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# THE WISCONSIN LITERARY MAGAZINE

Published by the Students of  
the University of Wisconsin

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FEBRUARY, 1904

VOL. 1    ♪    ♪    No. 3

# The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

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THE  
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VOLUME I

NUMBER 3

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**A BARBARIAN UPRISING**

"Well the Rho Kappas are going to run Sam Wheeler for Class President next semester," announced Zack Thayer from the threshold of Pat Campbell's smoke-clouded room to those of the "Gang" assembled there.

"Oh damn that bunch," growled Campbell.

"What's the matter with them? Wheeler's a good fellow isn't he? Roehm, his slow going room-mate, known familiarly as "Dutchy", paused inquiringly between puffs at his pipe.

"He's a good enough fellow I guess, but what has he ever done? He has absolutely no license to be president of the class. He can't talk and he certainly isn't a bright and shining light as a student."

"It strikes me," said Brayton, "for a 'frat' man, you couldn't find anybody who would make a better run."

"That's just the point, he is a 'frat' man and if it can be done I'm going to nail him to the cross." "The King of the

Micks" as Lawrence Alden had once dubbed Campbell, in sportive reference to his nationality and autocratic tendencies, was absolute ruler of the "Gang." The fraternity system was his pet aversion and it needed only the mention of some new encroachment on their part to rouse his kingly ire to the fighting pitch.

"The old boy is going after 'em again," whispered Thayer to Roehm.

"Just because his father happened to have some money," continued Campbell, "Wheeler made a 'frat'. Then his 'frat' worked their graft with the coach, the old man put up a lot of coin to help pay expenses and they took him along with the team. On the strength of that his crowd have been boosting him for everything in sight. He has had more than his share now and it is about time to put a quietus on him, if for no other reason, because he is a 'frat' man. The fraternities are overdoing the thing; it's the same way all along the line; they control athletics, they've got the 'barbs' froze out of the glee club, they run the Prom and the Badger Board. Talk about this being a democratic institution! why outside of the debating societies a man doesn't stand a show for a thing unless he's a fraternity man. I was talking with Jackson, the Delta Phi, the other day about this bunch of 'willie boys' that have just got their charter and he had the monumental gall to tell me that he thought that there were 'frats' enough now, so that everybody who *ought* to belong could join. I told him that so far as I could see there was no excuse whatever for the existence of any of them and that if I had the power I would wipe them all out. He got sore and hasn't spoken to me since. I think it's about time—"

"Oh, cut it out," broke in Thayer, "we've heard all that before. What are you going to do about it?"

"Get his hide, that's all."

"Wheeler will be a hard man to beat," said Brayton, "the fellows all know him and they like him pretty well and he has a good 'stand-in' with the girls."

"Who are you going to put up against him?" inquired Thayer.

"I think Al. Franklin is the man we want." Franklin of all "Campbell's kitchen cabinet" as Alden called the "Gang" seemed to reflect the autocrat's views most accurately. Not even Campbell himself was more violent in his denunciation of the fraternities and their manifold iniquities.

"I doubt if Franklin could beat Wheeler," persisted Brayton, "he isn't well enough known."

"We'll get out and make him known," said Campbell. "The election doesn't come off for two weeks yet and we'll take our coats off and work for him. He's got to win. Nobody has anything against Al.; all the fellows who know him like him. Besides there is quite a bunch of 'frat' men who are sore at Wheeler for that deal of his on the Badger Board and if we go about it right we can get them. The Alpha Mus and the Rho Kaps got into a row a while ago over some third or fourth assistant managership and so all of the Alpha Mu bunch have it in for Wheeler because he's a Rho Kap. Alden is the bell-cow over there, and what he says goes. He's about the smoothest political proposition that's been around the university for some time. I'll see him in the morning and try to fix up some sort of a deal with him."

Three years before, Campbell had entered the university. It was only by dint of much scraping that his mother had succeeded in sending him through the high school, and not until many long and earnest family councils were held, was it decided that it would be possible to spare him from the petty round of farm labors and permit him to go to the university. With money that he had earned by working as a common farm hand for some of the neighbors, he paid his entrance fee at the university, but there was nothing left over. Luck favored him, however, and he received his room rent in exchange for raking the lawn and caring for the furnace, while he waited on table at the Sigma Delta house for his board. Life under these conditions was not one of keen enjoyment.

He had all of a farmer's instinctive aversion for doing woman's work. Entering fresh from the farm he brought with him much of its spirit of sturdy democracy, and as he said: "It was hard to get used to being ordered around." Perhaps he took too seriously the chaffing at his awkwardness, particularly the references to "his highwater pants," and his "plow-walk," for though he seemed to accept them good naturedly enough so far as outward appearance went, he winced internally. Not unnaturally he developed a strong prejudice against fraternities and everything connected with them, which subsequent observation and experience in no way tended to diminish. His hatred of the fraternity system had in fact become intensified until it was almost a creed with him.

He had been in the university but a few weeks when he was apprenticed to a more profitable occupation. He began to hustle laundry, at first among his immediate acquaintances and classmates. A peculiar genius for organization soon manifested itself, and he rapidly extended the sphere of his operations until by the end of his junior year he enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the business. From the first he had been active in debating society work. The experience there added to two summers of canvassing for books gave him an assurance and self-confidence that but few of his classmates possessed. His influence extended as the number of his acquaintances grew larger, and by his junior year he came to be regarded as a power in his class.

Campbell met Lawrence Alden at the entrance to Main Hall as the two came from their nine o'clock recitation, and they walked down the Hill together. Judge Alden's only son, as was meet, for one of his family standing and well-bred air had speedily been taken into Alpha Mu, the most aristocratic, incidentally the hardest drinking fraternity in the university. The "mamma's boy" who had always carried off the highest prizes in the Sunday school at Fairview and had been Valedictorian of his class in high school, underwent an interesting transformation. Outwardly he re-

tained the same physical attractiveness that had made him the pet of the Ladies' Sewing Circle in his younger days. Only it was now reported that he could drink more whiskey with less visible effect than any man in the whole Alpha Mu crowd, and his coolness and luck at poker were proverbial. Nevertheless he made it a point to do the class work, and the professors rarely caught him napping; indeed his friends protested that it was due only to the fact that there was "a bunch of Y. M. C. A.'s" in the faculty that he did not make Phi Beta Kappa. He never ran for class offices of any sort, and one gathered from his air, that he thought such trifles were beneath him. While he was never active or conspicuous at election time, in some way, the impression was current that he was the shrewdest politician in the class, and few political deals of any sort went through without his knowledge and, in most cases, his assent.

"Well," said Alden, after Campbell had stated Franklin's qualifications for the office of president, "I haven't any interest in Franklin, but if you can show me where he can win out over Wheeler, I'll back him. It's anything to beat Wheeler with me."

The two met by appointment in Campbell's room that night. Together they went over the list of their unsuspecting classmates as given in the last year's catalogue and carefully checked them. Those who could be counted on for Franklin were marked with an "X"; those who were lost to Wheeler were marked "O", the doubtful ones were indicated by a "?". Each of these latter was gone over at length and thoroughly discussed, and possible means of winning them over decided on. They were divided into lots of five, and each member of the "Gang" was assigned the task of looking after one or more of these lots. Alden expressed himself as perfectly satisfied with Franklin's chances. For the next two weeks life seemed one continuous handshake to Campbell. Some men he wheedled, others he cajoled, and a few he threatened, but the burden of his conversation was always "anti-



frat," and was sure to close with the injunction, "You'll be there for sure, then, and we can count on you for 'Al'!"

Toward mid-night, usually, he made his appearance in his room to find Roehm blinking out at him as he turned on the electric light. He would take up the next day's work and read, perhaps for half an hour, then with a start would find his thoughts far from the printed page before him. The book would be thrown down impatiently and he would take to checking over the list of names. Finally his room-mate's periodic curses would drive him to turn out the light and go to bed.

