more, indeed," she said musingly.

"I shall ask no more, if you will make me one promise—always to think of me as a tried and trusted friend, to be treated with absolute confidence."

"I will promise that," she replied, after a pause of thought.

"I have been a lonely man, Rezah, with little or no real interest in life strong enough to stir any innermost emotions—till this love of mine for you. And now—well, you cannot understand, and I cannot describe, all that this means. God give me strength to be a tower of help to you, and to win in some measure that second abiding love that can spring from the ashes of a dead passion. I am content, dear." He lifted her fingers to his lips and kissed them. "And now let us talk as we have often talked together when you suspected nothing of my real feeling—like the friends we are going to be for life."

She always remembered that interview with a sense of refreshing gratitude. And it pleased her too, greatly, that he said nothing directly about the marriage, and neither then nor at any time afterward pressed her as to the time of the marriage.

Instead of this, he drew her shrewdly to take a great interest in a number of projects and schemes that he had in hand, or took in hand for the particular purpose.

Thus the instinctive craving for change that had led her to contemplate the idea of marriage with him at first was satisfied, and a new set of interests were brought into her life in consequence.

Mrs. Warrender was anxious to get the marriage fixed for as early a date as possible, and with this object spoke to Mr. Mitchell. But he would not hear of it.

"No, no; not on any consideration. Let it come naturally."

"Yes, and perhaps Frank Mowbray may come back first with some tale to disturb Rezah, and knock the whole thing on the head."

"Ah, you don't understand your child, Mrs. Warrender. Nothing can ever knock the whole thing on the head, as you call it, with Rezah—at least, only one thing—if that bar between them were removed."

"Well, there's always danger in delays," said the widow petulantly.

"My friend, my engagement to Rezah has done two things. It has increased my love and admiration for her a thousand-fold, and it has purified—if that is the word—my feeling for her, till I can believe that even if young Mowbray were to come back able to marry her, I could even bring myself to be enough her friend to find my happiness—subdued, mournful, and different, of course, but still happiness—in seeing her happy as his wife."

Mrs. Warrender looked at him out of the corners of her eyes, and sniffed with an indescribable suggestion that she had no words sufficiently eloquent to express her opinion of his quixotic foolishness.

The man was right enough as to the fixing of the date of the wedding. Rezah herself mooted the subject to her mother, and in this way the time was settled; and the girl took the keenest pleasure in arranging that everything should be in just that form and style which she thought would best please her husband that was to be.

It was a perfectly quiet wedding; and though the children wished to make the most of the opportunity for a lot of fun, it was in their view a very tame affair, and dull.

Mrs. Warrender was very thankful and self-congratulatory when it was all over, and the two had driven away for their honeymoon, which was to be a very long one. It was all her own tact and diplomacy, she thought, that had managed it all; and her sole thought about her daughter was that Rezah ought to be entirely grateful to her for having found her a husband who had so much money. That he was a man of exceptional parts was reckoned by her as of no account. He was a "good match," and she had made it.

One circumstance only was there to cause her even a momentary twinge. A letter had come for Rezah on the very morning of the wedding; and Mrs. Warrender, knowing the writing, and that it came from "that young Mowbray," had purposely "forgotten" to give it to her daughter. At bottom, she was a good deal afraid of Rezah; and although it had seemed a somewhat small thing to keep it back or forget it in the hurry of the preparations, now that she thought it over "in cold blood" she saw that there might easily be a good deal of unpleasantness.

She would have liked to destroy it, but dared not; so she posted it to the first place where the couple were to stop, with a line of apology for her "forgetfulness."

All unsuspecting the tragedy that lay within the envelope for her, Rezah opened it, with the simple remark that there was a "letter from mother."

When she saw the writing on the enclosure she turned pale. She knew it well enough. Thoughtful for her husband, however, she put restraint on herself, and waited to read it until she was alone in the room.

