MIREY

By FRANK NEILSON

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FLIP th' piller a leetle higher up, Mirey," said the old man, peevishly. "Th' cher hurts my back—an' th' sun's a shinin' right in my eyes."

The girl tenderly adjusted the pillow and with masculine strength lifted the rude chair with its paralytic burden to a shadier spot under the apple tree.

"Ye ain't a treatin' Jake right, Mirey," grumbled the old man. "He ain't said nothin', but I kin see it; an' you a goin' to marry him this fall."

"Mebbe I am—mebbe I ain't," the girl said, impatiently.

The old man looked up at her anxiously.

"I knowed it," he exclaimed. "I've seed it a comin' ever sence that Evans come a snoopin' 'round here, a pizenin' yer mind with his stories 'bout fine houses, an' great ladies, an' dresses, an' dimunds. What brought him 'way up here in this wild place? Who knows what he is, ennyhow? Like as not he's one of them revnoo spies."

"Ye've got no call to slander him that a way, pap," retorted the girl, hotly. "Lots of them city folks spends their vacations in th' mountains. An' ennybody kin see he's a gentleman. He ain't no spy."

There were hot words over the young city man, leaving the old man sullen and dissatisfied and the girl defiant. As she turned to go he said:

"Mirey, they's sumthin' I clean forgot to tell Jake when he come by, an' I must see him. He ain't more'n half way to th' stun, yit. Run, Mirey, ye must bring him back."

The girl hurried obediently down the steep path and along the base of the mountain, smiling as she went.

"I kin coax him into it after while," she murmured, "an' then I kin be sumbody. Rob says I kin have ennything I—"

A crash, a rattle of descending stones, a smothered ejaculation, and two struggling, interlocked men rolled down into the path below her. One of them, wrenching the revolver from the other's hand, arose panting, tall and powerful. His opponent lay quite still, blood trickling from a wound on the curly, handsome head.

With a choking cry Mirey sprang forward and raised the wounded head in her arms.

"Ye've killed him," she moaned.

"He's only stunned a leetle," growled the tall man. "He was a follerin' me, an' when I s'prised him he tried to shoot. He's a spy, Mirey."

"You lie, Jake!" the girl cried, defiantly. "An' this won't do ye no good, nuther."

The tall man bent down and from the inner pocket of the stylish coat drew a long, official-looking envelope.

"Look at that, Mirey," he cried, with a note of triumph. "Frum th' Internal Revnoo D'partment!"

"That ain't his name on it—it's fer sumbody else," she protested, wildly. "Let me read what's inside."

She reached up a trembling hand, took the opened sheet and her sunbrowned face turned pale. The wounded head dropped from the encircling arms and she staggered to her feet, swaying, crushing the letter in her hands. The man at her feet stirred and sighed. The tall man knelt and with his handkerchief bound the unresisting hands cruelly tight.

"What ye goin' to do with him, Jake?" asked the girl, quietly, almost inaudibly.

"Ye've heered rumors of what went with 'tother one," the tall man muttered, with a significant glance. "But tain't fer me to say. Th' boys'll decide that."

The girl shuddered and turned away.

"You'll have to go an' tell th' boys, Mirey, while I watch him. He musn't git away."

"I—I kain't—bring them, Jake. I'll watch him. He'll not git away," savagely. "Give me th' gun."

Jake's eyes looked searchingly into hers. She met the scrutiny unflinchingly.

"Kin I trust ye, Mirey?"

"Don't I know what'll happen ef he gits away," she cried, indignantly. "D'ye think I'd send pap and—and you—to prison? I'll kill him first. Go—an' hurry."

She seated herself on a nearby bowlder and with drawn face and cold, pitiless eyes regarded the unconscious captive. The bees, homegoing, heavy-laden, droned musically among the blossoms, loath to leave. From the distant river came the faint whistle of a passing boat. A great, black buzzard flapped heavily down upon the dead limb of a sycamore, wiped his hooked beak on his sable plumage and cocked his baleful eye inquisitively at the fallen man.

