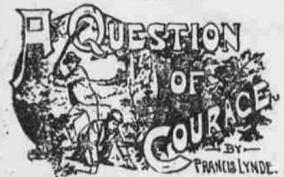


A CHILD'S THOUGHT.

A little face, arrayed in golden curls,
Against the window pane in silence lies;
Two dreamy eyes, with wonder filled, look
Away into the depths of evening skies.
Forgotten toys lie scattered while she notes
The setting sun, fast sinking in the west,
Which paints with crimson, purple, shining
gold,
The mists that gather as it sinks to rest.
"Mamma," she said, as if from dreams
returned,
"Is that the shadow of God's house I
see?"
There pictured fair among the clouds,
The house prepared for you, papa and
me?"
"Nay, nay, my child, no shadows there are
seen,
Of palace where our Father dwells on
high;
The setting sun, while whispering; fare-
well,
Throws back those colors on the evening
sky."
"But why, my love, does such a question
rise?"
While musing there, what dreams have
come to thee?"
"I only thought, if such the shadows were,
How very beautiful the house must be."
—Rev. W. H. Halsey, in Chicago Interior.



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III.—CONTINUED.

"Do you know, Mr. Ringbrand, that I've always had a persistent and haunting impression that we've met somewhere before?"
Ringbrand was spending the evening at the Latimers as usual, and they were all sitting in the starlight on the veranda of "The Laurels."
"You mean before I came to Tregarthen, Miss Hester?"
"Yes, it might have been ages ago."
Ringbrand smiled under cover of the darkness. "Perhaps it was. Do you believe in transmigration?"
"I think not," she answered doubtfully. "I believe in the creed."
"May I ask what creed?"
"I'd think you'd be ashamed to, when there is only one—or, at most, two."
"I stand corrected. Would it be heresy if I asked where I might find the one—or two?"
"Of course not; they're in the prayer book; I supposed everyone knew that."
"Going back to your impression again, do you know that I have an exactly similar one? I am almost positive that you are right. Can't you help me solve the mystery?"
"What's that you all are talking about?" inquired the colonel, knocking the ashes from his long-stemmed pipe and crushing a dry tobacco leaf in the palm of his hand for a fresh charge.
"Miss Hester was just saying she thought we'd seen each other somewhere before I came to Tregarthen, and I'm almost sure she's right. We were trying to locate the time and place."
"Oh, I reckon it's just imagination," replied the colonel, packing the tobacco dust into the bowl of his pipe. "That is, without you've been visitin' the young ladies' schools in Virginia."
"No, I haven't been doing that," said Ringbrand, laughing, "though it would doubtless be a delightful experience."
"That would depend entirely upon your errand," interrupted Hester. "I think most of the visitors used to leave Miss Pelton's with tingling ears; they should have, if there's any truth in the old saying."
As Ringbrand was about to reply, he saw a shadow moving in the bushes a few yards distant. "What's that down there by the laurels?" he asked, rising to get a better view.
At the question Harry Latimer sprang from his chair and ran into the house, appearing a moment later with his rifle. As he came out, the shadow darted from the bushes and glided among the trees on the lawn. Henry saw it, and would



He appeared a moment later with his rifle. He fired if his father had not wrested the gun from his hands. "Seems like you get less sense every day, Henry," gasped the colonel breathlessly. "How do you know who you were going to shoot at?"
"I know well enough, and so do you," replied the young man, nonchalantly, going back to his chair and relighting his cigar. "They all will get you some day, if you don't get them first."

IV.—A VANISHING POINT OF VIEW.

When Ringbrand left the hospitable mansion on the mountain and began his two-mile walk to Tregarthen, he was distracted by more different kinds of

