A LION AND A LIONESS.

An Adventure and a Romance of a Courageous Woman.

WRITTEN FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO CALL BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

CHAPTER I.

DOUBT if you will find either profit or pleasure in reading this incident of my third voyage up the Nile. It is really not worth reading. I have written it down merely for a few friends who know something of the facts; and also to escape the annoyance of having to tell it over as one of the features of my four years' travel in the Orient. But to begin. Wearying of the Levant, I was resting a time in Rome when I was formally invited as well as specially urged to witness the marriage ceremony between the Grand Duchess Alexandria and the Duke of Edinburgh. Let us pass over these wasteful follies; the waste of time, the waste of sense, of soul! I have only mentioned the reason for my presence in St. Petersburg; have only mentioned the fact of my being there, because I saw a face in that gathering of people that could not be forgotten. It was the face of a tall, dark and serenely quiet Dolores, a young woman who had surely met and made the acquaintance of sorrow early in the morning of life. I sometimes wonder if I could ever have known or cared to know any one who had

not sorrowed deeply. And yet I now know very well that in whatever guise that woman could have come there could have been no two roads for us from the day of her coming to the day of her going.

Let me be a little confidential right here. I knew, I had always known, I should meet this woman. I had waited for her; worked hard, built up the battlements and the fortress of my soul so that I might receive her into it; and defend her well against my baser self when she should come. And now tell me; have you never had a thought, a conviction like this; a certainty in your own heart that your other and better self would come to you complete and entire some day, soon or late; so soon as you might have the fortress ready? The doctor said she was dying. She had been trying to stand between the Czar and the Jews. She may not have been of that "peculiar peril," but I think she had the money of Rothschilds and Sir Moses Montefiore behind her. There had been attemps at assassination, followed by executions. Some of the condemned were women. It was as if this woman herself had been condemned to death. I think she had suffered more than all the others put together; she was so very, very sensitive to the pain and sorrow of others.

There are souls like that. But there is a good God. The soul that suffers keenly can and shall enjoy keenly. You can, if you care to persist in it, make yourself as the centuries wheel past more than an entire nation in this.

We had common ground to work on in the cause of the condemned people. It was on this ground that we first met; as two swift streams that flow in the same direction and finally unite forever. All that could be done was done specially for "the law's delay," whatever else must be laid to the door of Russia, is not one of her sins.

As summer took flight we went south with the birds, for she surely felt that she was dying. Besides, she had been impressed with the idea of restoring Jerusalem and having a Christian church established in the Holy City. Her religion? I think it was all religions. I saw her kneel in the Kremlin at Moscow, cross herself in St. Peter's at Rome and bend low at prayer in the Synagogue at Alexandria. I think she would have done the same in a mosque. As stated before, I had, previous to meeting her, been all over Syria. And so, whenever she referred to her cherished idea, as she so often did, of forming Jewish settlements in and about Jerusalem and restoring Israel, I took occasion to explain how impossible and impractical it all was.

I remember telling her how that in a whole day's ride from Babylon toward Jerusalem I had seen no living thing save a single grasshopper. I explained to her that the path of civilization had been in the track of the setting sun ever since the dawn of history, and that it was not in the power of man to reverse this course. I attempted to show that the tide of population would pour upon the salubrious and fertile shores of the farthest west till the heart of civilization would beat right there. I explained to her that wherever the great strong heart of commerce beat strongest there would be found the strongest and the best of those people whom she hoped to help, while the weak and helpless of that race would remain stranded by the waters of the Levant, as in Russia now.

"Why not then let us anticipate this and build the city of refuge by your great sea in the path of this civilization which you say will so surely come?"

Like the golden doors of dawn was the great earnest idea to me as she spoke. But I knew, as said before, that the "peculiar people" could not be induced to brave the desert. They do not seek rest, but action; employment in the marts. They would not rest but a single night even by the sweet waters of Jacob's well.

CHAPTER II.

As winter came on and Egypt began to be oppressively full of tourists it was decided that we should make our escape up the Nile and hunt the ruin of Kamak and other places until the outgoing tide set in. Once fairly on our way it did not take long to persuade me that she was not only gaining strength each day in body but in soul. We had been more than a month on the Nile, a tattered palm tree here tossing in the wind and sand; a gaunt, clay-colored camel yonder all legs and hair; beggars, disease, despair all around us; a land to fly from, fit place for tombs, jackals, and famishing lions!

But she was stronger, there were roses in her face. Her glorious black hair had not the dampness of death in it now but was luxuriously sensate with renewed life and health and possible happiness.

One warm sunset, as the boat lay with its prow in the yellow sand that seemed to stretch away into infinity, she proposed that she and I should ascend to the top of the tall ruins on a hill and there wait and watch and listen for the coming day.

It was a dreadful place. I had already walked a little way out, but on seeing a shriveled black hand stretching up from the

sand I had turned back, only to stumble over the head of a mummy which I had afterward seen one of our servants gather up and take to his Arab camp for firewood. Still, we had been pent up in the boat too much; and then would not she be with me?