The captive heaved a long, quivering sigh, opened his eyes, struggled, and sat up, staring about him confusedly.

"Mirey," he said, faintly. "Is that you, Mirey?"

He drew his feet under him to rise. The revolver in the brown hand rose quickly, leveled at his face.

"Don't ye try it," the girl said, harshly. "I'll shoot—an' ye know I don't miss."

"Mirey! Have you turned against me?"

"Hain't ye played th' hypocrite long enuff, Joseph Armacost," she sneered.

The breeze rustled the letter at her feet. He glanced at it and started.

"I guess the play's over," he observed, wearily.

She made no reply. After awhile he looked up again and said softly:

"Mirey, before they—before I go—will you forgive me?"

She turned away her head to hide the tears of wounded pride that would not be repressed.

"It was mean, cruel, despicable," he continued, "but we have to do such things sometimes—they're a part of our orders. I wish you could understand and forgive me, Mirey."

"Fergive ye!" she burst out. "Fergive ye! You lied to me, made love to me, learned me to love—yes, to love—sich a snake as you. You'd have sent poor old pap to prison, an' made me an outcast—a convict's darter. Fergive ye? Never—you hound."

"Mirey, it wasn't all a lie. I did admire you—I do yet. And I intended to arrange that your father might escape if—"

"Then ye wouldn't have done yer duty. You'd have played traitor to both sides. Don't talk to me. I don't never want to hear yer voice."

There was a long silence—then the man remarked:

"I suppose Jake has gone after the gang."

"Don't mention Jake's name. You ain't fit to. He's a man."

"Look here, Mirey. Do you realize what you are doing? You are helping murder me, as surely as though you had shot me through the head with that revolver. Do you understand what that means—to take human life—in cold blood? Bad as I am I never did what you are doing now. You are helping murder me, Mirey."

The girl shuddered again, then steeled herself.

"How do I know what they'll do with ye? That's their bizness—not mine. You an' them fer that."

"Mirey, you know as well as I that I'll never see another sunrise if you keep me here 30 minutes longer. You loved me once, Mirey. An hour ago you would have gone with me to the ends of the earth. Do you hate me so now that you will stain your soul with my blood?"

She gave a great sob.

"What kin I do? I dasen't let ye go. Let me alone. Fer God's sake don't tempt me."

He strained his strong wrists, the handkerchief fell over the supple, pliant hands, and he sprang to his feet, defying the deadly weapon upraised in the shaking hands.

"Stop! I'll have to shoot! I promised Jake—ye're a spy."

"Shoot, then, Mirey. I'd better die that way than by torture. Shoot—right here—between the eyes—be sure."

The dark eyes looked into his, filled with tears, and the grim muzzle dropped.

"O, Rob—I kain't—I'm a coward."

He sprang forward, seized the weapon, and fired every chamber in the air.

"Now, you've done your duty," he exclaimed, breathlessly. "You've fired every bullet at me and only wounded me as I ran. I've a boat concealed at the river. Goodby, Mirey."

She grasped his arm and clung to him desperately.

"Not till I know ye won't inform on pap and—Jake. I must know that, er I'll hold ye till they come—an' they've heered th' shots."

"Could I betray you—after you've saved me? Mirey—girl—look in my eyes—they shall never know."

She looked, knew, and released him. He stooped to kiss her, but she thrust him back fiercely. He seized the brown right hand, pressed it to his lips, and bounded away. The girl fell on her knees.

"O, Lord, fergive me fer what I've done. Fergive me fer the lie I'm about to tell. An', O, God, help me to fergit him."

Then she pressed her burning lips to the brown right hand, rubbed the spot madly with the crushed letter, and, with a little moan, cast the paper away, as she cast him from her heart, and rose to face the hurrying men.

Late that night when Jake returned, weary and desperate, from the fruitless search, Mirey, from the old man's side, stepped forward in the moonlight to meet him.

