

AN AIR CASTLE.

I built a house in my youthful dreams, In a sunny and pleasant nook...

Fair morning glories climb and bloom At will by the eastern eaves...

Down at the end of a pleasant path In a group of evergreen trees...

I have pictured it all a hundred times— I shall do it a hundred more...

But yet, in the airy realm of dreams Where all my riches lie, I never see the house...

THE AUSTRALIAN'S STORY.

I had just finished reading for the twentieth time my last letter from home when a sudden growl from Bouncer...

Long Ridge station was a very solitary spot indeed, even at the best of times; but just at present, when Long Peter and I were its only occupants...

For a month at least Long Peter and I had shared the work and the danger between us, he as the most experienced, going out with the sheep...

On this particular day I had been feeling an amount of listless weariness which I could scarcely understand myself...

Bouncer had risen to his feet and was listening intently. Again he growled; no, not growled, but whined impatiently, and trotted to the door...

Even as Mr. Ashby spoke we could recognize the bleating of the flock, and could dimly see the white fleeces of the sheep as they emerged from the shadows of the trees...

"There you are all right!" he added exultantly, as both Mr. Ashby's gun and mine were fired at the same moment. "You have each fixed your man, and the others are drawing off for a little. But mark my words, sir..."

"We have enough of both," I replied, "but we have only half a dozen bullets. I'll run them to-morrow. This I said with a flush of shame rising to my cheek, for had not Peter asked me that very morning to run the bullets? Yet I had spent the long summer day listlessly reading letters, because, forsooth, I saw no immediate need of the bullets; and now, thanks to my carelessness, we were practically unarmed."

Mr. Ashby did not seem to observe my embarrassment, for he was standing at the door impatiently waiting for Peter. He had, however, heard my words, for he replied immediately: "Don't put off anything till to-morrow, Jem. Fetch the mold and get the bullets run at once; then go to the water hole and fetch up as many bucketsful as you can stow away in the hut."

Even as he spoke Peter and his flocks arrived, the animals feeding quietly all the way along. "Good evening, sir," said Long Peter, "I have had some trouble with the beasts to-day. Three are missing. I found the body of one of them, Sir, it had been speared!"

Mr. Ashby looked full at the man, consternation clearly written in his face. "Are they so near us as that, Peter?" he said. "I must get home to-night. I only came to warn you and Jem."

"I don't think that you can possibly go, sir," responded the shepherd, coolly filling a panikin of tea. "They are too close to us now."

"I looked at the man inquiringly; his face was pale but resolute looking, and his voice sank to a whisper as he added: "After seeing the spear wound in the sheep I looked about me pretty sharp you may be sure, but I saw nothing till I was clear of the timber, then I sighted one of the blacks wriggling through the grass like a snake. I would have fired at him but I saw another, then another, and I thought it best to return and warn Jem. They did not guess that I had seen them or I would have had a spear through my back. As it is I expect they will attack us to-night."

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth when a spear whizzed through the open doorway and quivered in the wooden slabs behind. Had my two companions been as inexperienced as I was all would now have been confusion and dismay, but both the master and Long Peter were old colonists, and had had more than one brush with the natives. They were both as cool as possible.

"Bar the door, Jem," said the shepherd, "and hand me the powder flask and bullets. Here, Bouncer, keep to heel, good dog."

With a feeling more akin to agony than I had ever known before, I handed the powder flask to my fellow servant, at the same time telling him that I had forgotten all about the bullets, and that only a half a dozen remained in hand.

He just gave me one glance, partly indignation, partly pity. "Then we are all up a tree," he said. "However, let us do our best; two bullets each of us, Jem, and we'll stand by each other."

The good old fellow! I saw by his face that he felt for me in the agony of remorse I was enduring, and did not mean to make it worse for me by his reproaches. Yet Long Peter had a wife at home among the heather mountains, and a daughter, a curl of whose golden hair I had often seen in his pocketbook. Ah, Long Peter could not afford to die yet!

Meanwhile Mr. Ashby was coolly reconnoitering through the loopholes; but as he let down the window, and was preparing for action as calmly as the shepherd. We had handed him his two bullets, but he pushed them back; he had a few of his own. "Take them, then," he whispered; "you will need them all." And truly we did. By this time the moon had risen, its light gradually growing on the landscape till we could see the outlines of the trees, and could see the long grass waving white in the ghostly shadows, but all was silent—nothing but the hoarse cry of some night bird broke on the stillness around. Oh, how long was it to last, this dreadful silence and inaction? For myself I must confess that every pulse in my body was beating like a sledge hammer, every nerve quivering till I could scarcely hold my rifle. But the master and Peter, they knelt as quietly as though no danger was to be apprehended, their barrels pointed through the loopholes, while they closely watched for any movement outside.