perplexity than usually fall to the lot of a man of his temperament. The friendly footing upon which he was established at "The Laurels" gave him opportunities for constant association with Hester which had swept away all his earlier doubts as to the depth and reality of his attachment for the girl; but, assuming that he could win her—and he was by no means sure that it was so written in the book of possibilities—she was different enough from his ideal to demand a very disconcerting readjustment of the lines upon which he had formed his somewhat indefinite plans for a domestic future. Like most other men, he had painted for his life a possible matrimonial background, but in this picture the colors harmonized artistically with the neutral tints of his own studious habits. There was to be a quiet home, with books and works of art, and an atmosphere of thoughtful refinement whose peaceful calm should be ruffled by no rude blasts of passion; a home which should be a small city of refuge from the din and turmoil of the strenuous battle for existence. The central figure in this ideal retreat had never been quite clearly defined, but she was to be intellectual and endowed with quick sympathy, and she was to embody the artist's ideal of the other half of himself which should divine with sensitive intuition the subtle thread of genius in his work. A hasty review of the results of his acquaintance with Hester Latimer brought out with alarming distinctness the fact that she possessed none of the attributes of this ideal, save that, perhaps, her charming individuality made it impossible to say that she was not intellectual. She was positive and innocently self-assertive; and she had already given him a shock by a very frank and ingenuous criticism of one of his stories which had appeared in a recent number of one of the magazines. She was essentially of her own day and generation; and she apparently knew little and cared less about the subtler distinctions of motives and of character which so torment and perplex the student of his kind. Without in the least suspecting it, and being, on the contrary, quite fully resolved to keep in touch with bustling activity of modern life, Hugh Ringbrand was already beginning to acquire the introspective habit of a closet-student; peace and quietness, and a well-selected library, seemed to comprehend the conditions most necessary to his well-being; and such an environment with the breezy personality of Hester Latimer for the central figure appeared almost laughably incongruous.

To do him full justice, Ringbrand tried very earnestly to reason his way out of the emotional tangle in which he found himself—the more insistently, perhaps, because he felt his powers of resistance slipping away from him in a closer acquaintance with Hester. The experience of those few weeks was entirely without precedent in his well-ordered life. He had said to himself, in certain self-congratulatory moods, that he had successfully passed the age when passion usurps the place of impartial judgment; that an artist must be so far removed from the emotional side of life in his own experience as to be able to look upon it with the cool and dispassionate eye of a critical student; and up to that unlucky moment when he had seen Hester Latimer trip across the platform at Chilwae Junction he found little difficulty in conforming to the artistic requirement. Now, however, the point of view seemed to have veered so suddenly that it left him groping in a mist of uncertainties, in which he was sure of nothing but an overwhelming desire to possess Hester; a desire which contemptuously pushed aside the arguments of reason as of no weight and quite unworthy of the smallest consideration.

And then the incident of the evening—the indistinct shadow in the bushes, Henry's hasty and vindictive intention, the colonel's interference, and Hester sitting unmoved through it all. What was the meaning of this warlike episode? Were such things of so little moment in the daily life of the south that they could be passed over without comment? It would appear so, since his hosts had immediately ignored the incident as though it had never been. Even Hester had been able to take up the thread of inconsequent conversation again with no visible sign of perturbation or embarrassment. What was the reason for Henry's sudden and savage wrath? Could the intruder have been a common marauder of chicken-coops, or was he a sneak thief hoping to find the house unoccupied because there were no lights?

The sinister meaning in Henry's careless reply answered these questions before they had taken shape. Could it be possible that the Latimers were involved in one of the cruel vendettas about which he had heard and read?—was that what Hester meant when she said her own family had not escaped? And following closely upon the heels of the latter question came another: If he should enter the family, would he be expected to bear a part in any such irregular warfare? No, that was not quite the way to state it; say, rather, could he reasonably hope to hold the respect and affection of his wife upon any other condition?

The night was cool, and the light air sweeping up the side of the mountain was grateful and refreshing after the heat of the day, and yet Ringbrand grew uncomfortably warm as the inevitable exclamation placed itself like a gigantic exclamation point at the end of his theories. The possession of physical courage in his own proper person is not a necessary qualification for the writer of stories. It is true that he must recognize its existence, and he must be upon sufficiently intimate terms with its outward presentations to be able to imbue his heroes with a proper degree of contempt for their personal safety; beyond this, the exigencies of the art demand nothing, and the artist himself may be the most humble votary of the goddess of common sense. Some

such thought as this came to Ringbrand as he made his way down the mountain. The successive scenes of his uneventful life passed in review like the pictures of a retrospective panorama. Now that he thought of it, he saw that all of his lines of conduct had been drawn well upon the hither side of personal antagonism—that he had always been averse to anything approaching an arbitrament of force. With well-meaning sophistry, he had argued himself into the belief that a contempt for mere physical courage was a part of the thoughtful man's protest against brutality and the unconvincing logic of appeals to physical superiority; but he remembered, with a sharp little sting of mortification, that these fine-spun theories had been swept aside like cobwebs on the few occasions when he had been brought face to face with personal danger. It was not necessary to go far for an example; a flush of shame glowed in his face when he recalled the small fit of terror that had seized him but an hour before, when he had stood helplessly watching Henry trying to get the dodging shadow within the range of his rifle.

