#### A SONG OF HOME.

I've wandered north and south;
In many lands I've been,
But one small spot alone
Am I contented in.
And there the roses bloom,
And there the daisles nod—
For home, my humble home,
I thank the gracious God.

The glory of the east,
The splendor of the west,
The pomp of prince and king,
Are but a hollow jest. Give me the sunny stream, The green and fragrant so

or home, my happy home, I thank the kindly God.

The rain upon the roof, The robin in his tree,
And simple fare and health,
And peace and liberty—
What greater boon to ask,
Had I a Merlin's rod?
For home, my pleasant home,
I thank the gentle God.

Moreover, at my side,
When singing, full of cheer,
The blessed wife of youth
With deepest love I hear,
I fancy more and more
My paths are angel trod!
For home, my joyful home,
I thank the living God.
—Chicago News.

#### A CLEW BY WIRE

Or, An Interrupted Current.

BY HOWARD M. YOST. Copyright, 1896, by J. B. Lippincott Co. 

#### CHAPTER II.

It was something like coming home after all, albeit to a house almost void of furniture and peopled only with remembrances of loved forms long since gone. At any rate, it was the only home I could really call my own.

There were two rooms, the spare bedroom and the parlor adjoining, on the first floor, which still retained the furniture. Everything about these rooms, though faded and somewhat worn was in good order and a somewhat worn, was in good order, and I complimented Mrs. Snyder on the care she

Sarah had thrown up the windows and the soft evening air came into the

Although the place had not been allowed to go to ruin, there was about it that indescribable quality which is attached to long-deserted houses. all felt it more or less. Sarah and Mrs Snyder spoke in whispers; Jake stepped about on tiptoe, as though fearful that the heavy tread of his cowhide boots would bring back the spirits of the departed; while to myself there was a pathos about the old house which had not known an inhabitant for so long It seemed like some human being de serted by its own flesh and blood.

While I was passing from bureau to wardrobe, from center-table to mantel-piece, taking mental notes of all the old-fashioned china and bric-a-brac which adorned those places still, and which in my years days had been for bidden my boyish fingers, Sarah and Mrs. Snyder made up the bed, taking the bedding from a huge cedar chest which stood on one side of the room.

Sprigs of spruce and hemlock had been placed in the chest from time to time, and when the cover was lifted the pungent odor filled the room.

All through the preparations I no-ticed that Sarah and Mrs. Snyder were engaged in earnest conversation.

The old widow was especially vehe ment, and Sarah would frequently shake her head and give forth exclamations indicative either of wonder or of disapprobation. My old nurse also fame with many glances which eemed to have much of solicitude in

When everything had been done to make me comfortable for the night, Sarah turned to me, and spoke low with a touch of fear in her tones.

"Come, Nel, you go back home with us," she said. "Don't stay here all alone in dis grade big house. I am afrait you. Come back with us," she

"No, indeed," I replied, decidedly. "I would not miss sleeping amid the gratebe over to your house for breakfast,
Mrs. Snyder," turning toward the old my meals at your house, do you not?"
"Yes. Dat ish all fixed. Mr. Son-

tag, your lawyer, told me. Bud you better go back mit Sarah," the old woman replied.

"And why so? What's to hinder my staying here in my own house?" I asked. "Have you cooked up a scheme, Sarah, with Mrs. Snyder, to force me to go back with you?" I asked of my old nurse. "Never fear, you'll see enough of me. I'll come over to your house

The two women exchanged glances and seemed to be reluctant to proceed. Finally Sarah spoke in awe-stricken tones, first looking around with

frightened expression.

"Dere's something funny aboud de house, Nel."
"Humph! I don't see anything funny

at all," I replied. "There is more sadness to me."

"Der's awful strange things haf been seen and heard," Sarah continued, with deep seriousness. Old Jake's face fell at his wife's words, and he moved near

"Who has seen and heard strange things, and what are they?" I asked, lightly, for I am not superstitious, and not easily frightened by two women's imaginations.

"Mrs. Snyder haf seen lights at night. and efen in de daytime haf heard noises strange noises of talking," replied my

"Well, they will have to be very bright lights and very loud noises to awaken me to-night, for I intend to sleep like a I said, laughingly. strangest thing of all to me is my com-ing here for the first time since my grandfather's body was borne from the parlor to be placed in the grave."

Old Jake gave a sudden start which attracted my attention to him. I saw him gaze through the open doorway in-to the parlor in very evident terror, and heard him exclaim, in low, awed tones: "Gott in Himmel!"