Two Arabs were taken with us to carry a bottle of water and the rugs and robes. The hill was steeper than it at first seemed, and the ascent through the sand heavy. I was having an opportunity to test her strength and endurance. I might also have an occasion to test her courage before the break of morning, for as we entered between two towering columns of red granite one of the Arabs dropped on a knee and spread his hand as wide as he could in the sand. But wide as he spread it he could not more than half cover the fresh foot-print of a huge lion.

The clamber to the top was steep and hard. Yet it was not nearly so steep and hard as I could have wished it when I reflected that very likely before midnight a lion might pass that way.

We found that these wonderful columns of granite were coped with great slabs of granite. These granite slabs were of astonishing breadth and thickness. This temple, as it is called, had probably been a tomb. I took good care to see that there was no other means of ascent to the place where we had chosen to spend the night than the one by which we had ascended. And I remember how eagerly I wished for a crowbar in order that I might break down a little of the debris, so that the ascent might be less easy for prowling beasts.

But as there was nothing of the sort at hand I dismissed the two Arabs and resolved to be as brave, if possible, as the singularly brave and beautiful woman who had come here to hear the voices of desolation.

The sky was rimmed with yellow—yellow to the east, yellow to the west, a world of soft and restful yellow that melted away by gradations as the eye ascended from the desert. It was like melodies in its serene harmonies and awful glory.

And she at my side partook of it all; she breathed it, absorbed it, literally became a part of it. I saw her grow and glow. Soul and body I saw her dilate and expand till she was in absolute harmony with the awe and splendor that encompassed us. I felt that she had been in the midst of even a part of this tawny desolation ages and ages before. Perhaps her soul had been born here—born before the pyramids.

CHAPTER III.

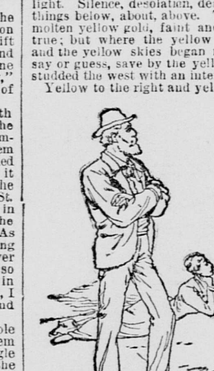
With my own hands I spread her couch of skins and rugs in the remotest corner of a great stone slab that still lifted its unbroken front in defiance of time high above the tawny sands of the desert. The night was very sultry, even here on this high and roomy summit. The broad deep slab of granite was still warm with sunshine gone away and gave out heat like a dying furnace. The steep and arduous ascent had taxed her strength and unloosing her robe as I turned to examine more minutely our strange quarters on the top of this lofty tomb or temple, she sank to rest, half reclining on her arm, her chin in her upturned palm, her face lifted away toward the rising moon.

Half a dozen paces to the right I saw two tall and ponderous columns of granite standing in line with those that supported the great slab on which she rested. Evidently these grand and solitary columns had also once been capped by granite slabs. But these had fallen to the ground under the leveling feet of many centuries, and now lay almost swallowed up in the sea of yellow sands below. I put out my foot carefully, trying to reach the broad top of the nearest column of granite, but it was beyond me. Stepping back a couple of paces and quickly removing my boots, I gathered up my strength and made a leap, landing almost in the center of the column's top. A half step backward, another leap—who could resist the challenge of that lone and kingly column that remained?—I landed securely as before, then turned about. Her face had not lifted an instant from the awful majesty of the Orient.

Slowly, wearily, the immense moon came shouldering up through the seas of yellow sand. These billows of sand seemed to breathe and to move. The expiring heat of the departed sun was felt in the twilight and shimmer and waves of soft and undulating light. And yet it was not light; only the lone and solemn ghost of a departed day. Yellow and huge and startling stood the moon at last, full grown and fearful in its nearness and immensity on the topmost lift of yellow sands in the yellow seas before us. Distance seemed to be annihilated. The moon seemed to have forgotten her place and all proportion. Looking down into the sullen Nile, it seemed a black and bottomless chasm. And it seemed so far away! And the moon so very near.

Black as blackest Egypt rolled the somber Nile down and on and on and on through this world of yellow light; this light that was not light. Silence, desolation, death lay on all things below, about, above. The west was molten yellow gold, faint and fading it is true; but where the yellow sands left off and the yellow skies began no man could say or guess, save by the yellow bars that studded the west with an intense yellow.

Yellow to the right and yellow to the left,



yellow overhead and yellow underfoot, with only this endless chasm of Erebus cleaving the yellow earth in halves with its bottomless pit of endless and indissoluble blackness.

After a time—and all the world still one sea of softened yellow, torn in two by Charon's chasm of black waters—I silently leapt back, replaced my boots on my feet and then held my breath. For I had seen, or perhaps felt, an object move on the lifted levels of sand between us and the moon.

Cautiously I sank down on my breast and peered low and long up the horizon. I saw, heard nothing. Glancing around to where my companion lay I saw that she still had not stirred from the half reclining position she had first taken, with half lifted face in her upturned palm.