He dozed through his classes, his mind far from the work of the recitation. Half consciously he heard the murmur of voices sounding like the buzzing of flies to the patient in the sick-room. When his own name was called, the man next to him nudged, and without waiting to hear the question he rose and answered, "not prepared," and lounged back in his seat again, to resume his speculations as to votes that were safe and of possible new combinations. Once he so far forgot himself as to begin telling off on his fingers the names of those who could be counted on.

The day of the class meeting arrived. For once there was a full attendance, even Obadiah Luther, the hardest grind in the class, furtive and suspicious, squirming like a frog caught on a fish hook, had rallied to the anti-fraternity slogan. Campbell entered late, slunk into a seat in the rear of the room and waited for things to begin. He cowered there, feeling insignificant, helpless. He was nervous and strangely sick at the stomach. He listened to the nominating speeches made by the others, first for Wheeler, and then for Elkins, the Y. M. C. A. man, and felt that everything was lost, as he heard the shouts of applause that went up when the speakers had finished. Twice the president had paused after calling for "Any further nominations?" Then with a great dryness in his throat, and something very much like a ringing in his ears, he drew himself to his feet. He noted that his hands

trembled and wondered whether this was the stage fright which he had read of but never felt before. He began to speak, but his voice quavered and the words sounded hollow to him, and his carefully framed sentences seemed flat and weak, ridiculously inadequate, to express what he had intended to convey.

“Fellow classmates,” he began, “it has been our proudest boast that in this democratic university the way to honors lay not through social pull but through merit and ability alone.” Then he enumerated the qualifications of his candidate. Franklin was unknown and therein lay his availability; such negative virtues as were his left free sweep for the imagination. As he continued the sinking sensation at his stomach passed away; he gathered confidence with every word and, coming to the heart of his speech, his eye swept the room defiantly, and slowly and distinctly he uttered his Philippic. “He comes here backed by no clique or gang. He stands alone, squarely on his own feet; he is too big to be owned by any man or any body of men. He is broadly representative of all that is best in college manhood; he is a man, every inch of him, from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, a man. If you believe that a man counts for more than money, if you think that worth and not the cut of one’s clothes or the length of a father’s bank account should be the qualification for honors at our hands, if you feel that the plain democracy of the shop and farm is better than a pseudo-aristocracy based on wealth and wealth alone, then vote for honest, unassuming Albert Franklin.”

A silence followed; then some one started a hiss, but immediately it was drowned in a great roar of applause that fairly shook the window panes. Amid a confused murmur of conversation the president appointed the tellers, and they proceeded to collect the ballots. The first vote was decisive. Hardly had the result been announced when Campbell and the man nearest him caught up Franklin and carried him triumphantly to the platform. He thanked the class for the

honor that had been conferred upon him in words that he had carefully prepared in anticipation of the event, and the meeting adjourned.

\* \* \* \* \*

Next morning Campbell met Franklin and Alden coming down the Hill as he went up. In response to their "Hello Pat!" he lifted his eyes, fixed habitually on the ground. He caught but a glimpse of them in passing. But in that instant he noticed something glistening in the lapel of Franklin's coat and, in the golden triangle shining bravely in the morning sun, he recognized the pledge button of the Alpha Mu fraternity.

—0.

## THE IMPETUOSITY OF McLANAGHAN

"Prince, when we think the game is played,  
Memory comes like a tawdry jade;  
Pay no heed to her jibes and threats,  
Drink, for the drinker alone forgets."

"And that," said McLanaghan as he laid down his manuscript and smiled condescendingly on his nodding roommate, "is what I call true poetry, perfect in form and faultless in sense and—"

"Perfect in form, Lanny," said his room-mate quietly, "for that was invented some centuries ago when the troubadors wanted something new, and as for the sense, I am unable to judge as to its perfection, for I am unable to detect its presence. If you'd only hypodermically introduce a little meaning into your verse now and then, I for one—"

"Would find some new thing whereat to cavil. Well 'Biggsy,' I am to-night without pugnacity and we will not quarrel. I'm in love. Thou knowest I am not given to confidences, but honest, old man, I'm going to reveal to you my innermost soul, and I want you to listen and," McLanaghan's voice was serious, "not jibe, for this is no jest."

'Biggsy,' with the inbred wisdom of many year's comradeship, was silent.

'I met her at the naval ball. Brooks brought her, and had me down for a dance or two and when the fantastic arrove, so did I. After we had done a giddy whirl or two, I suggested a chat out in the side hall, and say 'Biggsy,' I was lost. For once in my life I found a girl who could talk and who knew something, and also, above all who didn't agree with everything I said. To find a girl who could say something vital about a book, a principle or a political party; who was capable of something besides the ineffable vacuity of ordinary conversation, and who had a real sense of humor—gad! It was like a good smoke to a man many days without tobacco. She could quote, she could appreciate, and she wasn't an 'Isn't-that-nice?' girl or an 'Isn't-that-funny? girl,' and she didn't have any friends who write 'awfully cute things' and say such 'bright things,' and whom I 'ought to meet,' and—well I was a goner. 'Biggsy,' the memory of those dances—

"Memory comes like a tawdry jade!  
When the heart is pierced by Love's sharp blade  
And the new wound rankles there and frets,  
Forget the pain and forget the maid—  
Drink! for the drinker alone forgets!"

Quoth 'Biggsy,' "and I trust that I have the sentiments of your verses correctly," he added.

"This is no time for the introduction of roistering songs, even though they be my own," said McLanaghan frowning. "The memory of that girl doesn't rankle, and it frets only because she's practically engaged to some one else, a fact which I learned by chance. Who the fellow is I don't know, but by Gad 'Biggsy,' I love her with all my soul, and I'll win her if she's engaged to the finest fellow in the land. I cut out drinking from now on and if a good clean-hearted, honest fellow, who will be mighty impetuous in his wooing can't win her; well, he'll at least try to be worthy of her."

“Modesty was always one of your noticeable virtues,” said ‘Biggsy,’ “but have you thought about the other fellow, he also may love her a little.”

“In the love of a man for a maid there is no thought of the other man save as an an obstacle to be removed, and I trust I shall remove him. I go, to call upon her, as she asked me many days ago.”

“By the way, what’s her name?”

“That will transpire later,” said McLanaghan as he took his hat and vanished noisily, singing that well-worn tune, “Just One Girl.”

“I’m glad,” said ‘Biggsy’ to the alarm clock over the bed, “that he isn’t in love with *my* girl; for ‘Lanny’ is certainly a winner.”

“And so,” said Miss Milligan, smiling, “you find me different. Distinctions I am always fond of, *how* do I differ?”

“I have decided,” said McLanaghan irrelevantly, “to call you Agnes. I do not like the name Milligan, and I despise formal titles. My name is Lloyd. You will find it less difficult and far more euphonious than McLanaghan, I believe.”

Miss Milligan gasped; this tall fluent young man seemed to believe decidedly that delays are dangerous.

“You certainly do not lack-ah-assurance, Mr., Mr.,—well since I can’t remember the other, Lloyd, and I *should* be very offended, but I like you, and you *may* call me Agnes. But do all your acquaintanceships proceed with like rapidity?”

“I never cared enough to try to make them,” said McLanaghan, and turning to the piano, “Do you play? I see you do. Well I brought with me some music, a sort of dream melody, and I have written some words to it. If you will play the music I’ll sing them to you. No, the words are not written there, I have them with me—learned by heart. You see the air is not difficult.”

Miss Milligan, dominated almost against her will by this assertive young fellow, who never seemed to dream of being

disobeyed, played the old air through. Then she struck the opening chord again and McLanaghan's baritone filled the room with the song:

“A little space have I known you dear,  
But long enough for me  
To wish to love and to own you, dear,  
Through all of the ‘years to be.’  
Time flies like a fleeting breath, my dear,  
And the hours of our life are few,  
But neither Time nor Death, my dear,  
Shall alter my love for you.”