It told her almost at a glance that Frank Mowbray had now good reason to believe that in a short time he would be free again; that he had discovered certain things about the wife which would probably divorce the tie that had become so hateful to him; and that if Rezah could wait with a little patience things might yet be as they had been for them both.

As she read everything seemed to grow dark and cold, and the girl sat and shivered, and breathed hard, and interlaced her fingers, and pressed them until they were hurt.

Her thoughts were a complete blank.

Then an old favorite quotation came jumbling into her head, bringing a word picture.

"Love took up the glass of Time and turned it in his glowing hands," and the mental picture changed to Love staring, pained and frightened, at the broken hour glass, let slip from his nerveless fingers.

"Yes, it is broken," she murmured to herself as she rose, with one deep, heavy sigh.

Till then, she had not seen the date of the letter. When she did so, came the perception of her mother's treachery, and the anger against the latter was a relief from the pain.

"Rezah, are you coming out?" said her husband, entering the room at this point.

"In a minute or two, dear," she answered, forcing a smile, which he did not see was unreal. "See, I have had a mishap with a letter. I have a letter from Frank Mowbray, which ought to have reached me yesterday or the day before. He tells me that he is likely to get a divorce from his wife." She held it out to him.

He looked at her fixedly for fully a minute before speaking.

"Poor child!" he murmured. Then, in a voice so toned with sympathy and compassion that its genuine sorrow was unmistakable: "What can we do?" The question was no more than a whisper of helplessness.

Then he sat down like one dazed. He was infinitely more overcome than she. And he buried his face in one hand.

The letter had fluttered to the ground and lay between them.

"I would give all I'm worth to undo what we did yesterday," he said at length. "You must try and think if I can do anything to make it easy for you."

Then she knelt down by him, and it was rather as if the sorrow were his and she the comforter.

"See, John," she said, after a while, taking up the letter. "We have no secrets, you and I; and we'll have no half confidences, nor, if we can help it, thoughts of the might-have-been. See," and she tore the letter in little pieces. "There, that is all over, never even to be thought of except as between two friends with no secrets, husband. No secrets."

She kissed him affectionately twice, gave a little sigh, and then rising, said, in a cheery tone and manner:

"And now we'll start for our walk—the walk, husband, that is to last all through life."

And when he looked at her she saw that his eyes were thick with tears.

(THE END.)

WILL ANDREE RETURN?

Fate of the Explorer and His Companions Discussed.

NOTHING AUTHENTIC YET HEARD

A German Magazine Discusses from All Points the Fate of the Savant and His Comrades in Their Quest for the North Pole—Possibility that the Party May Be Alive—The Balloon Could Keep Afloat for Thirty Days—A Rash Enterprise.

(Adapted by Mary J. Safford.)

In view of the rumor of the discovery of the bodies of the aeronaut, Prof. Andree, and his companions, an article discussing the chances of his return by Admiralitatsratte E. Koldeway, which recently appeared in a German magazine, gains added interest. He writes: "It was a year on the 11th of July since Andree, with his two companions, Strindberg and Frankel, set out on his adventurous voyage in a balloon from Dane Island, on the northwestern coast of Spitzbergen, to soar over the north pole; but up to the present time not a single reliable message concerning the whereabouts of the balloon and its occupants has been received. The questions force themselves upon us: Have the bold aeronauts succeeded in surviving the arctic winter? Are they still alive? What are their prospects of eventually returning? True, these questions cannot be answered with absolute accuracy; but in the universal interest aroused by the expedition, it is interesting to discuss its possible fate and the chances of return, upon the basis of the resources at Andree's disposal and the well-known conditions existing in the arctic regions.

"In the search for everything strange and sensational natural to mankind, it is easy to understand that, during the autumn, various rumors were in circulation, according to which the balloon was said to have been seen, now here, now there, over Norway, over Greenland, even over Western Alaska. Special excitement was caused by the tidings that some Norwegians in pursuit of seal had heard men calling for help, who were supposed to be Andree, and his companions. Improbable as this might appear, the Norwegian government was induced to send a ship to Spitzbergen to make further search. The vessel, of course, returned without having found any traces.