Then she had seen nothing, heard nothing. This, however, did not argue much. Her life had not been of the desert. She had spent her years in the study of men and women. I had spent mine with wild beasts. I could trust her to detect motives in men, give the warning note of danger from dangerous men, but the wild beasts and wilder men of the border were mine to watch and battle with, not hers.

She had seen nothing; evidently she feared nothing and so was resting, resting in mind as in body. And as I glanced again over my shoulder and saw how entirely content she seemed, I was glad. Surely she depended entirely on me; on my watchfulness and my courage. And this made me more watchful and more resolute and stout of heart. A man likes to be trusted. A true man likes a true woman's trust much indeed. A strong man likes to be leaned upon. It makes him stronger, braver, better. Let women never forget this. Admit that she, too, has her days of strength and endurance; and admit that she, too, has her peculiar fortress of strength and courage; and these also man respects and regards with piteous tenderness. But man, incapable of her finer and loftier courage and endurance, resents her invasion of his prerogative.

It is only a womanly man who can really love a manly woman. But to continue: Looking up a third time to this woman at my side I saw that she had let her head sink low on her leaning arm. She was surely sleeping. How I liked her trust and her faith in me! And how I liked her courage, too, and her high quality of endurance. It was her courage that had brought me up here this night to the contemplation of awful and all-glorious Africa. Silently and without lifting a finger she had shown me a world of burnished gold. I had surely seen God through her. We stood nearer together now than ever before. This single hour of indescribable glory should forever stand as an altar in the desert. Our souls had melted and flown and tided on intermingled like molten gold in the golden atmosphere and the yellow scene that wrapped us round about, and no word had been said. When God speaks so audibly let man be silent.

I must have looked longer on the sleeping and trustful woman at my side than I ought to have looked, for on turning my eyes again to the horizon there distinctly on the yellow sand and under the yellow moon moved, stealthily as a cat, yet graceful and grand, the most kingly beast I ever beheld. He did not look right nor left, but moved along with his huge head in the air, slow and stately and triumphant in his fearful symmetry and strength.

CHAPTER IV.

I half arose and felt for my trusty six-shooter. This pistol was not one that had been purchased for this or any other occasion, as the worthless pistols of the time are purchased, but it had been my companion from boyhood.

As I half arose the lion suddenly halted. He lifted his proud head higher in the air, and to my consternation half turned about and looked straight in my direction. Then a sidewise and circuitous step or two with his long reach of hinder leg, his wide and deep and flexible flank; slow and kingly, splendid to see.

I sank down again, quite willing to let him interview the land of Arabs in the black chasm below. They had spears and guns and everything down there, everything but courage to face a lion with, and I was not going to interfere with a fight which at the first had promised to be entirely their own.

But this new movement of mine only accentuated his graceful motion. The head now turned in the air, like the head of a man. I had time to note, and I record it with certainty, that the massive head and the tumbled mane towered straight above the shoulder. In fact the lower parts of the long mane looked most like the long shaggy beard of a man falling down upon his broad breast. This I noted as he still kept on in his sidewise circuit above us and around us on the yellow sand and under the yellow moon. At times he was almost indistinct. But the carriage of that head! There was a fine fascination in the lift and the movement and the turn of that stately head that must ever be remembered, but can never be described.

As he came nearer—for his sidewise walk was mainly in our direction—I saw that he, too, was yellow, as if born of this yellow world in this yellow night, but his was a more ponderous yellow—the yellow of red and rusty old gold. At times he seemed almost black, and all the time terrible.

In half a minute more he would be too close for comfort, and I decided to arouse my companion. She wakened fully awake if I may be allowed to express a fact awkwardly. You may know that there are people like that.

"What is it?"

"A lion."

"Are you sure?"

"Certain."

"Where?"

"Right before your eyes!"

"Why, I see nothing."

She had looked and was still looking far out against the yellow horizon where her eyes had rested when she fell asleep. And as she looked, or, rather, before I ventured to point her to the spot almost under the tomb where the lion strode, he passed on

and was by this time, perhaps, almost quite under the great slab of granite where we rested.

I was about to whisper the fact in her ear when I fancied I felt the whole tomb tremble! Then it seemed to shake, or rather rumble again. Then again it rumbled! Then again! Then there was a roar that literally shook the sand. I heard the sand sift and rattle down like drops of rain from where it lay in the crevices as I listened to find whether or not he was moving forward toward the place by which we had ascended. He was surely moving forward! I felt rather than heard him move. I assert—and I must content myself for the present with merely asserting—that you can feel the movements of an animal under such circumstances. And I assert further than an animal, especially a wild beast, can feel your movements under almost any circumstances. The undeveloped senses deserve a book by themselves. But just now, with the largest lion I ever saw coming straight upon me, is hardly the time or place to write such a treatise.