"Jake," she said, softly, "don't worry. He'll never tell. I know."

Jake looked down, sternly, into the dark eyes.

"Mirey—you let him go."

She laid both brown hands on his arm and looked up, pleadingly, into the grave, rugged face.

"Yes—it was better. I've been a fool, Jake. But it's all past now. An'—Jake—ye needn't wait till fall—ef ye'll have me yit."

Jake stooped, kissed the quivering lips, put his strong arm about her, and led her to the smiling old man.

Vanity.

Mr. Potts (to his wife)—My dear, the air is chilly. Fermez la fenetre.

The Visitor (sotto voce)—Why do you ask your wife in French to shut the window?

"Because you are here. If I asked her in English she wouldn't do it, as she won't take instructions from me before visitors. But if I say it in French she gets up and does it at once, so as to let you see that she understands the language."—Pick-Me-Up.

Adopts German System.

After repeated experiments the United States navy has decided to adopt the Slaby-Arco German wireless telegraphy system, which has been demonstrated to be the most practical.

AMERICANS LEARNING TO EAT FISH

THE IMPORTANT WORK OF THE UNITED STATES COMMISSIONERS OF FISH AND FISHERIES.

NOT only is there spreading abroad more knowledge in regard to the preservation of the fishes with which the waters of our land are already stocked, but the inhabitants of inland districts, as well as of coast regions, are learning the value of fish as a food and the economy of stocking even the small streams. The farmer is beginning to look upon the finny beings as valuable additions to his farm creatures, as a welcome addition to his bill of fare. In the near future, when we visit our country cousins, we may reasonably look forward to a dish of fresh fish flanking the traditional fried chicken.

Since the United States government had her eyes opened to the value of fish culture she has made great strides in the work, and now is to the fore of all other countries in carrying it on on a large scale. After her in the prosecution of this work should be mentioned, in the following order, Canada, Germany, Norway and Sweden.

Our valuable and indefatigable fish commission, one of the most popular of the government bureaus, is accomplishing results many and various. It is 30 some years since Prof. Baird was appointed "to prosecute investigations with a view to ascertaining what diminution in our number of food fishes of the coast and the lakes of the United States had taken place, to what causes the same is due, and what protective, prohibitory or precautionary measures should be adopted." Soon after the investigation was instituted several hatcheries were established, and almost every fresh session of congress new hatcheries have been provided for. Now 35 hatcheries in 25 states are in operation. Last year the United States fish commission sent out 1,488,673,374 little fishes to stock waters in various parts of the country. The demand from private individuals is constantly increasing.

PICKING OUT THE DEAD EGGS IN ONE OF THE GOVERNMENT HATCHERIES.

A pond, if only a small one, should not be neglected by the farmer; can be made readily available as a home for the fishes. And all one has to do to obtain a bountiful supply of these minute water creatures is to fill out a simple blank of application and send it to the state fish hatchery. The kind of water must be described (whether spring-fed lake, running stream, or what), whether or not fish already inhabit it, and one must specify the kind of fish desired and the number, though those in charge of the hatchery may suggest a different selection to yours. Then, at the proper season, some day along will come the fish train bearing its small cans, each probably containing tens of thousands of fish; and the person to whom the can is addressed receives his property and at once proceeds to empty into his waters the tens of thousands of baby fish. He now has the beginning of future property concerning which an enthusiastic fish culturist has written thus: "After the seed is planted nothing further is required than to reap what you have sown. Wind, rain, hail storms or cyclones do not damage them, nor are the buds blighted by early frosts or the fruit withered by late ones."