After that, his thoughts kept him but indifferent company for the rest of his walk, and he reached Tregarthen, and his room at the Ludlows', without having arrived at any more definite conclusion than a determination to ask his friend for an explanation of the incident at "The Laurels," and to get there with so much of the Latimer history as Ludlow might be able to recite.

The latter enlightened him, cheerfully, on their way to the furnace the next morning. "That was probably one of the Bynums," he said; "though why he should risk his skin at such close quarters I can't imagine. They're a bad lot, though—equal to almost anything, I'm afraid."

"Who are the Bynums, and why—But don't make me pull it out of you by little bits; tell me the whole story."

"Is it possible that you've been in Tregarthen all this time and haven't yet heard of the Latimer-Bynum feud?"

"It's more than possible; it's a fact."

"Well, it's a long story, but I'll condense it for you. Old Squire Latimer, the colonel's father, was instrumental in bringing one of a former generation of the Bynums to justice for the murder of a revenue officer. Since that time there's been a running fight between the two families; the squire had his house burned, and subsequently lost his life, presumably at the hands of the father of the present family of Bynums. I qualify because there seems to be a little doubt about the murder part, now, although the squire's neighbors were well enough satisfied to hang John Bynum by the summary process of lynch law. Of course the row couldn't be expected to end with a single lynching, and when the boys grew up they began on the colonel. I believe he horse-whipped one of them and got a broken arm for his pains; that was a good while ago, but the feud has lost none of its bitterness with age. It's been stirred up in my time by a lawsuit over the McNabb coal vein, which is situated on a part of the colonel's estate, but was claimed by the family in the cove. Of course the colonel—or rather the company, in this instance—won the lawsuit, and that didn't help matters any. We tried to open the coal vein afterwards, but it's my private opinion that the Bynum boys destroyed the working as fast as we developed it."

"What a frightful story of lawlessness!"

"It is rather savage, when you come to think of it, isn't it? And we haven't seen the end of it yet by several lives, I'm afraid."

"But won't the law protect the colonel in the defense of his rights?"

"It—or public indignation—would avenge his death very promptly, but in regard to the other, you'll remember that you must first catch your hare; these fellows don't go around with a brass band announcing their intentions."

"Still, I should think it would be easy enough to get evidence against them."

"Do you?—then suppose you try it. That's a bright idea, Hugh; you are interested in the family fortunes, and you haven't anything else on your mind. Just turn in and get evidence enough to hang these three Bynum boys, and I'll guarantee the colonel will give you Hester out of hand."

"—God forbid!" replied Ringbrand, turning pale. "My gifts don't lie in that direction."

Ludlow glanced at his friend with a look of mingled curiosity and concern. "I was wondering if you'd changed any, Hugh; you used to be a peaceable sort of fellow in college. I can't imagine you in the role of a fire eater."

"Go on and say the rest of it," said Ringbrand, bitterly; "you can't imagine me as an adopted member of a fire-eating family. Well, I don't blame you; I can't do it myself."

"I shouldn't have put it in any such uncharitable form," responded Ludlow, reflectively, "but, since you've mentioned it, I'll say what's been in my mind ever since you told me what brought you to Tregarthen. Hester Latimer's husband will have to do one of two things—help fight the family battles or refuse to have anything to do with them. The first may cost him his life, and the last will be very sure to cost him his happiness. I'm no hand to meddle, as you know, Hugh, but it's well enough to consider these things before it's too late."

"That's the pity of it, Tom," replied Ringbrand, quietly. "I'm afraid it's too late now. I realized two things pretty clearly last night—one was that life without Hester wouldn't be worth living, and the other was that I'd rather die than have her find me out for what I am."

"That's putting it rather harshly; you haven't any good reason for thinking that you are—"

"A coward—say it, Tom; I ought to be able to bear the truth, and that is the truth. I know it; I've known it all along, only I've been trying to make

myself believe it wasn't so. That's what was at the bottom of all those little things you remember in the university days; you don't know how I despise myself when I think of it all."

"No, I don't remember anything but what I said a moment ago—that you were always a peaceable sort of fellow."