Pistol in hand, I sprung to the steep and rugged passage; and not a second too soon. His mighty head was almost on a level with the granite slab, and he was crouching for a bound and a spring upward which would, perhaps, land him in our faces! I could see—or did I feel?—that his huge hinder feet were spread wide out and sunken in the sand, with preparation to bend all their force toward bearing him upward in one mighty bound.

I fired—fired right into his big red mouth, between two hideous pickets of ugly yellow teeth. He fell back, and then, gathering his ferocious strength, he bounded up and forward again, this time striking his left shoulder heavily against a projecting corner of the granite slab. Fortunately the ascent was slightly curving, so that the distance could not be made at a single bound without collision, else had we both surely been destroyed.

Again the supple and comely beast, disdaining to creep or crawl, made a mighty leap upward, but only to strike the rounding corner of the great granite slab and fall back as before.

But I knew he would reach us in time! And if ever man did wish for fitting arms to fight with and defend woman it was I at that time. True, I had five shots left; but what were they in the face of this furious king of beasts? I began to fear they would only serve to enrage him.

Still, he should have all I had to give. Death is, has been and will be. The best we can make of it all is to try and see that we shall not die ingloriously.

The woman had been by my side all this time. And now, as the lion paused as if to gather up the broken thunder-bolts of his strength, she laid a hand on my arm, never so gently, and said:

"Let me go down and meet him face to face. I think he will not harm me."

"Madam," I exclaimed, impetuously, "you will meet him up here, and face to face, soon enough, I think."

"No, that will not do. You must trust the lion, as Daniel did."

I pushed her back, as she tried to pass down, almost violently.

"There," I cried, as I wheeled about and forced her before me for an instant, "if you have real courage leap to the head of yonder column, then on to the next. Quick; be brave enough to save yourself, and ——"

"No, I will not go away and leave you to die."

"For God's sake you will run away and save me."

"Why? How?"

"I will join you there, go! Quick, or it will be too late."

Another leap of the lion. Bang! bang! This time he did not fall back, but held on by sheer force of his powerful arms; his terrible claws tearing at the granite slab as they hung and hooked over its outer edge.

Bang! Bang! Bang! The last shot. I hurled my revolver in his face, for he had not flinched or given back a single grain. His breath and my breath were mingled there in the smoke of my pistol. I heard—or did I feel?—his great hinder feet fastening in the steep earth under him for his final struggle to the top.

I turned, saw that she had reached the farther column, and with three leaps and a bound I had crossed the granite slabs and stood erect on the nearer one. Not a moment had I left. The lion, with great noise of claws on the granite, came tearing to the surface. I crouched down out of breath on the outer edge of my column, so as to be surely out of reach of his ponderous paws. I expected him to decide the matter at once, to reach us or give it up instantly. But he seemed in no haste now. He scarcely advanced at all for what seemed to me to be a long time. Finally, jerking his tail like the swift movement of a serpent, he strode along the farthest edge of the granite slab and seemed to take no notice of us whatever. Blood was dripping from his mouth, but he did not seem to heed it.

Once more he strode with his old majesty, and seemed ashamed that he should have descended to the indignity of a struggle to gain the place where he now stood, sullen

and triumphant. Enraged? He was choking, dying with rage; and yet this kingly creature would not even condescend to look in our direction.

Why, I could feel his fearful rage as he now walked on and around the edge of that granite slab. At length he came opposite to where I lay crouching on the further edge of my column. He passed on without so much as turning his eyes in my direction. And yet I felt, I felt and knew, as distinctly as if he could have talked and told me, that he was carefully measuring the distance.

When the lion, in his stately round, came to the narrow pass by which he had ascended, he paused an instant and half lowered his head.

Ah, how devotly I did pray that he would be generous enough to descend to the sands and gracefully present us with his absence.

But no! Lifting his huge head even higher in the air than before, he now passed on hurriedly, came on around to where in his stately majesty he stood with quivering flank and flashing eye, almost within reach of me. Yet he still disdained to even so much as look at me. His head was far above me as I crouched there on the farther edge of my column; his flashing eyes were lifted far above me and beyond me. Maybe he was on the lookout over the desert for the coming of his companion.

Soon, however, he set his huge paws on the very edge of the great slab on which he stood and then suddenly threw his right paw out toward me and against the edge of my column with the force and velocity of a catapult!

I heard the sharp, keen claws strike and scrape on the granite as if they had been hooks of steel.

Then he threw himself on his breast, and hitching himself a little to one side he threw his right paw so far that it landed full in the center of my column's top and tore a bit of my coat sleeve. Then he hitched his huge body a little farther on over the edge and again threw his huge paw right at my face. It fell short of its mark only a few inches, as it seemed to me. But having hastily gathered in my garments his claws did not find anything to fasten on and they drew back empty.

At this point three dusky etchings stood out against the golden east on the yellow sands, and looked intently at us with their enormous heads high in the air. And now the beast slowly arose and moved on. A lion's head seems always disproportionately large, but when he is exercising for an appetite to eat you it looks large indeed.