The voice thrilled Miss Milligan strangely, and she looked up suddenly at the man beside her. His eyes blazed down into hers with such overpowering glory that she turned hastily to the music.

“Is— is there another verse?” she asked almost in a whisper.

“There is,” he said.

With queer lights dancing before her eyes, Miss Milligan played the music through once more while McLanaghan's deep voice, shaking with feeling, sung on through the words of his own song:

“‘My Lady 'O Dreams', would you hear of her  
My mystical love of old?  
The tender way and dear, of her,  
And her hair of beaten gold,  
Then lean more close and list, my dear,  
For the song is almost through;  
And my 'Lady 'O Dreams' I've kissed, my dear—”

McLanaghan took Miss Milligan's head in his hands and kissed her lips, and his voice rose exultantly as he ended,

“For my 'Lady 'O Dreams' is *you!*”

Miss Milligan played the last bar of the song, mechanically, got up from the piano and faced McLanaghan, her eyes flashing.

“Mr. McLanaghan, I don’t know what you mean by taking advantage of your invitation here by insulting me. Perhaps it is your idea of humor to make love to a girl who you know is bound to another and whom you don’t care a snap for, but I—I, oh go! Go home—and leave me!” She pointed fiercely to the door.

McLanaghan quietly took the outstretched hand in his and kept it there until Miss Milligan ceased struggling—and afterwards.

“Agnes,” he said, “look at me and listen to what I say. I love you. Do you think I care whether you are engaged or not, do you think that can alter my feeling toward you? I love you. You may think me precipitate but that is in my blood. I know what I want and I waste no time in getting it, and I keep and cherish everything I have. I love you and could not love you more if I had known you a thousand years. I *will* not love you less though I should know you for another thousand. Agnes, you must know your own heart, you are a woman of decision and character. I love you—Will you marry me, Agnes?”

She looked for a moment into the strong face above her, a face wherein she read honor, purity and devotion and—one can decide so much better with one’s head on a man’s shoulder.

“But,” said Miss Milligan after a minute or two, “what shall I say to poor Bob?”

“Poor devil!” said McLanaghan, “it’s tough on him, mighty tough, but it had to be, dearest, you were meant for me and—but Gad, think what he’s lost! You can only tell him the truth, dear.”

“You know his name is’n’t really Bob, dear. I just called him that. Did you ever know him? He’s Mr. —”

“Don’t tell me his name, I, well I guess I’m jealous already.”

And for the rest of the evening Bob was forgotten.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Let’s see, now, gratitude, beatitude, attitude—no, those last two are really identical, they aren’t rhymes at all. I suppose I’ll have to give up triple rhymes, they’re—Hello, ‘Biggsy’ and—why, how are you, Blakesly? Gad, but you’re looking bad; what’s wrong?”

“Lanny, the girl has thrown me over.”

“The deuce. But I didn’t even know that you had a girl.”

“We’ve only been engaged three weeks, and we’ve tried to keep it secret, so you see no one knew.”

“What’s the trouble? Cheer up, it’s only a lover’s quarrel; go and apologize, that’ll clear things.”

“No, it won’t, Lanny. There’s been no quarrel; there’s another man, he’s cut me out. I don’t really blame him, for I’d do it myself; but, Lanny, I loved Agnes so, and it’s hard to bear.”

“Agnes—Agnes, who?” said McLanaghan, while his face went white.

“Agnes Milligan.”

“Agnes Milligan—Blakesly, did she tell you who the other man was?”

“No—but the way she spoke of him, I know that there is no further hope for me; she loves him as she never dreamed of caring for me. Maybe I’m childish in blabbing this to you fellows, but I’ve told no one else, and you’re the best friends I have. Funny, isn’t it, a fellow wants to hog happiness to himself but he’s willing to share his sorrows.”

“Blakesly,” said McLanaghan, the words came slowly and painfully, “I may as well tell you now that I’m the other man. I didn’t know that you were the other fellow who was engaged to Agnes, but I loved her and I guess it wouldn’t have made very much difference anyhow, for love is a selfish thing. I hope you won’t hold this against me.”

Blakesly looked for a moment at McLanaghan, and in his eyes burned the fire of unquenchable pain, then he turned his face toward the thronged street without.

“Lanny,” he said, and then again, as though the word



were strange, "Lanny—no, I can't hold it against you, but, well, we can't be friends as we were. I—I wish you joy, Lanny, you're worthier of her than I, and—oh, be good to her! Lanny, be good to her! And as for me there remains"—absently he took up a paper from the table and read the lines scribbled upon it. He threw back his head defiantly and with a laugh strode to the door, there he turned and in a cynical, reckless voice he read—

"When the heart is pierced by love's sharp blade  
 And the new wound rankles there and frets;  
 Forget the pain and forget the maid,  
 Drink! for the drinker alone forgets!"

—*A. B. Braley.*

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## THE WORM TURNS

Up the street he came, a short, round, little figure with a head so red that it fairly glistened in the sunshine. Two sturdy, brown legs, streaked and bespattered with dirt, twinkled beneath a pair of very diminutive trousers, the upper parts of which were entirely hidden beneath the folds of a bright green sweater many times too large. Two great blue eyes looked calmly out through a field of grime, and a small pug nose, plentifully sprinkled with freckles, strove, seemingly, to distract notice from the flaming head. Two fists were crammed deeply into the trouser pockets, already bulging out with the many valuables they contained. Tied around the neck, an old, red handkerchief held the band of the sweater in place and prevented it from slipping down over the young man's shoulders. In spite of his diminutive stature and more diminutive pug nose, he possessed an air of masculine self-confidence so plainly apparent that even the sturdy "pat, pat" of the bare feet suggested, in ceaseless repetition, the words, "I am a man; I am a man." Suddenly the boy commenced to sing in a high, shrill voice:

"I likey 'oo an' 'oo likey me  
 An' we bof likey same."

Two small girls, passing on the opposite side of the street, stopped and giggled.

"Say," urged one pig-tailed Miss, "let's jolly 'im."

"Let's," replied the other.

"O! Reddy, Reddy, who's your girl?"

"Say, Carrot top, what's 'er name?"

Reddy, alias Carrots, heeded not. The song held him as one enthralled.

"I likey say, 'is 'ery day

I likey chan' oore name."

The girls caught their breath in astonishment. Was there such a thing as a small boy who did not talk back? There must be, and yet—. They looked at him again. Yes, he was smaller than they. There would be little danger in a close attack. Running across the street they planted themselves directly in front of him.

"Cat got yer tongue, Red?" inquired the black-eyed one in accents of mock seriousness. No answer.

"Say, little boy," wheedled the other, in her most bewitching manner. "I like you awful; can't I be your girl?"

This was too much. The boy's face slowly reddened beneath its dirt. Bracing his feet firmly, he slid his fists still deeper into his pockets and, with the righteous indignation of one who has turned the other cheek in vain, he muttered evenly "Oo-do-to-'ell!"

When the girls finally recovered from this vindictive utterance Reddy was far down the street. Echoing back in a clear, childish treble came the words:

"Un'er a 'amby t'ee."

—O. R. Smith.

# EXPERIMENTS IN PESSIMISM

## I.

The morning hours that came and went  
Like dews upon the primal flowers,  
We took, and thought, though 'twas but lent,  
The morning ours.

Our steps we stayed in gaudy bowers;  
And unreal vapours, sunbeam-blent,  
And gay prismatic perfume showers

Asperged a rose-leaf firmament.  
Now traveling whilst the sick noon glowers,  
Too late we learn, too light we spent  
The morning hours.

## II.

Comes on apace the warping tide;  
Soon ends the struggle and the race;  
The end of hope, desire, and pride,  
Comes on apace.