We shall have time to speak of the artificial propagation of but one species of fish, and have selected the white fish, probably the most important group of fresh-water fishes of the world. The artificial propagation of white fish has been carried on with great success, and about four-fifths of the eggs hatch. When left to nature a female fish will deposit from 10,000 to 75,000 eggs; but many of the eggs are destroyed by enemies, and there is great loss. In the artificial methods, the impregnated eggs which are to be shipped to any distance are placed on trays and drained, then covered with damp mosquito netting, over which is packed damp moss; the trays are placed in cases, and shipped in cool cars or cool boat rooms. Whitefish eggs have been safely shipped from Michigan to Australia.

The eggs are hatched in hatching-jars, sufficient water being introduced to keep the eggs in slow motion. Everything must be scrupulously clean. When the "fry" is hatched they go out into tanks, then are dipped into kegs and transported to natural spawning grounds. If they go any considerable distance fresh water is kept running on them.

The fish commission holds as one important branch of its work the dissemination of information relative to the utilization of fishery products, which includes methods of canning, pickling, drying and refrigeration. The Americans have been most wasteful with their fisheries, as with other of their rich resources, and the strict laws that different states have in recent times passed in regard to fish preservation come a little late—the shad had almost entirely disappeared from the Connecticut river, likewise the salmon, though this river was once famous for both shad and salmon.

The division of fish culture, a very important department of the commission, now operates, besides its 35 hatcheries, four railroad cars for distribution, and a large equipment for the carrying on of its work. For the prosecution of the marine work three vessels are used; the steamers Albatross and Fish Hawk, and a schooner, the Grampus. The Fish Hawk is a floating hatchery, engaged in hatching shad, lobster and mackerel, in collecting eggs, and in distribution of the fry. In Maine are situated stations for cultivating salmon for distribution in New England and near-by territory. At Woods Holl and Gloucester, Mass., lobster, cod, flat fish, and other marine species are propagated. Shad are carefully looked after by the Fish Hawk on the Delaware river, and at stations in Maryland, North Carolina, Washington, D. C., and the fish distributed all along the Atlantic seaboard. On the great lakes, devoted to white fish, perch, pike, lake trout, lake herring, etc., hatcheries are located as follows: Cape Vincent, N. Y.; Put-in-Bay, O.; Detroit, Alpena and Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., and Duluth, Minn. Work with brook trout, black spotted trout, crappie, bream, etc., is carried on at St. Johnsbury, Vt.; Nashua, N. H.; Wytheville, Va.; Erwin, Tenn.; Cold Spring, Ga.; Northville, Mich.; Quincy, Ill.; Manchester, Ia.; Neosha, Mo.; San Marco, Tex.; Leadville, Col.; Spear Fish, S. D., and Bozeman, Mont. On the Pacific seaboard there are in operation six stations for the cultivation of the Pacific salmon. Shad and striped bass now are common on the Pacific coast, though unknown until their planting there about 20 years ago.

INTERIOR OF STATE HATCHERY AT COLD SPRING HARBOR, N. Y.

One of our statesmen, one who speaks with authority, bears this testimony in regard to the work of the fish commission: "There is no expenditure on the part of the government which results in greater economic benefit to the country at large than that applied to the fostering of the fisheries."

KATHERINE POPE.

Woman at Her Best.

It is now conceded by many shrewd judges of the sex that woman's beauty is most splendid and her intellect is in full maturity at 28 years. Cleopatra was 28 when she first met Antony and enslaved the handsomest man in the whole Roman empire, as well as one of the greatest orators, generals and statesmen. The queen of Sheba was 28 when she dazzled Solomon nearly off his throne. The marquise de Pompadour was 25 when she met Louis XV., and 28 when she began to rule his domains. Josephine captured Napoleon at 33, it is true, but she was a widow at whom he had been casting sheep's eyes for five years.

Bears a Curious Title.

Many of Gen. Shafter's older acquaintances occasionally call him "Small Cap" Shafter, a name which originated at a banquet in Denver a good many years ago. In one of the local papers a list of guests was given, all the names being put in small capitals. Through a printer's error Shafter's name was set up in ordinary letters and the proofreader marked it "small cap" in the usual way. The compositor was from the country and unacquainted with marks used by proofreaders in daily papers, so he inserted "Small Cap" before Shafter's name. This was why "Small Cap Shafter" appeared among the army list of guests.