The monster who was occupying the platform with us surely saw his followers; indeed he must have seen them long before; but his unbending dignity seemed to forbid that he should take any heed of them.

The new-born hope that he would descend and join his followers died as he came on around.

And now something strange and notable transpired. This one incident is my excuse for thus elaborating this otherwise passive and tediously dull sketch of this night. I has risen to my feet, and as the lion came on around, this woman, with a force that was irresistible, sprang to my side, thrust me behind her, and stepping forward with a single spring she stood on the edge of the column nearest the lion.

I would have followed, but that same force, which I can now understand was a mental force and not at all a physical force, held me hard and fast to where I stood.

She had let her robe fall as she sprang forward and now stood only as the hand of God had fashioned her—a snow-white silhouette of perfect comeliness against the terrible and bloody mouth and tossing mane of the lion. She leaned forward as he came on around and close to the edge of his slab. She looked him firmly and steadily in the face, her wondrous eyes, her midnight eyes of all Israel, the child of the wilderness had once more met the lion of the desert as of old.

Who was this woman here who stepped between death and me and stood looking a wounded lion in the face? Was this Judith again incarnate? Or was this something more than Judith? Was it the Priestess and Prophetess Miriam, back once more to the banks of the Nile? Was it the old and forgotten mastery of all things animate which Moses and his sister knew that gave her dominion over the king of the desert? Or was her name Mary? "The other Mary," if you will, who won all things to her side—God in heaven, God upon earth—by the sad, sweet pity of her face and the story of holy love that was written there? The lion's head for a moment forgot its lofty defiance as she leaned a little forward. Then the tossed and troubled mane rose up and rolled forward like an inflowing sea. It never seemed so terrible. He was surely about to spring. And she, too! Her right foot settled solidly back, her left knee bent like a bow, her shapely and snowy shoulders under their glory of black hair bowed low. Her dauntless and shining eyes, her ready precious body leaned forward and was smiting the imperious beast full in his blazing eyes. I knew that her body would follow her spirit in an instant more.

Face to face! Spirit to spirit! Soul to soul! A second only the combat lasted. Then all ferocity and force of the brute was beaten down, melted like lofty battlements of snow before the burning arrows of the sun, and he slowly, surlily shrank in size, in spirit, in space. A paw drew back from the edge of the block, the eyes drooped, the head dropped a little and the terrible mane seemed terrible no more, as slowly, doggedly, mightily, aye dogedly and majestically, too, at the same time this noble creature forced himself sidewise and back a little.

Then he hesitated. Rebellion was in his mighty heart. He turned suddenly and looked full in the face once more. All the beast that was in him rose up. The terrible mane now seemed more terrible than before. With great head tossed, tail whipped back and teeth in the air, talons unsheathed and legs gathered under him, he was about to bound forward.

But the woman was before him. With eyes still fastened on his face, she with one long leap forward drove not only her stinging soul but her glowy body right against his teeth. Or rather, she had surely done so had not the lion half turned about, shrank back as she leapt forward. Then slowly, looking back over his blazing eyes, covering eyes, feeling back, with his spirit still defiant, if but to see whether her courage failed her in the least or her mighty spirit was still in battle armor, and then he passed. His companions had drawn back and into a depression in the desert, where he slowly and sullenly joined them.

One, two, three, four dim yet distinct black silhouettes against the yellow east; then but a single confused black etching; away, away, smaller and smaller, gone!

I gathered up her robe, crossed over, and letting it fall on her shoulders, where she still stood looking down and after the beast, I picked up my pistol from where it had fallen a few feet below, and as she turned about carefully reloaded it from cartridges by chance in my vest-pocket.

Returning to the summit I found her again resting on her couch at the corner of the huge slab tranquilly as if we had not been disturbed. We did not speak. Not a single word had been uttered all this time.

I sat down at the feet of this woman, not at her side, as before, and let my own feet dangle down over the edge on the side farthest away from the isolated columns. Neither of us spoke, nor did she move hand or foot till morning.

[THE END.]

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"'TIS BETTER TO LAUGH

Than to Cry," Says Charles W. Foster in the New York Weekly.

PETTED daughter—Papa, what has come over you? I never had a wish you were not anxious to gratify, and you even anticipated my wants and handed me money for all sorts of things I hadn't even thought of. But now I have to ask you for every cent I need, and you growl and grumble and ask if I think you are made of money, and you rail at women's extravagance and invariably ask me what on earth I did with the last check, or dollar, or dime you gave me. Don't you love me any more?

Papa—My darling, I love you as much as ever, but you are soon to be married and I am trying to gradually prepare you for the change.

GAVE HER A GOOD TIME.

Returned daughter—Oh, ma, everybody was so kind to me when I was in the city. They took me to balls and parties, and theaters, and operas, and all sorts of places.

Shrewd ma—I knew they would. You told everybody, didn't you, that your pa had bought a cottage at Newport, and we expected to entertain all our friends and relatives there next summer, that is, if they would come?