Strange shadows fall about the place,  
A figure slinks up at our side,  
We turn—what strange, malignant face?

O fly! O God! where shall we hide?  
The Fear, the Failure, the Disgrace,  
The Shameful Darkness we defied  
Comes on apace.

## III.

The same old way we used to do,  
You stake your hearts at costly play,  
And there's no question, you will rue,  
The same old way.

So make your change and take your pay  
In that light coin which is your due,  
Which you must jingle and be gay.

A little time while it is new,  
Take it and spend it, for some day,—  
You'll preach to others—and feel blue,  
The same old way.

—*Ari Mer.*

## THE GIRL FROM ST. PAUL

From a plush-cushioned chair, in the luxuriously appointed West Hotel, I was watching the throng that trod its floors. The ever-changing crowd were all unknown. It was with the indifferent glance of the stranger to a city which in all its ways and buildings and its busy crowds, proves to be like every other city he has seen, that I watched the variable groups of traveling men, professional men, business men and local loafers. I noted languidly the motion of the revolving door as it turned to admit another from the prolific street. Across the room they moved with monotonous clatter, this one toward the barber shop, that one to the cigar counter, this one to the clerk's office to register, that one to a seat and a daily newspaper.

I had sought relief from the boredom of a city hotel in a *Minneapolis Journal*, when once more my eye was directed to the revolving door, and to a figure that emerged from its nervous cycle. What? Yes, the compact form, the darkly handsome countenance, the shifty brown eyes, and the deliberate step; it was none other than Pike my old friend and classmate.

He saw me, recognized me, came forward with that old-time, easy, graceful gait, and affably extended his hand. We were neither of us demonstrative. There was no slapping one another on the back, nor gurgling of suppressed emotion. Yet I always felt that he was glad to see me that night, even though afterward he *did*—well that is the whole story.

We had much to talk about. Pike, in the old days, had been a leader among the fellows, and I, with the rash hero-worship of youth, had been one of his most devoted followers. Pike won the leadership, I think, through his personal magnetism as well as his supremacy in athletics, oratory and theatricals. He was captain of the baseball team and in oratory and histrionics was a bright, particular star. His masterly oration on Abraham Lincoln had made his name familiar

throughout the state. He had played Rip Van Winkle to a crowded house in a way to make a theatrical career the prophecy of his destiny.

We talked until the hour was late—about the old school life and friends. Jones was married and living out West. Smith had quit teaching and gone to business college. Brown had gone completely to the bad. And old Prof. Willets had got married for the fourth time.

I don't know just how long we had engaged in this pleasant gossip of recollection, when Pike leaned forward, placed his hand upon my knee, and nodding in the direction of the door said, "Observe that man who just came in."

I did so and beheld a tall individual in the high silk hat and the long coat with numerous buttons, of a coachman. I turned inquiringly to Pike.

"That," and he leaned a bit closer, "that is the coachman of "the Girl from St. Paul."

"The girl from—"

"St. Paul," and he nodded gravely.

"Yes." "But who is the girl from St. Paul?"

"I beg pardon, old man, but I must see that fellow just going out the door," and he left me abruptly.

"I'll be back," he called out, over his shoulder.

But he did not come back. The tall man with the silk hat and long coat had vanished into the barroom.

The girl from St. Paul! What made those words arouse such strange and hitherto unexperienced emotions? Within my brain were kindled the fires of imagination. Who was the girl from St. Paul? Who was this mysterious being from the sister city? Why had Pike spoken in such cautious yet dramatic manner? Of what character was this unknown lady to masquerade beneath such a sensational sobriquet?

The conflagration of my ardent fancy burned higher. Perchance she was a glorious creature with limpid orbs and raven tresses or a sweet and roguish miss with golden locks and eyes of heavenly hue. Before my glowing mind passed a

beauteous panorama of all imaginable forms of female loveliness. Before the fancied charms of the girl from St. Paul would have shrunk like burning straw the classic beauty of Helen of Troy or the Venus de Milo.

Bewildered and half ashamed at being thus carried away by a silly string of words and resolved upon wreaking my curiosity upon Pike, should I see him in the morning, I went up to bed. But all night long I dreamed of a Theodore in a silk hat and long coat in hot pursuit of a divinely appareled Honoria from whose lips came constantly the words, "I am the girl from St. Paul."

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The next morning some business called me to M—, a small town on the Omaha Division of the Northwestern. Pike had not yet returned, so as I was obliged to take the south-bound leaving at 7:30 a. m., I went away without seeing him. The events of last night, the strange dialogue, the long-coated man, had faded more or less from my memory. The curious impression was dispelled by the bustle and hurry of making a train.

The train rolled smoothly into St. Paul. There were only two or three people in the car and these were of very uninteresting aspect. There was not even the discordant wail of a crying young one to enliven the party. Only the monotony of wheels beneath us, of the swiftly flying houses and trees and wintry streams and hills, and of passing vendors of fruit and newspapers, bananas and books. At St. Paul two men took the seat in front of me. Nothing remarkable about the men. They might have been doctors, they might have been actors, they might have been newspaper reporters, they might have been detectives, they may have been school-teachers for all I know. So once more I turned my attention to the copy of the Decameron I had with me.

I had become oblivious of all about me, in the racy experiences of those old time gallants, when chance words came to me from the conversation of the men who had just got on. I

pricked up my ears, like a spy in the enemy's camp. There crowded upon me a host of recollections, of images of the night-time, of vague and half-forgotten fancies. The words were "Girl" and "St. Paul." It was a juxtaposition of syllables that held miraculous power over my curiosity. I strained my ears, that I might hear what should follow.

"Yes," and the one with the gray hat allowed his voice to rise above the rumble of the coach, "I think she will 'make good'".

Oh most tantalizing! We went over a bridge and I lost the reply.

This time, the one with the automobile cap spoke: "I suppose you heard of the 'hit' the Girl from St. Paul made over in Eau Claire, Monday night?"

The gray hat responded in the negative.

"The fellows over there were taken by storm. You know Jackson, of course?"

"Well he said—" again the noise of the wheels drowned their voices and Jackson's dictum was lost to this history.

"Such a girl! Such a girl!" And the fellow with the cap laughed with a laugh that to my romantic fancy was unpleasant.

"She will be at M—— to-night?" interrogated the other. The automobile cap nodded.

At M——! Exactly my own destination. A momentary thrill possessed my bosom. At M——! And then occurred a most distressing and surprising incident. The knave in the gray hat took from his valise two small glasses, and then drew a flask deliberately from an inner coat-pocket. Turning into each glass a liberal allowance, he passed one to his friend. Then, holding the red liquor to the light, he pronounced the words: "To the success of the Girl from St. Paul."

My emotions at thus hearing the creature of my dreams toasted by passing travelers are scarce imaginable. Who could this damsel be? Of what sort was a female whose

name was on the lip of every stranger, whose name was spoken with an insinuating laugh, who was the toast and admiration of the casual tippler. My heart sank. I felt a misgiving that my passing interest was unfortunate.

I would speak with these fellows. I would know more of the strange personage, I would find out the truth about this mysterious woman who had so curiously won my attention. And then I hesitated. The folly of it all burst upon me. Of what concern to me? Of what use would it be to know the facts? Away with these silly speculations.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was the hour of sunset when our train pulled into M——. At this station there is a railroad lunch-counter, and toward its savory pyramids I took my course. I was the only one in the place who was eating at the counter, *a circumstance which renders incomprehensible the incident I am about to relate.*

I was quietly eating pie and drinking coffee, when I noticed a card lying at my right hand and close by my plate. It was of the size of a common calling card, no it was a common calling card. I picked it up and read thereon, traced in graceful, delicate feminine hand, the words familiar, the words that had been ringing in my ears for twenty-four hours, "The Girl from St. Paul."