Reports Without Foundation.

"It scarcely requires any explanation that all these reports had no foundation, but must be mere figments of the imagination. The time during which a balloon can remain floating in the air is extremely short, and under no circumstances can extend beyond a few weeks, since by the diffusion which takes place through the material a considerable quantity of gas escapes, thereby diminishing the lifting power. In addition to this, another and still larger amount of gas is lost by the inevitable rising and falling of a balloon floating freely in midair, and by the varying temperatures of the atmosphere; hence, all the balloon ascensions hitherto have extended only to the brief period of one or two days. This circumstance was well known to Andree, an experienced aeronaut, and he therefore took precautions to guard the balloon, as far as possible, from the inevitable loss of gas. Yet according to the estimates of the chemist of the expedition, Mr. Stade, the loss before the ascent was 51 cubic meters daily, equal to 56 kilograms lifting power. According to the calculations made the balloon, after deducting the car, the provisions, and the other equipments, the drag-rope and the weight of three persons, still had a lifting power of 936 kilograms, or, supposing that, in case of necessity, about 800 kilograms could be thrown out as ballast from the provisions, the drag-ropes, and other burdens, the lifting power would increase to about 1,700 kilograms. According to these calculations, the balloon ought to be capable of remaining in the air about thirty days, if we may assume that the daily loss of gas would not be greater than before the departure. This, however, is by no means the case; under the most favorable circumstances it may be positively asserted that the daily loss will be three times as great. In the most fortunate case, the voyage of the balloon would not last longer than a week; experienced aeronauts doubt even this period, and estimate it at a few days.

Course of the Balloon.

"Where can the balloon have drifted in this short time of a week at the utmost? The direct distance from Dane Island on Spitzbergen to the pole is about 1,200 kilometers, to the northern coast of Greenland about the same, and to the northern coast of Siberia about 2,000 kilometers. If it could be supposed that a wind blew steadily over this region in the respective directions, it might be conceivable that the balloon could have reached one of these points during the period of its flight. But nothing justifies such a conjecture. We know very little about the system of winds prevailing within the polar basin; the little we do know teaches us that steady winds in the vicinity of the pole, over the drifting pack ice, are nowhere to be expected. During the summer months, especially, they are usually very light and variable, and calms often prevail over the great desert of ice. This variableness is amply proved by the drifting of the Fram and the Jeannette, which was principally influenced by the winds. Since the drift was mainly westward and northward from Franz Josef Land and Spitzbergen—toward the southwest, it follows that the direction of the wind in the sea between Franz Josef Land and Spitzbergen and the Pole is principally easterly and northeasterly; that is, wholly unfavorable to Andree's enterprise. How, in the face of this fact, the opinion that the balloon might have landed on the northern coast of Siberia can be maintained is utterly incomprehensible to me. It is entirely improbable that, in that region, a steady wind would blow for several days in succession in the same direction over a tract several thousand kilometers in extent. According to a report published not long ago in the Stockholm Aftonbladet, the Swedish expedition under Herr Stadling, sent to Northern Siberia to search for Andree, has hitherto discovered no trace of the missing balloon.

"There is somewhat more probability in the conjecture that, after the subsidence of the south wind, which bore the balloon out of sight of the people in the harbor, who watched it disappear in the northern horizon, it was carried by an eastern current toward the northern coast of Greenland. Yet, even on this stretch, it is doubtful whether, amid the variable winds and the consequent sailing to and fro in the air, the distance of more than a thousand kilometers could be traversed in the short period the balloon would remain aloft.