I could not restrain a smile at the sight of the tall, strong man overcome by childish fears, and was about to upbraid him for his foolishness. But I re membered the vein of superstition which runs through the lives of the Pennsylvania farmers, and so said noth-

ing.
"Come back with us," again pleaded

"No. If there is anything out of the ordinary about my house, I am all the more determined to remain and find out what it is," I said, decisively. Then I added, more softly, for I did not wish o wound the kind heart of my old nurse -I knew her fear for me grew out of her love and solicitude for my welfare "I can take care of myself under any circumstances. I am not a child now

"Den let Jake stay with you until you find out," Sarah persisted.
"Vell, bud de oats, Sarah; ve god to

finish de oats to-morrow," hastily ex-claimed Mr. Hunsicker, in remon-

'Now come, how foolish this is! What could be the matter with the house Nothing hurtful, that is certain. be all right. Don't worry, and I'll ride over in the morning and tell you how soundly I slept."

"Der's no candle here. I go ged von and pring id ofer," Mrs. Snyder said.

"Not necessary for to-night. I am going to bed early, and will not need it. To-morrow we'll see about lamps, for ometimes I like to read late. See how bright the moon is going to be. It shines right into the bedroom, and will give me plenty of light to go to bed by."

I finally succeeded in getting rid of them. Old Jake was eager and anxious to be off, but Sarah hung back, reluctant to leave me to the lonely terrors which her superstitious mind had conjured up It was only after I had given my promise to come immediately to her house in the event of any danger to me spring ng up, that she consented to leave Feeling profoundly gratified that my oming here had revealed to me such absolute trust and love as inspired my old nurse, I placed my arm about her waist while going to the door, and then parted from her with a kiss on her wrinkled old cheek.

After the sound of the wagon wheels had died away in the distance, I disrobed and prepared for bed. The moonlight was so enticing, however, that I sat down on a chair by the window and for a few minutes gave myself up to remin iscent thought.

But before I go on with my experiences in the old house. I must tell about the bank robbery of which I was suspected.

Up to a year before, I had been employed in a large savings institution in Philadelphia. My advancement with this concern had been slow but steady. and after ten years of earnest work I finally attained the position of senior paying teller. Under my immediate charge was the vault, in which the cash and all securities held by the bank were kept. This vault was, of course, guarded by a time lock. The bank opened for business at ten o'clock, but the bookkeepers began their work a half hour earlier. There was a separate vault for the books of the concern, which was not furnished with a time lock, and all the bookkeepers knew the combination of this vault.

The bank was noted for its conservative business methods, and the great eautiousness with which its funds were guarded. It was the established rule that the timepiece of the money vault should not be set to open until halfpast nine, at which time the bookkeepers and most of the employes were at work. In short, so careful were the officials that under no circumstances was it allowable to leave the combination lock unguarded by the clockwork unless some responsible employe was present.

mechanism to throw the bolt at halfpast eight, an hour before the usual securities by the trustees was to take place, and I wished to have the moneys

under my charge in order. When I left the bank that afternoon I found a telegram awaiting me at my lodging place:

"Come out to Fairlawn this evening. We entertain a small party. I want you." Thus the dispatch ran, and it was signed by a name very dear to me—Flor-

ence Morley.

I would willingly have gone to the antipodes to please the lovely young woman, and my disappointment was keen when I thought of the time lock having been set to open at half-past eight the following morning. For Fairlawn was a country seat of Mr. Morley's, about 30 miles distant, and should not be able to return until near ly ten o'clock in the morning, and the combination lock would be unprotected a full hour before the arrival of any of the employes. It was highly im-probable that any thief expert enough to open the combination would attempt the lock, even if it were known that the time mechanism had run down. The risk would be very slight, and I was tempted to take it. But, knowing, even though no consequences should be the result, that by doing so I would break a very stringent rule, I resisted the temptation, and in no very good humor started for a telegraph office for the purpose of sending a dispatch to Miss Morley stating my inability to accept

her invitation. On my way I met an associate in the bank, named Horace Jackson. He was one of the bookkeepers, a man about 40 years old, and a quiet, reserved fel-He never mingled in any dispute day's business, I entered the vault. or controversy among the clerks, was a competent accountant, and lived a se-

was a bachelor, and did not seem to have any special friends. It was cer tain he never chummed or cronied with any of his associates in the bank.

"Mr. Jackson, will you do me a fa-or?" I asked, as he paused in his walk. "Most willingly, Mr. Conway. You have but to state it," he answered, af-

I stated the circumstances concern ing the lock. "It is possible that I will be unable to be on kand at half-past eight," I added.
"And you wish me to be at the bank

in your place?" he said.
"Yes, if it would not inconvenience

"Not at all. I will be there, so the rule will be complied with. Oh, stay a moment. There is an old aunt of mine over in Camden who is ill, and I might possibly be summoned to her bedside."
"Well, then, let it go. I'll stay at home, and go to the bank, as I intended,

myself," I said, feeling quite disap-

"But if I say I will be at the bank you may depend on me, Mr. Conway, sick aunt or not," Jackson went on. He really seemed so willing to do me the favor that I could only reply:
"Thank you very much. I'll depend on
you. It will be doing me a great favor indeed. I'll reciprocate some day."