I was overcome with astonishment. I was completely bewildered. Had the dishes walked bodily off the counter I could not have been more astounded. About this whole affair there was an aroma of the supernatural. I am not especially superstitious, yet the fatality of these encounters filled me with a sort of awe. I looked stupidly at the bit of pasteboard in speechless amazement. Then the rumble of the departing train warned me that the time was flying and my engagement with Mr. Holmes at his office was for five o'clock.

The details of my affairs with Mr. Holmes need not concern us. My business was concluded satisfactorily. After the last letter had been read, the last receipt signed, the gentleman with his usual hospitality asked me to be his guest for



the evening, couching his invitation in the following terms:

“My dear fellow, there is a very excellent play to be given in our new opera house to-night. I say excellent, because very good reports of it have come from Eau Claire, Chippewa, and other places where they have performed. As my book-keeper expressed it, the company made a great ‘hit’ at Eau Claire. I believe they took everyone by storm. The name of this splendid production”—

A sudden light burst upon me, “is ‘The Girl from St. Paul?’ ”

He nodded, wondering, I presume, at my vehemence.

“And the girl, she’s the star—what’s she like?”

“We will know to-night,” and there was a puzzled expression in his eyes as he took down my overcoat from the rack.

As we entered the stuffy little theater and took our seats in the parquet, a host of sentimental reflections assailed me and made my heart throb painfully. Despite the folly of it, I felt that fate had led me thither for a purpose. My hand trembled as I fumbled the program sheet.

Spurred by patience uncontrollable, my active mind conceived a plan of action. My pulse beat faster. I took from my pocket a bit of paper, wrote hastily, rapidly, furiously, upon it. I beckoned to an usher. He bent over and listened to my words. A queer smile came over his face. He went away. As he disappeared behind the stage entrance, my heart stood still. I felt as though the eyes of the audience were upon me.

When he returned he brought a note in an envelope, scented of course. I tore it open, not feverishly, but stealthily, and read, “I will see you at once. The usher will show you up.”

In a dimly lighted dressing room were a table, trunks and a rough chair. Upon the wall hung a mirror, which even in that uncertain light I perceived was cracked. Before it stood a familiar figure, shaving with deliberate, easy, graceful strokes: One side of the face was covered with a copious lather. It was Pike!

"Pike! What the devil are you doing here?"

He smiled a bit, a very faint, slow smile.

"Didn't you know I was in the show business?" He went on. "You called to see some one?"

For the moment I had forgotten my mission.

Pike pointed to some garments heaped promiscuously in a corner, a coarse blue apron, some long red stockings and a woman's skirt of divers impossible colors. Again the sad, slow smile.

A horrible suspicion dawned upon my agitated brain. I spoke huskily.

"Then"—?

"I am the Girl from St Paul," he said, very solemnly and very slowly.

—*Lewis H. Moulton.*

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## JIMMIE'S FAIRY PRINCESS

The sun was low behind Murphy's Heights when a small boy, holding a great unbuttered slice of bread in one hand ran out from the little kitchen where he had found himself too much elbowed about by his numerous brothers and sisters. His ragged blouse bulged in front with something heavy that bumped up and down inside, and he was just clutching at the blouse with his free hand when his eyes met those of a fairy princess looking at him over the top of the low gate.

"Well, I'll be jiggered," he exclaimed, nearly dropping his bread in his surprise.

The fairy surveyed him, severely, and yet longingly.

"Vat isn't polite. You should 'a said, 'I'll be delighted to give you a piece'. Oh, I'm so hungry!"

The boy was amazed. The idea of it! Here was a fairy princess—for what else could this white-clad, yellow-haired thing be?—standing at his gate, actually crying because she was hungry! According to all the approved tales she ought to wave her wand and turn his bread into cake and ice cream.

But he never stopped to think about that. She was hungry; he knew how that felt.

"Don't cry! Don't cry! I'll give you all my supper if you won't," he pleaded, one brown arm about her neck. Then, suddenly, he was seized with the desire to keep the fairy princess all to himself. No one inside the house had seen them. There was no one on the street excepting old Mr. Reilly who could scarcely see to the end of his short black pipe.

"Come along," he whispered, tugging at her hand, "and I'll give you some supper."

"All right, boy, but your hands are dirty." She drew hers away daintily.

"I, I, well, I had to build a mud fort this afternoon and there wasn't time—I forgot—How did you get here?" he concluded suddenly, seeking to change the subject

"Oh, I came on the street car," she responded airily.

"All alone?"

"'Course, I frequently go to Aunt Jessie's. This day I just 'cided to go somewhere else, so I camed here. Ve howwid conductor," she was suddenly indignant, "he said, 'Are you sure you want to get off here, little girl?' 's if I didn't know! An ven," her voice sank to an awed whisper, "he said, 'what ve—deuce—does she want to get off in ve worstest part of town for?' Wasn't he howwid? I fink vis is a very nice place. I shall ask my faver to come live here. But I'm vewy hungwy. Are'nt we almost there?"

"We are there," replied the boy, leading her around a big rock that completely cut them off from view of Murphy's Heights.

"Now, you' sit down on that stone an' I'll get the supper ready."

He laid the slice of bread on the stone beside the fairy princess who had seated herself obediently, with due care for her fluffy white skirts. Kneeling in front of the rock, he began digging vigorously with both hands.

"I should fink ve supper would be wahver dirty if you're digging it out of ve gwound."

"'Tain't. It's a nice clean cave made of a tin box."

"Well, I hope vere can't any dirt or—angle-worms get into it. What's in your blouse? It bobbles awful."

"'Tatoes," was the brief reply, as the boy rubbed both grimy hands on his short little trousers until they were red and stinging. Then he took from the box one large yellow apple and two sticks of red-and-white barber pole candy, and came to lay them on the stone beside the fairy princess. From the blouse he drew two enormous baked potatoes, and the feast was laid.

"'Vis is better van ve Palace," the fairy remarked, judiciously biting into her side of the yellow apple which they had no other way of dividing.

The boy's slice of bread halted on its way to his mouth. He had begun to suspect that, after all, she was not a fairy—for she hadn't changed anything yet—but she was certainly a princess. There could be no doubt about that. How else could she live in a palace?

"It's wude to stare, boy. My mamma said so."

The boy hung his head for a moment. He did not know what "wude" meant, but he understood her perfectly.

"Where is your palace?" he inquired at length.

The fairy broke into an incredulous peal of laughter.

"Don't you know where the palace is?" A shout arose from up toward the houses, and she stopped to listen.

"Oh-h, Jimmie! Hi, Jim! Where are you?"

There was no reply. Only the boy wiggled a bit on the stone.

"Oh, Jim! Come quick!"

"You just stay right here and don't move. I'll be back in a jiffy," he whispered to her.

They were coming to take his princess away from him, but he'd show them! They shouldn't have her. Not a bit of it?"

"Hi, Jim, hustle up!"

"Comin'," and the boy emerged from behind the rock.

"There's a kid lost. One of the swells from the Palace Hotel. Conductor says she came this way. Seen her?"

"Nope," replied Jimmie, his heart thumping as troublesomely as the potatoes had within his blouse.

By this time a crowd had come up—almost all of Murphy's Heights was there—headed by two policemen and a tall, drawn-faced man who walked mechanically beside the two officers, not heeding what was said or done. Behind the rock, the fairy was laughing to herself.

"I wonder if vat means me? P'raps vey fink I'm lost. Ve silly people!"

"Maybe she's gone down to Chinatown," hazarded Jimmie, determined to put them off the track.

"God pity her, if she has," a big Irishman half-whispered, wiping his hot forehead.

The tall man suddenly roused from his stupor. Jimmie's words had reached him.

"We've got to find her before dark, men," he said.

i There was a joyful shriek from behind the rock, and around t flew a twinkle of white skirts and yellow curls that launched itself into the tall man's arms, crying, "Faver! I didn't know you were here. I've had *such* a nice time."