"If the meteorological conditions are unfavorable to the enterprise, the aeronautical difficulties, in the opinion of experienced aeronauts, render the possibility of success still more doubtful, and, prior to the departure of the expedition, there was no lack of warning articles in the scientific periodicals, that pointed out the tremendous obstacles from a purely technical standpoint. Herr A. Berson, of the Prussian Meteorological Institute, one of our most experienced aeronauts, characterized the plan as the most perilous venture ever undertaken by an explorer, with an extremely small prospect of success, so far as escape with life was concerned. He added emphatically: 'Personally I have found in making balloon voyages from 300 to 500 kilometers in length that endurance was very difficult in rain or snow below the rain or snow clouds, for a longer period absolutely impossible.'

Various Theories.

"From these discussions it is at any rate, apparent that unless by some fortunate accident, a change of wind soon after the ascent drove the balloon back again toward Spitzbergen or Franz Josef Land, it was very improbable that it would reach the northern coast of either of the arctic countries. Therefore we shall scarcely err in the assumption that the balloon has descended somewhere in the vast wilderness of the polar seas and landed its occupants upon the pack ice, at latest, one week after the ascent—that is, in the second half of July. What, in this case, are the prospects that the three daring aeronauts will again reach an inhabited region? According to reports the balloon is furnished with provisions for about three months, weapons, ammunition, a small sledge and a boat, but what will such an equipment avail should it be necessary to travel hundreds of miles over the rough, uneven fields of ice, which often rise into actual hills, and, in summer, are covered with melting snows and pools of water?

"If it were possible for a Nansen, with dog sledges and the best and most complete outfit, to advance only about 200 kilometers northward from the ship, and it required the whole summer (four months) to traverse the distance of 500 to 600 kilometers to Franz Josef Land, we shall probably commit no mistake in believing that if the balloon descended on the pack ice Andree could not succeed in reaching land during the few months before October. Then he would be compelled to spend the winter on the pack ice, without any adequate supply of provisions and other resources needed to endure the long arctic winter. No reliance can be placed upon obtaining food enough by hunting on the pack ice in the autumn and winter. Even the polar bear during the long arctic night of winter retreats to the land and no longer roves over the fields of ice. Nansen himself succeeded in preserving his own life and his companion's only by building a hut on the land and being able in the autumn to shoot walruses and polar bears enough to live upon during the winter. For Andree and his comrades, assuming that they spent the winter on the ice, there is scarcely a possibility that they are still alive.

"But even supposing that the balloon landed on the northern coast of Greenland, which, as has been explained, is extremely improbable on account of the distance, there is little chance of a safe return. Although here, it might be possible by killing musk-oxen, bear, and seals and building a hut in the autumn to survive the winter, the distance to the nearest Esquimaux settlements on Melville Bay, by Kennedy Canal and Smith Sound, is too great to be crossed by Andree with the extremely limited resources at his disposal. Only an accidental meeting with an expedition sent to search the northern coast of Greenland in case the latter should penetrate so far would offer a prospect of rescue. The case would be the same if the balloon should have been driven toward the northeastern coast of Greenland. Here, too, the sole hope of rescue would lie in being sought by an expedition. The most favorable chance would be that the balloon had been driven back toward the northern coast of Spitzbergen or Franz Josef Land and landed there; then at least there would be the possibility that the aeronauts might have escaped to the western coast of Spitzbergen and been received on board of one of the numerous vessels engaged in hunting seals. But the latter does not seem to have occurred, otherwise news of it would have already reached us.

Small Chance of Return.