"Not another word, Mr. Conway, or the subject. Go and enjoy yourself. Then he regarded me with a smile as he continued: "I suppose it is Miss Mor-ley that you intend to visit. Now, I am just on my way to see her father at his office."

"Oh, you are acquainted with the Morleys, then?" I remarked, somewhat coldly, for I did not relish his bringing Florence Morley's name into the conversation.

"Only slightly acquainted. I am interested in a few business ventures with Mr. Morley. My acquaintance extends no further," Jackson said.

I returned to my lodgings light-heart ed and happy at the prospect of again seeing the sweet girl whom I had loved and worshiped for some time in secret

So then Horace Jackson was acquainted with Mr. Morley. I could not but feel a greater respect for Jackson. For Mr. Morley was one of the most influential and highly-thought-of men in Philadelphia, and, besides, was one of the trustees of the bank. Jackson had never boasted of his relations with such an influential man; indeed, I had never even heard him mention the fact

I had felt all along that it would be presumptuous for me to aspire to be



'Come out to Fairlawn this evening.'

Florence Morley's husband. But this evening she was so gracious, so sweet and lovable, that it was impossible for me to resist the impulse to tell her of my love. To my intense happiness l discovered that my humble self was by no means an object of indifference to

Mr. Morley was of a dignified, commanding presence, and rather overawed me. It would be no easy matter to ask his consent to marry his daughter. Florence was his only purposes of the father's life seemed to I knew I must approach him some day, and there was comfort in the fact that he had always met me in a kindly, if dignified and reserved, manner. had never given me any cause to think that my attentions to his daughter were obnoxious to him; but then those attentions had been extended out of friendship only. How he would be af-fected by the knowledge that I was, from this evening, the accepted lover of his daughter, I could not surmise. I could only hope that Florence's influ-ence, which I was well aware was powerful with her father, might prevail. The dear girl's heart was mine at any rate, for she had told me so, and I believed her words.

After the evening's enjoyment I withdrew to the hotel near the depot, where I passed the rest of the night in happy anticipations of the future.

The train which took me back to the city was a few minutes late, and when I arrived at the bank it lacked but ten

minutes of opening time.

Had I been late, either the president or the treasurer would have had to be called upon to open the vault, and it is doubtful if either of them remembered the combination. The bond teller and the head receiving teller shared with me the knowledge of the combination, but, as those two gentlemen were away on their vacations at this time, I was the only one besides the officials who could unlock the vault.

The heavy outside doors were soon opened, and, summoning the porter to help me carry out the cash for the

There were eight compartments inside, the doors of which were provided cluded life outside of the bank. He with combination locks.

reserve currency, another for the re-serve gold, and these two compartments remained locked for long periods. The remaining spaces were used for the storage of various securities, United States bonds, mortgages for loans on real estate, state and municipal bonds and for the gold, silver and currency required in the daily transactions. This cash was carried out in trays and placed in the tills in the banking-room every

morning.
While unlocking the compartment, I noticed with surprise that the lock of the reserve currency compartment, just at one side, was on the last figure of the combination, as though it had been already unlocked.

I grasped the iron handle, and the door swung open. I started back when I looked in. What had come over me! I rubbed my eyes and looked again. The place was empty; nothing to be seen but the two shelves and the painted steel back and sides. Of the \$400,000. the amount of the reserve, not one dollar remained.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

#### A WATERMELON DUEL.

Description of One of the Contests in

Which Southern Negroes Delight. Did you ever see a watermelon duel commonly designated by the colored prother of the southland a "mellion juel?" It is more interesting and a site more exciting than a latter day duel with arms. The duel with the luscious melon is generally seen at the country fairs in the southern states, and while coordinate with the greasy pole climb-ing and pie eating contest, it takes precedence over them in point of amuse ment.

It was a hot day at one of these fair gatherings-one of those days that "swink" the pumpkins and withered everything else, even in the shade. A melon duel was on the programme, with a prize to the negro who could eat the most melons. There were three entries. Each duelist was given a melon, with instructions to cut and eat at the word "go." When the cue was given the "cuffles" began to devour the red meat of the fruit with a ferocity of a wild beast. One had cut his melon in circular form. These he would break in segments and appear to swallow, rind and all. Another, with cavernous mouth, butchered his in horizontal slices. Grabbing them with lightning speed, he drew it quickly across his mouth, throwing the seed out at one side of his mouth and the rinds out at the other with an automatic ease that came from years of practice. The third broke his melon and soused his face down in the meat, sucking it up, seed in-cluded, not unlike a suction pump of large capacity. At the end of five min-utes two of the duelists cried "enough!" having eaten four large melons apiece speed of one melon a minute for two minutes longer. He had consumed seven, and then declared he had a suf-

The successful duelist received the prize money and walked off as if nothing unusual had occurred. He was eyed by the spectators, and one old negro, who seemed to envy him, pro-ceeded to remark: "Dat nigger sho' am in Heben. Dem seben millions am ernuff ter gib 'im 'ligion de res' o' hes nachel days. Dat nigger sho' ken git 'way wid water million."—Detroit Free Press.