"That isn't it; it's one thing to be peaceable from principle, and quite another to be restrained by a wholesome fear of consequences. It's always been the latter with me. I can look back over my life and see how I've been continually dodging. When I was a little fellow, the fear of a whipping was the strongest incentive to good behavior, and the same argument has held good ever since. You know that, Tom, if you'd only admit it."

"No, I don't know anything of the kind," protested Ludlow.

"Well, it's true. You remember that affair with Turnbull in the last year—when he went out of his way to insult me. You took occasion to praise my self-control, but I want to tell you now that it was the inmost shame; I was afraid to resent it, and that's the truth."

"Nonsense!" retorted Ludlow; "you did just right not to demean yourself by fighting with a cub of an undergraduate."

"I'm not arguing about that—it's the motive; it was cowardice, pure and simple; there's no other name for it. What are you laughing at?"

"It's amusing to hear you vilify yourself. But seriously, Hugh, this is a crisis that's got to be met. I take your word for it that you're properly in love with Hester Latimer; if she does you the honor to return your affection—which, I take it, is not yet a foregone conclusion—why, you're a lucky fellow, and you should be thankful enough to fight her battles, and those of her father and brother if need be. It may not require such a phenomenal degree of physical courage, but it'll ask for some of the moral variety; and there's always a wide possibility that it'll demand both in heroic proportions. If I were in your place I should fight the battle beforehand; then, if you find you're not going to be up to it, the honorable thing is to pull out while the girl is yet fancy free. That's pretty straight talk; but you know me of old, and you have invited frankness."

They were nearing the furnace yard, and Ringbrand did not reply until they reached the gate; then he grasped Ludlow's hand and pressed it warmly. "You're a good friend, Tom. I'll think it over and try to do as you advise. Only if I can't bring myself up to the mark, you mustn't be surprised if I should drop out unexpectedly. I don't believe I could face you or Mrs. Ludlow after that."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ARNOLD'S COUNTRY PLACE.

Where the **Traitor Once Entertained Ham and Eggs Are Now Sold.**

If you wander far enough through the broad drives and cross the ample fields of Fairmount park, Philadelphia, you will presently encounter a commodious stone building, surmounting a wooded knoll, set down between two subsidiary ones of the same material, into and out of which a small crowd of people, mainly women and children, are constantly passing. It is now known vaguely and generally as the "Jairy" and is a pleasant enough little place to stop for ice cream, tea and other light refreshments, pleasantly dispensed by a neat maiden, in the employ of the lessee of the house. But probably not one in 1,000 of the persons who so indulge themselves is aware of the fact that this quiet little refectory, with its trim gravel walk in front and its grassy banks in the rear, sloping gently down to the Schuylkill, was once the country seat of Benedict Arnold.

It was conveyed to him in 1776 by John McPherson, a Philadelphia merchant, for £16,240, subject to a mortgage of £1,700 and a lease to Don Juan Miralles, the Spanish minister. In this sumptuous mansion, with its high ceilings, decorated walls, massive mantelpieces and deeply carved oaken doors and windows, Arnold lived and entertained and plotted for more than three years. The north room on the first floor, where the visitor now sips his tea and leisurely munches his sweet cakes, was probably, from its appearance, the morning-room of Arnold and the gay party he constantly gathered about him. In the fine wide hall, where the guests were wont to be received with stately courtesy, is now a row of small tables on one side and a confectory counter on the other. The portion in front, to which queued gallants and powdered dames were wont to treat in the cool of the evening, is now covered with small signs, calling attention to the ham sandwiches, ham and eggs and other delicacies that may be procured by the hungry.

When Arnold was attainted with treason in 1780 this property was confiscated by the government and was subsequently owned, among others, by Hon. Edward Shippen, chief justice of Pennsylvania; Gen. Jonathan Williams and Baron von Steuben, inspector general of the army under Gen. Washington. It was acquired by the city of Philadelphia in 1868.—N. Y. Press.

A Wonderful Change.
"Well, how are you, Snively?" exclaimed an erratic Austin man, trying to thrust his hand into the unwilling, clammy paw of the supposed acquaintance; "how you have changed. Never saw a man change so in my life."

"My name is not Snively," replied the stranger, in a cold, 36-degree-below-zero tone.

"Great heavens!" ejaculated the Austin man. "Worse and worse. You have not only changed wonderfully in your personal appearance, but even your name is changed."—Texas Siftings.

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