By there was none. The sheep were camping quietly round the hurdles, the night wind swept with a mournful sound through the dark trees, causing the spectral tracery of the branches to dance in the moonlight on the grass, but that was all. Still the terrible silence. But suddenly there was a change, three or four of the sheep rose, looked all around, stamped with their feet and huddled close together. Something had alarmed them, some sight or sound as yet unrevealed to our blunter faculties. Bouncer rose to his feet, too, whining uneasily.

"Down, dog, down!" whispered Peter breaking the silence for the first time, and the docile animal once more sank to the ground.

The next moment a loud report rang out into a thousand echoes. Peter had fired the first shot, a shrill death scream following it, while we could dimly see the dark figure of a man who leaped from his ambush and fell like a clod to the ground.

"Now, master," cried Long Peter, while rapidly reloading his gun, "fire away, but aim to the right, sir, aim to the right. I can see the cursed creatures gathering there in numbers."

Mr. Ashby obeyed the directions given him by his servant, for in truth Long Peter had a fuller view than any of us of what was going on outside.

"There you are all right!" he added exultantly, as both Mr. Ashby's gun and mine were fired at the same moment. "You have each fixed your man, and the others are drawing off for a little. But mark my words, sir..."

"Well, I declare, you have had a bit of a scrimmage, and here's poor Jem about done for!" It was the voice of Jerry, who was dragging away the dead body of my assailant from off my chest.

"The other chaps are attending to him," said Jerry, "and as for the master he says he is all right; he won't own to a single scratch. He is a game one, he is. We'll have you all carried to the Head Station afore breakfast time, see if we don't. But you should have seen that dog of Peter's. Why, his feet was all skinned and raw, and he had an ugly spear wound in the shoulder, so that the letter was covered with blood. We could scarcely make it out, but we guessed quick enough that there was something amiss, and came away at once. We were just in time, Jem, my boy."

"Didn't I tell ye as Bouncer would do it?" cried Long Peter, in rather a weak quivering voice. "Poor old chap," he added tenderly, as the faithful brute limped across the hut at the sound of the shepherd's voice and crept close to his side. "You and me will never be part, Bouncer, never, as long as we live." And they never did part till seven years later, when, in extreme old age, Bouncer died and was buried in a grave dug for him by Long Peter himself. "Ah," he said, when the ceremony was over, "why do them faithful brutes die so soon? I'll never see his like again; he was as wise as any Christian, and much more faithful than many."

There was certainly no time to lose. I could see the dark figures of the natives dodging round the hut, evidently thinking that since we had ceased firing our ammunition must be totally expended; but it was not so, we had each of us one bullet left, but only one, which we were keeping for emergency, or for final scrimmage. Meanwhile Long Peter had pulled away a half rotten slab from between his bunk, thus making a hole sufficiently large for Bouncer to creep through. He then fastened the letter securely to his collar, the noble animal giving now and then a suppressed whine and trembling from head to foot with anxiety. He had smelt at Jerry's waistcoat, and quite understood what was expected of him. I could not bear to look at Long Peter at this moment, his features were working with emotion, and I could have sworn that there were tears in his eyes; but he said nothing. Everything being now ready he led Bouncer to the hole, held his muzzle for a moment pressed hard between his hands, while he gazed into the creature's expressive eyes. "Now go, good dog," he whispered; and squeezing himself through the hole Bouncer sped away on noiseless feet.

I listened intently for a few minutes. Oh, how I wished I could see his blanches, and our limbs trembling. Had Bouncer escaped away on his weighty errand without being discovered? Alas, no! a sudden wild jabbering rose on the night air, a rush of many feet, and the next instant we detected a yelp of pain.

"They have surely speared him!" whispered Mr. Ashby.

But Long Peter turned on him almost in anger. "No, no, sir," he said; "he is just scratched. He'll do it yet, I know he will."

"He must be quick then," replied the master, "for those cursed savages have struck a light somehow; they mean to burn us out, look!"

Our eyes were now intently watching the movements of the black fellows from the loopholes, and we had not watched long till we saw a flaming brand whizzing through the air till it fell upon the stringy bark roof above our heads. Another and another immediately followed, still it did not seem to us that any of them had taken effect.