—*Marion E. Ryan.*

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## NOLAN'S GIRL

The operator at Greenwood was sitting at his desk before a half-sent pile of messages, when the door of the office opened and admitted a man. The intruder was dressed in the uniform of a passenger conductor, yet his face wore that indefinable expression, half serious, half watchful, of a locomotive engineer. He was not an old man, perhaps forty-five, yet his black hair and mustache were already tinged with gray, and this, together with a deep scar across his forehead and a missing thumb, suggested that he had seen much of the

rugged side of life. He stepped quietly to a vacant chair, sank into its depths with a sigh of satisfaction, and drew a folded newspaper from his pocket.

"Hello, Gus," said the operator, without looking up.

"'Evenin' Kid," replied the man, unfolding his paper, and smoothing out the creases with precision. "No 9 on time to-day?"

"Three hours late out of River Bend. Going somewhere?"

"Yes. Called in to take Schmitt's run for a week. Get a pass for me when you're through there, will you?"

The operator, with a nod of assent, continued his sending, while the conductor, after glancing rapidly over the "scare heads," settled back more comfortably in his chair to read an item which seemed to catch his eye.

After a few minutes of silence, disturbed only by the clicking of the busy instruments, the operator checked off his last message, rose to his feet, and, after the manner of one who has long sat in a single position, stretched out to his full length. As he did so his eyes fell upon the figure of the conductor who was sitting motionless in the chair, his paper lying unheeded upon the floor, and his far-away, unseeing gaze directed toward the opposite wall of the room.

"Come out of it, Gus," said the operator, laughing good naturedly.

But the look which the conductor turned upon him drove the smile from his face. It was the look of a man who has heard a voice from the past—a past whose very memory brought to his face lines of pain and sorrow.

"Listen to this, Kid," said the man, picking up the paper and drawing himself together abruptly. "Here is something about a man I used to know a long time ago:

"Butte, Montana:—Barney M. O'Connor, a roustabout, who was for many years an expressman on the Great Northern Railway, met his death in a strange manner last night. He left his home about six o'clock and did not return. This morning he was found dead in the railroad yards, beside the body of an unidentified man. There were no marks on either body that would indicate a struggle, though the faces of both men were badly distorted. No explanation as to the manner of their death can be offered. Mr. O'Connor was 42 years of age and leaves no family."

"Some friend of yours?" asked the operator, not knowing what else to say, for he instinctively felt that behind this ordinary newspaper item lay some trouble he could not fathom.

"Well, it's a long story, Kid," replied the conductor quietly, and "I'm the only living man who knows all of it, but now that it is a thing of the past I don't mind telling you about it—to kind of relieve my mind.

"'Twas long back in the '70's—before your time," he continued, after filling and lighting his pipe, "when I was firing on the Coast Limited on the Great Northern between Iron City and the Switchback Tunnel. You never knew that I used to run on the head end of a train, did you? Well—that's part of the story.

"A young fellow—the same Barney O'Connor I just read about—was express messenger on the Limited then, and since he and I both tied up at the same town, McGregor, we were much together. Barney was a good-hearted lad; he would lend you every cent of his pay check, and then borrow enough to pay his board without saying a word. But he had one great fault; although he was Irish clear through, he didn't have an ounce of the Irishman's traditional aggressiveness and backbone. He couldn't refuse a drink or a game of poker, and he was always dead broke a week after getting his check. Don't think I'm preaching, Kid, for I've gone out on a tear with the best of them, but only when I wanted to; no man in the crowd could make me if I didn't feel like it.

"It happened that the station agent at McGregor, Jim Nolan, had a daughter, who worked in the office with her father, and I'd swear she could beat old Jim all hollow at doing station work and operating. Her name was Christy, but all of us railroad men spoke of her as 'Nolan's Girl'.

"There wasn't a better-looking girl on the whole run than Nolan's girl, or a smarter one. She had wavy, brown hair and big blue eyes, that looked straight into yours when you talked to her, and a figure—well, I've never seen any that

could beat it. She had no brothers or sisters and her mother was dead, so she stayed in the depot with old Jim most of the time.

"They changed crews on the Limited at McGregor, so every day when we pulled in Barney and I, after washing up and putting on our store clothes, went up to the office to see Christy.

"It wasn't long after we began to hang around the office like this, that I commenced to feel that 'two's company, three's none', though of course I never said a word to Barney about it. I noticed, though, that she always had the sweetest smile for Barney, when we came in, and if I happened around alone, the way she'd ask 'where is Barney?' made my heart sink. He was a good-looking fellow, was Barney, none wittier, and always looked neat and dressed-up in the express car. I was only a plain-faced fireman, who couldn't say clever things to a girl, and who always looked grimy and dirty on the engine.

"It's no wonder, then, that Christy preferred Barney to me. I could see plainly that she loved him, though I doubt if he then realized his good luck. He never knew that I would have thrown myself bodily under the wheels of the Limited any day for her, and he always talked about her when we were together.

"'Isn't she the best ever!' he used to say, and 'Just wait till I get enough saved up to set us up in business, and then you'll see how quick I'll find out if she's willing to do up my lunch for me every morning!'

"Things went on like this for nearly a year, and Barney had saved enough to buy a little home, when one day he came to me, his face shining like a clean headlight on a frosty night, and said with affected indifference: 'Come on and have a cigar on me. We're going to couple up next May.' Then he added, with a tremble of joy in his voice, 'And you can just bet she'll be the pilot of this here train!'

"Barney had kept pretty straight all that year. I made him. When I saw how that girl's face lit up with pleasure



every time she saw Barney come safely in from his run, I knew the only way *I* could do anything to make her happy was to keep Barney in the narrow path.

“What happened after that, I knew nothing about at the time, though years afterwards Barney confessed it to me when his tongue was loosened with whiskey. It seems that he had drawn his money—about a thousand dollars—from the bank in McGregor and was carrying it to a man in Iron City, as part payment for a lot and house he had bought there.

“When he left the express car at Iron City, he met one of the fellows, a freight brakeman, who was one of the ‘gang’ to which Barney belonged before he met Christy. After congratulating Barney on his coming wedding—there wasn’t a railroad man on the whole division who didn’t know of that—he introduced him to a fellow whom he called Chadwick.

“‘Chad’s one of us now, Barney,’ he said. ‘Come it’s up to you to furnish the drinks on your good luck.’

“Barney was feeling particularly good-natured toward everybody in the world just then, and the cordial manner of these two men was too much for his newly donned straight-jacket. He hesitated a moment and—went.

“Inside the saloon, Barney ordered the drinks, not once, but twice and three times, and then came poker. Once under the influence of liquor, Barney grew talkative. He told about his plans, about the home he had bought, and about his work. He even went so far as to tell them about the money which an eastern syndicate was sending by express to Butte on some big mining deal, money which would be in his care the next day on the Limited.

“When Barney came to his senses early the next morning, he was lying in the baggage room of the station. His first thought was of his money, and he felt for it. It was gone. His next thought was of Christy. He knew it would almost break her heart if she found out what he had done. Not that he felt the loss of his money deeply—his was too care-free a nature for that; but all his thoughts and hopes had been wrapped so closely in Christy the past year that this came as

a rude shock to his plans. His only thought was how to keep it from her.

"I caught only a glimpse of Barney that morning, before the Limited left Iron City. He was busy checking packages of express matter into the car, and I noticed that his face, which the day before had beamed so jovially on everybody, was now clouded and thoughtful.

"That morning, about twenty miles from Iron City, near the Whipple Creek bridge, the Coast Limited was held up. A 'slow' flag had been set up by the side of the track, and when the engineer checked the speed of the train to six miles an hour, a man jumped up from the side of the bridge behind which he had been concealed; waiting, however, until the engine had passed him.