FREE PROOF FORBIDS DOUBT.

GAINES, PA., August 3, 1903.—"I received your sample of Doan's Kidney Pills and since have taken two boxes, and I can truthfully say they are as good as they are recommended to be. When I began taking them I could not bend my back enough to pick up a stick of wood—sometimes could not walk or move my feet—had two doctors but did not get relief. I saw your ad., and got a trial box and have taken two besides, and I am able to do a very hard day's work. Doan's Kidney Pills are a God-send to humanity."—MRS. ELLA A. MATTISON, Gaines, Pa., Box 186.

The great fame of Doan's Kidney Pills is won by the wondrous power of the free trial to demonstrate surprising merit.

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For free trial box, mail this coupon to Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y. If above space is insufficient, write address on separate slip.

GALESBURG, ILL., March 31, 1903.—"The sample of Doan's Kidney Pills came to hand. I also got one 50-cent box from our druggist, and I am thankful to say the pain across the small of my back disappeared like a snow bank in hot sun. Doan's Pills reach the spot."

ELMER WARFEL.

CAMBRIA, WYO.—"Previous to taking the sample of Doan's Kidney Pills I could scarcely hold my urine. Now I can sleep all night and rarely have to get up, and that aching across my back, a little above my hips, is gone."

ISAAC W. STEVENS, Cambria, Wyo.

WITH NERVES UNSTRUNG AND HEADS THAT ACHE

WISE WOMEN BROMO-SELTZER TAKE

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Before Marconi.

An Egyptologist and an Assyriologist were disputing about the relative advancement of the two ancient peoples whom they were studying.

"Well, sir," said the Egyptologist, "we find remains of wires in Egypt which prove they understood electricity!"

"Pshaw!" answered the Assyriologist. "We don't find any wires in Assyria, and that shows they knew wireless telegraphy."—Youth's Companion.

Empire State Express in Foot-Ball.

The New York Central's Empire State Express is recognized as the swiftest and surest train operated by America's greatest railroad, and considered the very best means to cover the ground in the time required. It is for this reason that the Harvard University football team named their best and surest play of the season of 1902 the "Empire State Express," for they believed it to be the most reliable play in their programme. It was successful throughout the season until it met Yale's "20th Century Limited" play, which was just as swift, safe and sure, but had longer endurance and was "limited" only by the size of the field. The names of the rival teams very correctly describe the difference in the famous trains, the "Empire State" running only from New York to Buffalo, while the "20th Century Limited" makes the 980 miles between New York and Chicago in twenty hours every day of the year. Great is the New York Central and great are the trains it operates—swift, safe and reliable.—*From the Brooklyn Standard Union.*

Lawyer—"I must know the whole truth before I can successfully defend you. Have you told me everything?" Prisoner—"Yes, everything; 'cept where I hid the money, and I want that for myself!"—Glasgow Times.

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the Northern Pacific will sell a special ticket for a tour of Yellowstone Park, including railway and Pullman fares and meals in Dinning car, St. Paul to Gardiner and return, stage coach transportation through the park, and board and lodging at the Park hotels for the regular tour of five and one-half days. Tickets sold so that passengers can leave St. Paul or Minneapolis on Park train of Sept. 8 only.

If necessary, a special train of Pullman, dining and observation cars will be run. Apply to any N. P. R. Agent for information and reservations, or write to Chas. S. Fee, Gen. Passgr. Agent, St. Paul, Minn.

Stranger—"I would like to have a tooth pulled." Dentist—"A man who would like to have a tooth pulled must be a lunatic. Guess you'd better go to the nearest asylum."—Boston Transcript.

Radisson on the Chippewa.

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"Jack told me that I was not like other girls." "That's what he tells all of us. He's read somewhere that all women are different."—Louisville Times.

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