"From all these considerations, which result directly from the experiences garnered during numerous journeys in arctic regions, there is, unfortunately, but a very small probability that Andree and his companions will return home. From the purely humane standpoint we may lament this result and most deeply regret that so much ability, scientific aspiration, and human energy should be lost; but I cannot help remarking that, according to our present knowledge of the nature of the arctic regions, the conditions of the ice, and the distribution of land and water, a balloon voyage over the arctic ice, even were it successful, could contribute little or nothing to the further completion of our knowledge. If the balloon could be kept even at the moderate height of 300 meters above the icy wilderness, the observer, for want of conspicuous landmarks in the frozen desert, which from above looks almost like a vast plain, would be unable to determine what course the balloon was taking. The compass here is absolutely useless. It will probably show the direction toward the magnetic north, but not that in which the balloon is flying, which can be decided only by stationary objects on the earth. Astronomical locations of places are also extremely difficult in a balloon, so that not even the geographical latitude, far less the longitude, could be ascertained. So, if the balloon really does reach land again, it would be impossible to prove what course it had taken and what latitudes had been gained. Its occupants would have seen vast stretches of ice; perhaps here and there some water; perhaps a lonely island—that would be all. And as we have long been tolerably well informed concerning the distribution of land and water in the vicinity of the north pole, and are also, in the main, familiar with the conditions of the temperature and the ice, it is difficult to perceive what scientific value an enterprise so daring and perilous as Andree's can have. Scientific balloon ascensions for the closer investigation of the condition and movement of the air strata in the atmosphere, like those made from the Meteorological Institute in Berlin in the balloon Phoenix, are undoubtedly of great utility, and the balloon is admirably adapted to such uses; but in the present condition of aeronautics it is by no means suited to geographical investigations. Such attempts, especially when associated with such extreme peril to life as under any circumstances existed in the Andree enterprise, are to be condemned. That life can and, if necessary, ought to be risked for the solution of scientific problems, especially to promote geographical investigations, is a matter of course, and I am certainly the last man to dissuade any one from a geographical enterprise which involved danger to life; but there must be a certain probability of success, and, above all, the problem to be solved and the gain to science and human life and industry must be worthy of the stake. Both are lacking in the Andree enterprise, which can only be characterized as an adventure springing from vain ambition, and though we must hope and wish that the overbold aeronauts are still alive and will return, such an attempt to fly over the north pole by means of a balloon is not worthy of serious scientific investigation."

TESTED THE TELEPHONE.

Then He Ordered It Taken Out, but Had It Put Back.

From the Detroit Free Press.

"Had my telephone taken out last week," said the man who is known in a certain section of Piety Hill as "such a good neighbor." "Just ordered it back again. Got mad, and cut my nose off to spite my face. Deep-voiced man with an official tone called me up and said he wanted to test the instrument. 'All right,' I called back; 'go ahead.'

"'Please stand to the right of the transmitter and talk,' he directed, and I did. 'Now to the left,' and I did. 'Now kindly talk directly into the transmitter,' and I did. 'Now stand on your head and talk,' and he rung off before I had time to paralyze him in a few sentences.

"A man never reasons when he's as wrathy as I was. I ordered that 'phone out of there inside of an hour or I'd remove it with an ax. At 1 a. m. the next day, the thermometer 14 below, my neighbor's wife bombarded the front door and excitedly asked me to call a doctor at once. Her husband was very ill. My telephone was gone; there was no other in the vicinity. I dressed hurriedly and went chasing after a doctor. I went on a dog trot and was breathing through icycles on my mustache before I had gone half a block. Two doctors were out on professional work. The third took me in and revived me. He took me home in his carriage, but I frosted one ear, four toes, and a spot as big as a dime on each cheek. Now they can't get a telephone in quick enough. Meantime I'll give $100 for reliable information as to who that deep-voiced rascal is."

GOSSIP OF GAY PARIS.