Daughter—Yes, indeed, ma; and they said of course they'd come. Newport is the capital of Rhode Island, isn't it?

Shrewd ma—The Newport we are going to is in Pennsylvania.

EVERY-DAY HISTORY.

Winkle—I wonder what becomes of all the boys who leave the country and enter the great struggle of life in the city.

Kinkle—They make big fortunes, and then lie back in their easy-chairs and advise country boys to stick to the farm.

MADE HIM SICK.

Doctor (on ocean steamer)—Your turn has come, I see, sir. Allow me to—"

Sea-sick passenger (an old bachelor)—N-o, no, doctor. It-it will soon pass off. It isn't sea-sea-sickness. I looked too long at those-those bridal couples.

EVOLUTION.

Miss de Fashion (a few years hence)—Pa, I'd like to walk down the avenue with you a little way to see a friend.

Pa—All right, my dear. Get your cane and overcoat and plug hat and come along.

THE SEASON OPENED.

Mrs. de Style—Dear me! What a lot of society news you've got hold of—even to a full description of Miss Tiptop's Paris trousseau! Where did you hear it all?

Miss de Style—At the symphony concert.

The London Police.

The metropolitan police force is not under the control of any local authority, but is directed by Commissioners who are responsible to the Home Office of the General Government, says the November Century. There is a strong demand in London for the transfer of the police authority to the County Council, and the subject has provoked much discussion. It is urged that the concentration of imperial and national interests in London is so vastly important that the higher authorities should maintain control of the police in protection of all those central concerns that pertain to the greatest capital in the world. Ultimately a compromise will probably be reached. The County Council ought certainly to have some share in the police administration of the metropolis.

"TWENTY BUSHELS OF ROSES."

A Poetic Little Incident Plucked Right Out of Sober History.

Housemaids Who Came Out While the Morning Dew Lay on the Garden and Pelted Each Other With Roses.

NOW, what was he going to do with all those roses? What did the man want them for? He asked that he might have leave to gather "twenty bushels a year." What an unusual request! An unheard-of one it was—and coming from a man!

It is a poetic little incident which I have plucked right out of sober history. It immediately brings a picture before me of an old, a very old, English garden. The man was the unfortunate Bishop of Ely of Elizabeth's reign. He was unfortunate not only because he lost the favor of his fickle sovereign, but because through one of her caprices he lost his garden. It is the last-named loss that engages our sympathies, and it is the one with which we have to do.

England had had pleasant gardens from the time of the conquest; with shady walks, hedges, fountains, and many fruit trees. And those gardens had been, as a rule, in the hands of men who had chosen an ecclesiastic life. The monks and bishops found the pursuit of horticulture congenial to their quiet tastes and their ways of seclusion. Even now, in the neighborhood of some of the old abbeys and other religious houses, may be seen a few half-winding rose-bushes, descendants of those once cultivated by tender hands; and along the moldering walls are still clinging vines and scraggly fruit trees.

Elizabeth's bishops were great horticulturists. Dr. Cox, Bishop of Ely, rich, honored, scholarly, and a man of fine taste, had a palace in London "and fair gardens, called Ely-place, on Holborn-hill." This great estate had long been held by the bishops of Ely; and it appears in history that the Duke of Gloster, afterward Richard III., once asked for strawberries from that place. In the play of "King Richard III," Shakespeare makes use of the incident:

My lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there;
I do beseech you, send some of them.

Our Bishop's garden covered several acres of land; and a right fertile tract it was, too, with just the needed moisture, for once, before London had become so densely peopled, a stream had flowed there, called the Oldbourne, from which the hill Holborn had taken its name. The Bishop had a princely establishment in this, his town house, which he kept up, besides maintaining his country place at Stanton; and there was no lack of upper gardeners and under gardeners to keep things in order.

We may be sure that, according to the custom, this ample domain was inclosed by a high wall of brick or stone, against which fruit trees were trained, so that

IN THE GENIAL WARMTH,

Where the sunshine could strike them, the abundance of peaches, plums, pears, apricots, nectarines—how tempting the names—might ripen in their time. Think of this great garden, with its cool, green vistas, its orchard trees, where pippins and other favorite apples were ready for the picking, bordered with box, its beds of lavender and thyme and all sweet herbs. Fragrant and beautiful, musical with the hum of bees and songs of birds, it was a peaceful, flower-adorned retreat. Right in the busy London of tradesmen and guilds, processions and pageants, of hawkers and peddlers, just outside its side glen walls, the stir and discordant noises must have come to the good Bishop as he walked and meditated, like the turmoil of a world he was glad to escape from.

We know that he took great delight in it, especially in his roses. One cannot help wondering about the kinds he had there. Roses past counting, "a gardenful," had the Bishop of Ely,

Red roses, white roses,
Roses past season.