### THAT FOLDING BED.

It Is Still an Object of Suspicion to Many Hotel Visitors.

"I'm sorry, sir," said the polite young uptown hotel clerk to the grum-looking guest, "but I haven't another room in the house to-night. If you could use this till morning I'll fix you up right for to-morrow." But the inducement, per suasivly delivered, failed to work, and the grum-looking man went away.

When he had got over the threshold the suave clerk smiled a pensive smile and said: "You can't do anything with these fellows. It beats the world how a man will let his prejudices drive him out into the night to seek inferior ac commodations. And yet this man looked like he knew better, too."

"What was it dissatisfied him?" the only room he'd have there was a center in his motherless daughter. Still folding bed. You see we are crowded I knew I must approach him some day, now and there are but few vacant apartments. He is a crank on the subject of folding beds because in modern times two or three human beings have been caught in them, when they folded up inopportunely, and had their lives crushed out. I pleaded with him that no such disaster could happen to him here, for nowadays folding beds are made with patent catches that absolutely prevent them from manslaughter. No matter how sorely a bed such as we have should yearn to close up on its slumbering victim these catches for-bid. I told him all this, but it had no

effect.' "Are most people imbued with this prejudice?

"Yes; I think a majority of the traveling public has that feeling and I do not believe the time will ever come when the folding bed will gain the full confidence of the American people.-Washington Post.

Poor as Job's Turkey.

Cuttan Thrust — That young Dum-leigh has got more money than sense. Dulham Bluntly-I didn't know he

Cuttan Thrust-He isn't.-Tit-Bits.

She Has No Chance

Mrs. Tupenny-Why don't you leave your husband if he neglects you so?

Mrs. Manhattan—He doesn't give me a chance. He's out seven nights a week himself.—Town Topics.

Doctor (to female patient)-"You have a slight touch of fever; your tongue has a thick coat—" Patient (excitedly)—"Oh, doctor, do tell me how it fits."—Fact and Fiction. A Mean Retort.

Quills-I've a great mind to write a Mills-I doubt it.

"Doubt what? That I can write : "No; that you have a great mind."-

Chicago Evening News. Lane's Family Medicine.

Moves the bowels each day. In order to be healthy this is necessary. Acts gently on the liver and kidneys. Cures sick headache. Price 25 and 50c.

Safe at All Hours.

Humanity is never satisfied. The man with a watchdog, a nervous wife and a rest-ive baby does not feel safe without a bur-glar alarm.—Adams (Mass.) Freeman.

In the advertisement of the John A. Salzer Seed Company, La Crosse, Wis., a few weeks since, the price of potatoes was inadvertent-ly placed at \$1.05 per barrel; this should be \$1.50 per barrel. We advise sending 5 cents postage for Salzer's catalogue.

Be careful how you grasp an opportunity; it is often terribly hard to let go.—Chicago

Not yourself? Use St. Jacobs Oil for Soreness and stiffness. It will cure.

Every dog has his day; but only thoroughbreds get entered at the bench show.—Chicago Record. Sprained last night. To-day you are Well if you use St. Jacobs Oil to cure.

Don't run from a bore; he is probably seeping you from boring somebody else.—Chicago Record.

Feel it pass away—when St. Jacobs Oil cures Neuralgia. Soothes it out.

The principles of acoustics are sound doctrines.—Chicago Daily News.

Rupture. Surecure. Book free. Write for it to S.J. Sherman, Specialist, Mt. Vernon, N. Y. With the day the light, with the road the strength to tread it.—Samuel Johnson.

Keep on and suffer if you think St. Jacob's Oil won't cure rheumatism. Spinster—Either a boy with a top or an elderly unmarried lady.

Why suffer with an ache or pain When St. Jacobs Oil will cure? Why? Humbug—A bug that always preys upo he unwary.—Chicago Daily News.

Frost bites are like burns, and both Are cured by St. Jacobs Oil promptly.

## The Klondike

post yourself about the Gold Fields of the Yukon Valley, when to go and how to get there, write for a Descriptive Folder and Map of Alaska. It will be sent free upon application to T. A. GRADY, Excursion Manager C. B. & Q. R. R., 211 Clark Street, Chicago. ~~~~~~~~~

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