"Carry up a bucket of water through the trap door and pour it over the roof," whispered the master to me, "but take care of yourself; don't let them see you."

I did as I was directed, and thoroughly drenched the roof, but while thus engaged I heard a shout from below. It was Mr. Ashby's voice.

"Come down, Jem; come quickly," he cried, and I rattled down the ladder with a sinking heart. Long Peter lay on the floor of the hut, white and gasping; a spear had entered one of the loopholes and pinned him through the thigh. In response to my groan of utter dismay the good fellow struggled into a sitting posture.

"Never mind me, Jem," he said; "fight it out to the last. Take my gun, there is one charge in it yet; but first drag me into that corner."

I obeyed in silence, handed him a panikin of cold tea, and then took my place by Mr. Ashby's side. "Look out," he whispered. "I mean to fire at your ringleader—that man with the blazing log in his hand—I fear he has already fired the roof. I hear it crackling; but it scarcely matters now, the end is not far off. We are doomed."

As he spoke these despairing words Mr. Ashby fired, his bullet bringing down the man aimed at, who, with a wild scream, fell to the ground. There was a pause of consternation after this, and a hurried talk among the savages outside; then, with wild yells, the whole force of the besiegers rushed on our little garrison. A moment's struggle round the door, then it gave way with a crash, Mr. Ashby's gun swinging on the crowd of savages with terrific force, felling two of them like oxen. I can scarcely describe what followed. There was a wild struggle with our guns and our fists; then two black fellows forced me to the ground; one was shortening his grasp of his spear to drive it through my body, when he suddenly fell on the top of me dead, felled by the butt end of Mr. Ashby's gun. But I knew little more. Dially seemed to hear a loud hurrah from outside, followed by the cracking of rifles; then every sound died away into utter silence.

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Two Loves in a Life.

The Most Thrilling and Passionate Love Story Ever Written.

[This story will not be published in book form.]

Strangers once, but lovers now. He presses a kiss on a snow white brow. Oh, the dreary past is aere and brown: Take an axe and hew it down.

Reginald Travers leaned carelessly against the fauteuil. He held a scented billet doux in one hand, and smoked his Havana with the other.

"Ha! ha!" he laughed, that low, rippling, musical laugh that had thrilled the proud heart of Ethel Beanpody, the aristocratic heiress of Thornfield manor—but to return to the ha! ha!

Then Reginald Travers' eyes glanced around the luxurious apartment and a scornful smile rippled across his face and broke in billows against his classic pompadour. At that inst there was a loud ring at the door.

"Fool that I am!" muttered Reginald Travers. "Why did I ever tie myself to that white faced girl. Thank heaven she knows that I am an exercise commissioner. But if I am betrayed!"—and a pallor of death overwrought that noble countenance.

"But no," he resumed "that can never be. She awaits me at the little vine covered cottage in Hoboken. She little thinks that Andrew McGuffey, the artistic kalsomner, her husband and Reginald Travers, the excise commissioner, who is soon to wed the peerless Ethel Beanpody, the rich heiress, are one and the same."

Far over in Hoboken the sad faced girl wife, Bedalia McGuffey, was cooking flapjacks on an oil stove. Marks of flour and of care were on her pretty face, while her big, wide, pansy eyes were filled with tears that anon fell down on the griddle and spoiled the flapjacks. Then all at once a sudden resolve seized her. Taking a large cork that hung behind the door, she enveloped her lissome form. "Heaven help me!" she cried, as she sped onward to the grim and ghostly ferry. "I must bilk them, for I haven't a penny!"

CHAPTER II. "She refused to tell when a reporter called, but only said that it was box platted with a shirred waist, the front being frocked, and a six inch hem to the overskirt, with accordion plait, the whole affair of golden gauze fly screen wire."—Romance of a Wire Dress.—Adv.

In a brilliantly lighted Murray Hill mansion sat Ethel Beanpody, the heiress of Thornfield manor. On every side were shown the evidences of wealth and luxury. A Broadway rose sent its fragrance from an Ives safe Japanese vase, real coal burned in the open grate. Ah Ethel Beanpody had ne'er felt poverty!

Her beauty was of the rich, dark, southern type that costs money. Her argent lidded eyes glanced carelessly over a libretto of "Reilly and the 400." Ethel Beanpody was one of those bright butterfies that bask in the sunshine and have pie three times a day.