Perhaps he had collected all the varieties which once grew wild in Britain, the Scotch roses, the sweet-briers, all the red, red roses, the pale-white ones, and the white ones, from thickets and hedges all over the dominion. He must have had the blended roses of York and Lancaster, the Provence and Burgundy roses and others, which came into England with the queen consorts from the south of Europe. The daintiest, dearest, most delicious, the damask roses could hardly have been among them, unless some crusader of kindred tastes with the Bishop had brought one when he came home.

We might never have known of this rose passion of his but for the misfortune that befell him. He had offended the Queen by rebuking her for her extravagant ceremonials, and she had never forgiven him. Elizabeth was a good hater; and the time came when she could have her revenge. Her new favorite, Sir Christopher Hatton, of whom she was foolishly fond, had long had his eye on the lovely gardens on Holborn Hill and wanted them. When it came to her knowledge the Queen commanded the Bishop to give them up. He resisted. Then she wrote him a brief letter, in which she used some of the strong language habitual to her when she was wroth. The Bishop was compelled to yield. But he reserved the privilege of free access to the gate-house, liberty to walk in the garden, and "leave to gather twenty bushels of roses yearly therein." The same was to be granted to his successor in the bishopric.

And now a light dawns upon me. Can it have been that the good man wanted the roses for confections and conserves.

DID HE PURPOSE GIVING THEM DISTILLED?

Let us not harbor such a thought for a moment. We will remember how many men have been almost passionate lovers of flowers; how Linnæus fell down on his knees when he first beheld the golden furze of England; how a great American divine expressed the extravagant desire to have mignonette growing in his grave in such a quantity that he could mow it with a scythe. We will remember our two distinguished historians, Bancroft and Parkman, among their roses.

How such men would revel in the flowers that certain recent travelers tell us of—the acres of blood-red anemones on the hills of Ephraim; the vast solitudes of daffodil far as the eye could reach, splashed with gladiolus and purple iris, that Pierre Loti came upon in Morocco, and the plains of lavendar he saw; the miles of prairie roses in the far West; the forget-me-nots of Western Siberia described by Kennan; "the steppe to the very horizon was a blue ocean of forget-me-nots. I do not mean simply that the ground was sprinkled with them, nor merely that they grew in great abundance. I mean that the grass everywhere was completely hidden by them, so that the plain looked as if a sheet of blue gauze had been thrown over it, or as if it was a great expanse of tranquil water reflecting a pale blue sky."

We will believe that the Bishop, grown gray among his flowers, stipulated for these twenty bushels now that the garden was to be taken away from him, so that he might have the rapture once a year of reveling in roses within the walls of his own home. To be let in through the gate-house by Sir Christopher's gate-keeper, and suffered to walk up and down and look at them would be tantalizing after all those years of ownership. He would have a carnival of roses till every old oak-paneled room in his house should be brightened by their glow and made sweet by their fragrance. From hall to lady's boudoir, everywhere within there should be a feast of roses.

So the house-maids came out while the morning dew lay on the garden; and with much chattering and girlish laughter and pelting one another with roses till the paths were strewn with petals, filled their baskets and bore them into the great house. And this continued till the Bishop of Ely was gathered to his fathers.

Years after, Gerard the botanist had a garden on Holborn Hill, containing 1100 plants, as catalogued by himself. There were all sorts of pleasant flowers; and who can doubt that some of the identical roses beloved by the Bishop were among them, and that they clung to the spot until the hill was dug over for building purposes and not a trace remained to show that a garden had ever been there?—Amanda B. Harris, in November Wide Awake.

A HAPPY INFLUENCE.

How the Hearts of Workingmen Went Out to a Fellow Worker.

In a pottery factory here there is a workman who had one small invalid child at home. He wrought at his trade with exemplary fidelity, being always in the shop with the opening of the day. Ha managed, however, to bear each evening to the bedside of his "wee lad," as he called him, a flower, a bit of ribbon, or a fragment of crimson glass—indeed, anything that would lie out on the white counterpane and give color to the room. He was a quiet, unsentimental man, but never went home at night without something that would make the wan face light up with joy at his return. He never said to a living soul that he loved that boy so much. Still he went on patiently loving him, and by and by he moved that whole shop into positively real but unconscious fellowship with him. The workmen made curious little jars and cups upon their wheels, and painted diminutive pictures down their sides before they stuck them into the corners of the kiln at burning time. One brought some fruit in the bulge of his apron, and another engravings in a rude scrap-book. Not one of them whispered a word, for this solemn thing was not to be talked about. They put them in the old man's hat, where he found them; he understood all about it. And, believe it or not, cynics, as you will, but it is a fact that the entire potteryful of men, of rather coarse fiber by nature, grew quiet as the months drifted, becoming gentle and kind; and some dropped swearing as the weary look on the patient fellow-worker's face told them beyond mistake that the inevitable shadow was drawing nearer. Every day some one did a piece of work for him and put it on the sanded bank to dry, so that he should come later and go earlier. So, when the bell tolled and the little coffin came out of the lonely door, right round the corner out of sight there stood 100 stalwart workingmen from the pottery, with their clean clothes on, most of whom gave a half day's time for the privilege of taking part in the simple procession and following to the grave that small burden of a child which probably one had ever seen.—Blessed be Drudgery, and other Papers—Gannett and Lloyd-Jones.