"Barney's attention had been attracted by the slackened speed of the train, and he was just about to open the door of the car to look out, when it was pushed violently open, and he stared into the barrel of a revolver. With a start he recognized his companion of the night before—Chadwick.

" 'Just keep your hands over your head,' commanded the man, hastily running his hands through the compartments of the large safe which stood open near the end of the car. In less than no time the man had seized a package of sealed envelopes and leaped from the doorway. As he did so, one of the large envelopes dropped from the package to the floor of the car. Barney's first move was to pick this up and thrust it mechanically into his inside pocket.

"By this time the train crew had reached the car, but Chadwick was seen, out of pistol range, in the act of mounting a pony which had been tied to a clump of tamaracks. He quickly disappeared over the ridge.

"The conductor of the Limited stepped to the safe and looked through it. 'He got every blasted dollar, Barney,' he said, 'that was in that syndicate package. Ten thousand—big haul for one man—mighty nervy business.'

"Barney, who by this time had recovered his normal thinking faculties, assented nervously. But I could see in

his eyes a fearful look I had never seen there before, though at the time I attributed it to the shock of the robbery.

“Well, they had a posse out after the robber, but they never caught him—disappeared as completely as if he had never existed.

“From that day Barney was never the same man. He made the payment on his house all right, and was married to Christy the following month, but he became moody and reticent and, what perplexed me most of all, he avoided me.

“This went on for over a year and Christy grew pale and thin, and had a troubled look deep down in her eyes that haunts me yet. She didn’t know the cause of Barney’s change and worried herself sick over it. Then the baby came, and for a time Barney seemed like his old self again, but, after trying vainly for two weeks to live, the baby died in Christy’s arms. After this Barney grew worse rapidly, and and in spite of all that I could do, he took to drinking hard. Christy forgot her grief over the baby’s death in this newer and graver trouble. She came to me one day, with tears in her eyes, and said: ‘You have been a true friend to Barney—to us, and I’ll never forget it. But can’t you help him any more? He is never himself when he is off duty, and every night in his sleep he talks so—’

The conductor broke off abruptly, set his lips tightly together, and paced up and down the office.

“I can’t help it, Kid, for God knows how I loved her, and to see her suffering so—

“Well, there’s not much more to it. Barney lost his job, charged with drunkenness while on duty, and Christy lived only a few months after that. I quit my run and came east to go braking. I couldn’t stay there.”

“And you think the unknown man mentioned in the paper was—?” queried the operator.

“Chadwick, without a doubt in my mind,” interrupted the conductor.

“How can you account for their mysterious death?”

“It’s beyond me. That’s only one of the ways of Providence, Kid, and nobody can explain them.”

—Fred W. MacKenzie.

# THE CALL OF THE OPEN ROAD

(SESTINA.)

I sit and drowse amid a heap of books,  
The hueless thoughts of scholars—men whose blood  
Runs pale blue ink; who scarcely see the sun  
Save as it lights the narrow, barren road  
That leads to learning. What know they of life?  
Of strife and love that move the souls of men?

These strait walls crush me! I would mix with men,  
Their ways my lore, their faces for my books  
Wherein to read the sin and good of life.  
I would go forth from things that irk my blood;  
I would go forth upon the world-long road,  
To seek and see strange lands beneath the sun.

My heart is all atingle for the sun,  
That gladdening sun which lights the ways of men,  
And ever leads the rover on his road,  
And even tempts the pedant from his books.  
I feel the springtime sunshine in my blood  
That leaps and glows for very Joy o' Life.

The glad, great earth is calling, "Here is life,  
"Here out amid the breezes and the sun!  
"The sap stirs newly and again the blood  
"Thrills fervently in veins of beasts and men;  
"O son of mine, put by your pallid books,  
"And know once more the glory of the road!"

Ah, I am fain to seek again the road,  
And breast once more the rushing swirl of life;  
For I am sick of walls, and sick of books.  
O, set me free to wander in the sun,  
To hear the laughs and oaths and groans of men—  
The Wanderlust is throbbing in my blood.

I will go forth with those whose gypsy blood  
Forever calls them to the rovers' road,  
I will get hence and mingle with these men,  
These rough hewn comrades of a freer life,  
With faces bronzed and puckered by the sun;  
Dreamers and builders—having done with books.

My rebel blood calls me to larger life  
To old Ulysses' road beneath the sun.  
I would seek *men*, I care not for your books.

—A. B. Braley.

## DARKNESS AND DAYLIGHT

“SAUGERTIES, N. Y., July 2, 1903.

MR. HARRY VERNON, NEW YORK CITY.

DEAR SIR:—I wish I could see your face as you start to read this. It must be a sight. Yes, quite a sight. As much so as it has been at some other times I could mention. And I can imagine you skimming over this part of the letter hurriedly, so as to get to ‘where she’ll quit her nonsense.’ Well, you are doomed to disappointment this time, for she has already ‘quit her nonsense,’ and that is what the letter is about. Do you begin to understand? But I’ll tell you plainly, so that there will be no mistake.

“We have been engaged about six months now, haven’t we? (And I suppose you will say in a little parenthesis that they have been the happiest you have ever known. It won’t be you if you don’t.) Well, I have made up my mind that that time is just six months too long, and that it might as well end here and now as anywhere or ever. Of course there is another little formality to be gone through with besides just saying so, but I’ll return your jewelry with some other things when I can get the opportunity. It would be rather too conspicuous to send it all by mail now, and in the mean time, you can be making up your mind as to what you will do with it. ‘The pain of one maiden’s refusal is drowned in the pain of the next,’ you know. So you see I am really doing you a favor by keeping it so long.

“But there’s nothing more for me to say, except that if you really do care for me as you seemed to think you did, I am sorry for you. I am afraid my sympathy is wasted, however, for I certainly thought I was in love with you, and since I was mistaken I see no reason why you shouldn’t have been mistaken too. So just think it all over carefully and you’ll see the folly of it, just as I do. I have wondered about it sometimes, before, and now that I have been without the prejudice that your letters always raised in your favor (remember that you have not written to me for at least three weeks, now), I have been able to see things in what I believe is the true light.

“But I may as well close now and say good-bye once and for all. When you get back to this part of the world you can come up to the village some time and get your ring and the other things I spoke of. You needn’t worry about seeing me when you come, as I’ll not be at home. So good-bye, for good and all.

EVELYN JAMES.

“P. S. I guess I’ll copy this on pretty heavy paper before I send it to you, as it is shorter than you have been accustomed to get from this quarter, and that will be a good way to let you down easy.  
E. J.”

Evelyn James was naturally secretive in all that she did, so there was nothing at all remarkable in her going alone to mail the letter she had written. Only the postman knew how often letters had been dropped into that particular box, addressed to Mr. Harry Vernon, and only the postman knew that another letter had gone the way of former ones, and wondered why the wax on the back of the envelope was an intense black instead of a bright blue, as it usually was. "It's so much more appropriate," was the mental comment of the writer as the taper's heat melted the end of the dark stick. "So very much more appropriate. Won't he wonder what's up though?" And in the contemplation of the mental picture which this thought raised she carelessly placed the monogram too far to one side.

"Oh well," she said, as she looked at the distorted imprint, "it will just be a warning to him before he opens the letter that something has gone wrong. 'Coming events cast their shadows before,' anyway."

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Tap-tap, tap-tap.

"All right, I'm ready."

The door opened gently and closed behind a young lady wearing a striped blue and white dress and small white cap. As she entered she glanced quickly at the occupant of the room, and noted with approval that his eyes were shut. Then the door closed and the room was in darkness.

"Is that you, nurse?"

"Yes. I brought your mail upstairs. Do you want me to read it to you now, or do you want to wait?"

"Where is it from?"

"There are three letters; one from your mother, one from Chicago, and the other from Saugerties."

"I'll take that last one, please."

"Why, you can't read it."

"I know that, but I want to take it just the same."