Paris, Jan. 31.—This is the first day this winter that envy has entered my heart and the desire for sunny climes possessed me. It has snowed all day, and the streets are wet and nasty, while the thermometer registers lower than at any time during the present season. The theaters are playing to crowded houses, and it is impossible to have tickets for "La Dame de chez Maxim," since every seat in the house is sold for six weeks in advance. "Le Roi de Rome" provided an evening of excitement when the audience took up the cry of "Vive l'Empereur," and ejected from the theater the one man present who dared oppose the cry of the audience. He occupied a "fauteuil d'orchestre," and protested violently against the cries of the imperialists, who, in their turn, protested quite as violently that he should either retire or remain silent. The Folies Bergere has each night some exciting "luttes," while "La fille de Madame Angot" entices many to La Galete. Sarah Bernhardt in her new theater seems to be inspired with a renewal of her wonderful powers. "Cyrano de Bergerac," notwithstanding the protests of our Chicago friend, Mr. S. S. Gross, continues to be impersonated by the incomparable Coquelin. Rejane holds the boards at the Vaudeville, and the Opera and Opera Comique have always something attractive to offer. Mme. Adelina Patti Caederstrom passed through Paris yesterday on her third honeymoon, and the husband who accompanies her this time is, according to the Figaro, "a son of Albion, one of those Englishmen with whom at this moment we are not on very cordial terms, but whom we know to possess great powers of endurance and trepidity." Mme. Caederstrom has played many roles, both on and off the stage, and apparently has been fortunate enough to discover the fountain of eternal youth, for she does not seem to have changed in appearance during the last twenty years. Let us hope that, while the disparity of age strikes one as being appalling, the Diva may at least be content and her present marriage prove a happy one.

The colossal statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps, which will be erected at the entrance of the Suez Canal, was finished last Monday. The eminent sculptor, Fremiet, to whom was confided the execution of this gigantic work, has succeeded beyond all belief in preserving the likeness to M. de Lesseps, which, owing to the dimensions of the statue, many feared might not be possible. He has delivered his model to the Fonte, where it will receive the bronze, prior to its departure to its final destination. The statue alone will not measure less than twenty feet, while the pedestal upon which it will be placed measures over ten feet in height. This pedestal will be decorated in bas relief, and the first intention was to reproduce the portraits of the four Khedives who assisted Monsieur de Lesseps in the accomplishment of his work. However, this they have been forced to abandon, since the etiquette of Egypt will not permit that the portrait of any Khedive be placed beneath the image of any other man, no matter how great he may be; hence the pedestal will bear simply the name of Ferdinand de Lesseps and the Latin inscription, "Aperire perram gentibus." Prince d'Arlanberg, President of the Committee of the Suez Canal, states that the inauguration of the statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the commencement of this gigantic work; therefore, the 16th of November, 1899, this imposing ceremony will occur at Port Said, commemorating, as it will, one of the greatest works, if not the greatest, of the nineteenth century.

Very soft materials appear to be the most successfuly used for spring costumes. Faille muslin is among them, and I saw yesterday an exquisite combination of orchid and mauve colored faille and venetian lace, with a skirt completely tight from the waist to the knees and six pleats vertically. Beyond the pleats are no longer stiff, and the faille forms a pleated flounce. It is shaped and made in one piece, with the lace that covers the corsage. On the tunic are laid bands of violet velvet rather deeper than the taffetas in color and three centimeters wide cut in the cross. They are of unequal length, diminishing from the bottom to the top in gradation like a flight of stairs. The corsage, which matches the skirt, fits closely, like a princess dress, and covers it except down the center in front, where it opens. Each side of the opening is trimmed from the neck to the waist with a band of violet velvet. The bands on the skirt are continued in an upward direction in unequal legnth like the corsage. The neck trimming is of violet velvet, surmounted by a long collar. The sleeves are flat and made with stiff pleats forming chevrons. I saw the other evening a lovely high-necked gown worn at a dinner. It was of white satin, covered with white mousseline de soie. The skirt was extremely tight round the figure down to about half way, whence the width gradually develops to the bottom. It was long in front and at the sides, and was made with a train of moderate length. The ground of mousseline de soie is inlaid with garlands cut out of a black lace, representing foliage and roses. The lower part of the skirt has the appearance of a shaped flounce at the sides and back. It is headed with black satin ribbon laid on the mousseline de soie and embroidered with black chenille and spangles. This ribbon is continued up the front on each side, forming an edge to the narrow apron. In the center at the bottom is a large Louis XVIth bow of black taffeta, inlaid in the mousseline de soie and embroidered in chenille and spangles. All around the bottom of the skirt is a band of black lace insertion inlaid in mousseline de soie. The corsage is of the same material and in the same style as the skirt. In the center in front is a Louis XVI bow like that on the skirt, but with long ends, and above it is a yoke of guipure, cut out of white satin and embroidered with silver beads. This yoke diminishes at the top so as to form a trimming at the neck. The back of the corsage is ornamented in a similar way to the front. The waistband is of black taffetas simply draped. The sleeves are of white mousseline de soie and satin, made long and tight, and are inlaid with lace, like the rest of the dress.