WINTER BLOSSOMS.

Hints About Bulbs Grown in the Garden and in the House.

As this is the season when the lovers of beautiful flowers are preparing the winter blossoms, the following hints from the pages of Vick's Magazine are timely:

Some one has sung of the garden in these strains:

Let long-lived pansies here their sweets bestow,
The violet languish and the roses grow;
In yellow glory let the crocus shine,
Narcissus here his love-sick head recline;
Here hyacinths in purple sweetness rise,
And tulips tinged with beauty's fairest dyes.

And who that knows what a garden is, and enjoys it, could spare one of these flowers? Their beauty, their fragrance and their association satisfy the senses and inspire sentiment. The literature of history, mythology, poetry and romance is studded with allusions to these fair forms that bedeck the earth. But how frequently the bulbous plants are lacking in the gardens of this country! In some cases it is because their planting season is an unusual one. Planting in spring is taken as a matter of course, and plants requiring to be set in spring receive attention. In autumn the requirements of the garden may be somewhat forgotten, the owner may be away on vacation or traveling, and so, from one cause or another, the bulb-planting season is passed and the flowers that should make the garden bright and gay in early spring are lacking. It is proper, therefore, at this time to call special attention to these plants. The garden should be plentifully supplied with them, and thus be made attractive at the earliest possible time in the spring. With a good variety of bulbous plants pushing their green blades as soon as the heavy frosts are past, there will be no lack of interest in the garden, and thus there will be incitement to further timely effort to make it beautiful and enjoyable for the whole season. But the bulbous plants have another claim on our attention; for their ease of culture in the house window enables us to make our rooms delightful with their brightness and fragrance through most of the winter season.

Snowdrops, snowflakes and crocuses can also be raised in pots for winter blooming; but they are more impatient of heat, if possible, than hyacinths and tulips, and it is absolutely necessary to bring them along in a cool temperature up to the time of blooming.

The Freesia refracta alba is another very satisfactory winter blooming bulb and can be treated practically the same as hyacinths and tulips.

Bulbs should be employed liberally both for the greenhouse and the window garden and their bright, fragrant flowers will always be admired. In the open garden they should be planted in beds, in groups and in masses. They should form a dominant feature of the garden in early spring.

The blooming season of bulbs in the open garden is frequently shortened by a term of hot weather, such as we often have in spring, sometimes in April or May, and lasting days, or a week or more; as we all know it is not uncommon to have in the middle of spring a succession of hot days of almost midsummer heat, bringing forward vegetation with great rapidity, and then a reaction occurs and cold winds prevail, whipping and injuring the newly unfolded leaves and flowers. This, too, is a danger period of frosts. To provide against the damage that may occur at such a time, and also to prolong the blooming season in any event, it is a good plan to mulch bulb beds with some nonconducting heat material; a covering of about two inches of coal ashes carefully placed over the beds in the spring, just before the bloom appears, will prove of great benefit; sawdust, if easily procurable, would be even better, and in some places old pine needles, or the fallen and decaying foliage of other evergreen trees, can be obtained and is excellent for the purpose.

Narcissus bulbs, the single and double varieties, can be planted in the garden in the same manner as above described. The Polyanthus Narcissus is not hardy, and in cold climates is used only in-doors. Tulips in the open ground need only three or four inches of space between them, but otherwise may be planted like hyacinths.

With plenty of bulbs in well arranged masses and a good collection of herbaceous plants selected with reference to their time of blooming the garden may be made continuously bright, attractive and interesting from early spring until winter closes in.

In the preparation of a garden-bed or border for hyacinths it is best to take some special care. The application of stable manure before planting is not desirable as it has a tendency to cause the bulbs to decay. But the addition of a quantity of leaf-mold, and if the soil is heavy a good dressing of sand, will be found beneficial. About four inches of the surface soil is removed from the space intended for the bed and laid on one side; spade over the whole as deep as possible and work in the leaf-mold, and sand if desired. With a sandy soil leaf-mold alone makes an excellent dressing. Rake over the bed, freeing it from all stones, and giving it a smooth, level surface. Parallel lines can be drawn, and intersecting ones, and the bulbs placed so as to show solid masses of color or designs of any desired patterns. At the point where the lines cross press the bulbs down into the soil even with the surface, and when all have been set cover the whole bed with the soil which was first removed, thus leaving them with about four inches of soil entirely over them. Before the ground freezes hard the bed should have a thick covering of leaves for a winter protection.

A STRANGE KLEPTOMANIAC.

A Man Once a Banker Arrested for Stealing Cambric Handkerchiefs.

"A man was arrested in the act of stealing a pocket handkerchief from a lady," writes a Vienna correspondent to a London pa