"You'll promise not to try to read?"

"Yes, I promise, sure. I couldn't read it if I did try, especially in this intensified midnight."

The nurse looked sharply in the direction of the patient, and held out the letter, moving it about until it came into contact with an outstretched hand.

"Thank you. And now you may read the others to me if you will, please. Here's the bandage." A moment or two passed in which the trained fingers fastened a bandage over the eyes of the patient. Then a shade was drawn aside from the window, and the prisoner heard news from home.

It was more than a week, now, since Harry Vernon had seen light of any kind. How sore the trial had been no one knew. In the midst of his final work, preparatory to entering upon a career as a physician, a disease of the eyes had come upon him, and although he had tried, by careful use of them, to retain the ability to do his work, they had constantly weakened, and before the day on which he was to have received the long coveted degree of M. D., he had found himself obliged to go to an oculist for treatment. The examination was brief and the directions specific, and half an hour after he had entered the examining room, Harry Vernon was sitting blindfold in a closed carriage, and being driven rapidly to one of the large hospitals of the city. There he was taken in charge by a nurse and an interne, who escorted him to the dark ward, and he had not been permitted to see a single ray of light since that time. The attendants were required to give a warning rap before they entered, that he might close his eyes, and so shut out even the little indirect light that came in from the hall as the door was opened.

"All things look alike to me in here," Harry had said laughingly to the nurse who was in charge of him that first day. But he had had time to think now, and it was with a kind of petulance that he said to the nurse as she finished reading his mother's letter, "It seems like ages since I was able to read like that. How long do you suppose I'll have to stay cooped up here in the dark?"

"Oh, not long, I guess. Don't you want me to read the other letter to you?"

"N—no, not just now, I guess. I—I'll wait. Darken the room and take this bandage off again, will you please? It's bad enough to have the room dark, without knowing that there's light in it that you can't see."

There was no longer any levity in either his words or his mind. He had done a deal of thinking while he was shut up, and it had been of a character that was far from cheerful. If this difficulty continued, what would become of his hopes of a professional life? How would he ever be able to repay what he had borrowed to meet the expenses of his medical training? How could he even support himself in such a condition as that?

But there was another thought that haunted him more than any of these, and it kept coming to his mind again and again, until he felt himself forced to face it squarely and decide upon it. What of his relations with Evelyn? If it was hardship to think of the other things, the thoughts that came with her image were torture itself. There was but one way open to him, he decided, and that was the course that was hardest for him to follow.

The letter in his hand seemed fairly to burn his fingers as he thought of all that must happen, but the ache in his heart was even greater than real physical suffering would have been. Poor girl! How could he tell her of his misfortune and its effect on their plans? And yet, he could not expect her to share the hardships which must come to him as a blind man. She would be hurt, he knew, and would probably wish to obey the first impulse of her love, and insist upon keeping her promise to share his life, but he felt that it would be his duty to refuse to let her make such a sacrifice of herself. No, she must not be permitted to do such a thing as that. He must at least stave off her offers until she had come to think the matter over calmly and quietly, and could listen to reason.

"Poor, poor girl!" he thought. "She had no idea when



she wrote me this letter that other eyes than mine would see the words that should tell me that old, sweet story. Perhaps she would not have written so frankly, so freely, if she had suspected that. If I could only get one little glimpse of it! I can break this wax, anyway, and be that much nearer the letter itself."

The brittle seal crumbled between his fingers, and fell on the floor in little black particles.

"It's a big, thick one, too. Just the kind she knows I like to get from her."

And so his thoughts rambled on and on, taking one turn and then another, but always sad, always melancholy. They went back to the time when he had first realized his love for the "little girl." He had no special aim, no ambition then but the realization of that love and the hope that it would be accepted put a fresh current into his veins, and a definite purpose into his life. Could he ask her to share an aimless life? Never, he had said. He would have something better in view, and from this thought had sprung the resolve to study medicine. She need not hesitate to become the wife of a professional man, and as a physician he could not only command the respect of those about him, but he would be in a position to provide for the wants of "the little girl."

Then came the struggle to carry on his work. Four years had been spent in earnest preparation, and all things seemed to point to an immediate and brilliant entrance into regular practice. He had spent the last Christmas at her home, and had told her all his hopes and plans, and he had come back to his work after the holidays with fresh vigor and earnestness, for Evelyn had said that she would help him carry out the plans that he had made, and he felt that his efforts had indeed meet with a rich reward.

And now—

He kissed the letter tenderly. "Dear little girl," he whispered, "how hard—Oh, how hard it is going to be for you, as well as for me. How can I ever tell you?"

Two weeks after the receipt of the letter with the black seal Harry Vernon was still sitting in darkness, but there was a bit of hope before him now. The doctor had said that if there were no unfortunate developments another week would, perhaps, make it possible for him to see a ray, just a ray, of daylight, if he would not try to use his eyes. Two days of that week had already gone by, and the symptoms so far were all favorable. Perhaps if the treatments should continue successful, he would not have to give up his plans, after all. He was glad that he had not sent Evelyn the message that he had framed as he had sat in darkness. He still kept near him the letter that he had been unable to read, and much of his time had been spent in caressing it tenderly. "Never mind," he thought. "In a couple of weeks more I can read it, and it will be all the more welcome for having had to wait."

Tap, tap, tap, tap!

"I'm ready. Come in." The hinges grated just the least bit, then grated again, and the latch clicked. The patient opened his eyes.

"Any letters?" he asked. It was the day which usually brought word from home. The answer was a shake of the head, given in apparent forgetfulness that the room was dark.

"Well, well, nurse, have you got into hard luck, too? Won't they let you talk? Well, be good, and perhaps they'll tell you after awhile that in two weeks they'll let you say just a word, if you won't say it to anybody."

The answer was a slight movement, accompanied by a sound which had long been a stranger to Harry's ears, and he was quick to notice it.

"Aha," he said, "So we're all dressed up in silks and satins, are we, and going out for a good time? Well, enjoy yourself, and get a little fun out of it for me. Not too much, because an overdose just at this time might result fatally. But don't let me keep you. I don't know of anything that you can do for me before you go, and I know you're in a hurry to get away."

“Oh, Harry!” was the unexpected reply. “Don’t talk like that. It’s cruel!”

“Evelyn!” he cried, rising and taking a step in the direction of her voice. “Where did you come from?” and his eyes tried in vain to pierce the darkness.

“From home. I got your letter, the one you dictated to the nurse, and I came right down to New York. Why didn’t you let me know before what the trouble was?”

“Let you know? How could I? I couldn’t bear to have anyone else write to you for me, and I kept thinking I’d be able to write myself pretty soon, so I just put it off and put it off till they finally told me it would be at least six weeks before I could use my eyes at all. Then I sent you that by the nurse.”

“And did you get my letter?”

If Harry had been in a calmer frame of mind he would have noticed that she was unusually earnest in her mention of that letter, but he was thinking of nothing but the joy of having her come to him in his trouble.

“Yes, I got it all right, and I’ve got it yet. And now you are here I am going to get you to read it to me. I haven’t heard it yet, and of course I haven’t read it. You see I somehow couldn’t bear to let the nurse read that one. I knew you never thought when you wrote it that anyone but me would read it, and I wouldn’t let them read it to me.”

Harry missed another opportunity to use his powers of observation. But he was excusable this time, for when Evelyn said “Let me take the letter then,” it was with a voice that was muffled through having to find its way out as best it could from somewhere in the breast of his coat. But he obediently gave up the letter, and—he never heard it read. And when, a month or two later he was able to do his own reading, the letter in the form of small gray and black particles, was scattered wherever chance and the wind had chosen to take it.

—*Don Eddie Giffin.*

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NOTE:—Owing to an error in composition the note, stating that the poem *Solvet Saeclum* was from the French of Leconte de Lisle, was omitted from the January number of the magazine.