The march of progress goes on, and almost each day brings us some new innovation, some surprise. Often we found it difficult at first to adapt ourselves, but eventually custom wins us over to the new thought. Few people recognize the tremendous strides cremation has made in the past few years. Possibly nowhere has this been more noticeable than in Paris, and it remained for a Parisian to add the final touch to this remarkable ceremony. It is now looked upon as an actual occasion of pleasure, but this recent innovation has at least robbed it of some of its grewsomeness. An amiable Parisian conceived the idea upon the cremation of his aunt to give a concert which should last through the entire time occupied by the cremation. During two hours a programme of sacred music was performed outside of the crematory, during which the body of the beloved aunt was being converted to ashes. The ceremony thus conducted, one must acknowledge, instantly assumes a more engaging air. Music sweetens everything, and the prospect of this final concert may bring many adherents to the cause. As you are aware, in France the average mourner walks to the cemetery, and after this long exercise two hours of good music would be most refreshing. The friends and relatives will find in this a source of consolation for their sorrow, and undoubtedly in coming back from the cemetery one will often hear the remark which was made by an illustrious savant on returning from the burial of his wife, who said: "This little walk has done me a great deal of good."

Since the second empire, those jaunty soldiers known as the zouaves have not been stationed in Paris. Two years ago, however, they were seen passing through the capital on their way to Chalons for the review held before the Czar and Czarina. There have been two battalions of zouaves just formed, and M. de Freycinet has decided that two of these battalions shall be quartered in Paris; the other will go to Lyons to form a part of the large garrison in that city. In the days of the empire the Imperial Guard included a regiment of these soldiers, with headquarters at Versailles, St. Denis, and several other places.

TO NURSE OUR HEROES

The Ministering Angels of Our Future Wars.

ORGANIZE FOR PEACE OR WAR

Mrs. Hunter Robb Starts a Movement for Trained Nurses to Take Care of Our Boys in Future Conflicts—None but Those Fully Competent Will Be Employed—Training Essential in Order to Obtain the Best Possible Results.

New York, Feb. 24.—Touched by the suffering of our soldiers in the late war, the compassionate women of the United States have risen in their gentle might and vow that never again shall wounded heroes be left to suffer and die for lack of proper nursing. Foremost among the women who have inaugurated a movement to insure proper attention to the soldier in hospital is Mrs. Hunter Robb, of 1342 Euclid avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. Mrs. Robb, who is President of the Associated Alumnae of Trained Nurses, called together in New York the women who she knew sympathized with her plan, and, with the aid of such well-known ladies as Mrs. Whitelaw Reid, Mrs. Winthrop Cowdin, Mrs. Amos C. Draper, and Mrs. W. Bayard Cutting, she set the wheels to work to enlist the services of every influential man and woman desiring to remedy the frightful wrongs of the patriots, who, for lack of womanly attention, suffered such horrors in the recent campaign.

No effort has been made by these women to court adulation. So quietly and unostentatiously have they proceeded in the foundation work of their mission of mercy that the general public are in ignorance of the movement, although a committee of women have presented a bill to Congress in connection with the merciful plan. It was no easy task to induce the humane inaugurator, Mrs. Hunter Robb, to write about her plans, but after much hesitation, she kindly consented to permit the publication of the signed statement that follows:

The need of a systematic and thoroughly organized nursing service in connection with the army, both in times of peace and war, was apparent during the late struggle. During the time of peace the men of the army corps appointed for hospital services seemed to be sufficient, but when the soldiers went into active service, the need