The footman in the bird's eye maple plush announced in rich Castilian accents, "Mishter Reginald Travers." The next instant her form was locked in his embrace and they had gone to press.

"None noticed the slight girlish figure, clad in a shabby sealskin in cloak, that crept up the marble steps. It was Bedalia McGuffey. In an instant she had reached Ethel Beanpody's boardier, silently sandbagging the lackey at the door. She burst inside only to find Reginald Travers covered with confusion and Ethel Beanpody, who sat in his lap.

The wronged girl wife raised her hands and shrieked. The continuation of this thrilling and passionate love story will be found in No. 1,012 of the Queen of the Kitchen, the best paper ever published. For sale at all newsdealers.—New York Evening Sun.

CHAPTER III. "You should never allow liquor to pass your lips," said a mission worker to a hard specimen she had picked up. "Well, myn," he responded regretfully, "you see I can't help it, soon' as how my drinker is sittyvated in the manner it is."

FASHIONS OF '91.—De Dude—Aw, mah good man! do you make trousers wide or narrow now? Fashionable Outer.—All depends 'n' on th' legs, sir; the less leg th' more trousers, sir.

Fashion Notes.

Narrow platings are no longer used to finish the edge of dresses. Fruit is only occasionally used as a decoration for hats and bonnets. Nainsook morning jackets have their entire front laid in narrow tucks. Sailor hats in colored straw are effectively trimmed with black lace. The ribbons used for sewing in rows on net dresses are generally two inches wide.

Many of the summer dresses made of thin fabric have bodices without darts. Yellow daisies were the floral table decorations much used in London this spring. Dressy young married ladies wear white tulle veils with capote shaped bonnets.

Mourning is worn for a longer period in the United States than any other country. The directoire ruffle of white or black lace is one of the features of summer gowns. White silk broadened or lace parasols are not seen to advantage in an unexpected shower.

Sage tea mixed with a little bay rum is an excellent wash for the hair, and prevents it falling out. Scarf veils three-eighths of a yard wide, scalloped on the lower edge, are worn with traveling hats.

Sailor hats, which are again used for summer wear, are much more trimmed than they were last season. The tea gown is no longer worn as a reception dress but has taken its position as a refined sort of wrapper. Twenty yards of ribbon is a very meagre estimate of an allowance for trimming on a summer dress.

Plain coat sleeves are rarely seen. There are always some plaiting or fullness at the top about the armholes. Coachmen's capes made of white velvet or cloth, trimmed with gold braid, have been ordered by Newport belles.

There are new fabrics for mourning brought out as regularly as novelties in any other department of ladies millinery. Kangaroo skin is a favorite leather for men's summer shoes and boots; oil or cream is used to keep it soft and pliable.

Enormous sleeves are necessary appendages to the light taffeta and surah silk dust cloaks worn by ladies when driving. An ancient fashion, revived by gentlemen of changeable tastes, is the watch fob on the right side of the trousers.

Dresses made entirely of crepe are worn only by widows. To be fashionable your parasol should match your dress. Henrietta cloth is the material used for the first mourning dress.

Warm weather fancy work should not require the use of needles. The newest wrinkle in Paris is a colored-gown with black sleeves. Accordion-pleated skirts are in high favor in Paris, so their lease of life is likely to be extended here.

Blazers are closed with one button at the throat, or three buttons placed lower down. The straight skirts which are now so fashionable measure four and a half yards.

Woolen dresses of different weights are the most appropriate fabrics for seaside costumes. Roof gardens are not the fashion, but it is right to pray that they may be in the near future.

Discount is known to be possible even to a girl with red cheeks and a dimple in her chin. It is said that an insurance company conducted by women has been established in New Orleans.

"Where the Bee Sucks." In Java the woodpeckers bore into the telegraph poles, deceived by the buzzing sound made by the wires into the belief that insects are concealed in the wood. Even hard oak has been bored into by these birds.

In Norway the woodpeckers have also been found to bore into the poles; but more curious is the fact that that, in Norway, bears have torn away the large staves placed at the base of the poles, deceived by the sound into thinking that bees and their store of honey were to be found beneath.

HAD BEEN THERE.—A boy discovered a horseshoe lying on Woodward avenue near Elizabeth the other day, and after standing over it for awhile he went into a store and got a pail of water and took it out and poured it over the shoe and then picked it up. Several people noticed his action and laughed over it, and one pedestrian queried: "Did you think there was fire under it, my boy?"