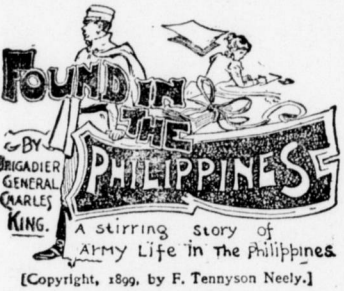


MY FARMER LAD.

We may be poor in worldly goods, My farmer lad and I. But I am one who envies none That live beneath the sky. I never sailed a foreign sea, Nor trod an alien shore. But who has soul to read the whole That lies about his door? The wind that ripples through the wheat, The shadows in the brook, The flight of birds; they all are words In God's great spelling book. And these are ours, to love and learn, Although our farm is small; The best things need no title deed, The sunshine is for all. Beside our hearthstone dwells content; No luxuries have we; If I am clad to please my lad, It is enough for me. Two sturdy little folks are mine, Who romp and laugh and grow; One stops her play, to come and say: "Mamma, I love you so!" Their father pauses, hoe in hand, To watch his darlings, too. Come kiss me, lad, my heart is glad While I have them and you. -Fanny Peirce Iddings, in Farm Journal.



CHAPTER III.

A day had dawned on the Presidio Heights as brilliant as its predecessor had been dismal. A soft south wind had kept the fogs of the Pacific far out to sea and cleared the summer sky of every wisp of vapor. The sun of early August shone hot and strong upon the sandy wastes between the western limits of the division camps and the foamy strand beneath the low bluffs, and beat upon the canvas homes of the rejoicing soldiery, slacking cloth and cordage so that the trim tent lines had become broken and jagged, thereby setting the teeth of "Old Squeers" on edge as he gazed grimly from under the brim of his unsightly felt hat and called for his one faithful henchman, the orderly. Even his adjutant could not condone the regimental commander's objectionable traits, for a crustier old villain of a veteran lived not in the line of the army. "Old Canker" the troopers had dubbed him during the few years he had served in the cavalry, transplanted from a foot regiment at the time of the reorganization, so-called, of the army in '71; but a few years of mounted duty in Arizona and later in the Sioux country had sickened him of cavalry life and he gladly accepted a chance to transfer back to the infantry. Now, 20 years after, risen by degrees to the grade of lieutenant-colonel, he found himself in command of a famous old regiment of regulars, whose colonel had donned the stars of a general officer of volunteers, and the pet name—save the mark—of cavalry days had given place to the unflattering sobriquet derived from that horror of boyish readers—the ill-favored schoolmaster of Dotheboys hall. He had come to the—teeth with a halo of condemnation from the regiment in which he had served as major and won his baleful name, and "the boys" of his command soon learned to like him even less than those who had dubbed him "Squeers," because, as they explained, there wasn't any privilege or pleasure he would not "do the boys" out of if he possibly could. Gordon had promptly tendered his resignation as regimental adjutant when his beloved colonel left the post to report for duty in the army destined for Cuba, but Lieut.-Col. Canker declined to accept it, and fairly told Gordon that, as he hadn't a friend among the subalterns, there was no one else to take it. Then, too, the colonel himself added a word or two and settled the matter.

A big review had been ordered for the morning. An entire brigade of sturdy volunteers was already forming and marching out by battalions to their regimental parades, the men showing in their easy stride and elastic carriage the effects of two months' hard drill and gradually increasing discipline. The regulars were still out in the park, hidden by the dense foliage and busy with their company drills. The adjutant and clerk were at their papers in the big office tent, and only the sentries, the sick and the special duty men remained about the body of camp. There was no one, said Private Noonan to himself, as he paced the pathway in front of the colonel's tent, after having scrupulously saluted him on his appearance: "No wan fur the old man to whack at, bar'n' it's me," but even Canker could find nothing to "whack at" in this veteran soldier who had served in the ranks since the days of the great war and had borne the messages of such men as Sheridan, Thomas and McPherson when Canker himself was sweating under his knapsack and musket. Like most men, even most objectionable men, Canker had some redeeming features, and that was one of them—he had been a private soldier, and a brave one, too, and was proud of it. But life had little sunshine in it for one of his warped, ill-conditioned nature. There was a p... conviction in the minds of the company officers that the mere sight of happiness or content in the face of a subordinate was more than enough to set Canker's wits to work to wipe it out. There was no doubt whatever in the minds of the subalterns that the main reason why Squeers was so manifestly "down on" Billy Gray was the almost indestructible expression of good nature, jollity and enthusiasm that had shown in the little fellow's face ever since he joined the regiment. "If we call the old man Squeers we should dub Billy Mark Tap-

ley," said Gordon one day, when the lad had laughed off the effect of an unusually acrimonious rasping over a trivial error in the guard report book. "He's no end kind when a fellow's in a fix," said Gray, in explanation, "and all the time he was soaking me I was thinking how he stood by Jimmy Carson in his scrape"—a serious scrape it was, too, for young Carson, detailed to escort certain prisoners to Alcatraz and entrusted with certain funds to be turned over to the chief quartermaster of the department, had unaccountably fallen into a deep sleep aboard the train and awoke to find both funds and prisoners gone. Explanations were useless. The commanding general would listen to no excuse; a court-martial was ordered, and a very worthy young officer's military career seemed about to close under a cloud, when "Old Canker" threw himself into the breach. He had long suspected the sergeant who had accompanied the party in immediate command of the little guard. He hated the commanding general with all his soul, and how it came about no one could thoroughly explain, but one day Canker turned up with indubitable proof that the sergeant was the thief—that he was bribed to bring about the escape of the prisoners, and that he had drugged the fresh spring water he brought in to the young officer after the burning heat of the desert was left behind in the dead of the summer night. Canker even recovered most of the stolen money, for there was a woman in the case, and she had safely stowed it away. Carson was cleared and Canker triumphant. "See what the man can do when his sense of justice is aroused," said the optimists of the army. "Justice be blowed," answered the cynics. "He never would have raised his finger to help Carson but for the joy of proving the general unjust, and a regimental pet, the sergeant—a thief."

Yet Gray reverted to this episode as explanation of his tolerance of Canker's harshness and thereby gave rise to a rejoinder from the lips of a veteran company commander that many a fellow was destined to recall before the regiment was two months older: "In order to settle it, somebody's got to find his life or his commission in jeopardy. Maybe it'll be you, Billy, and I'm betting you won't find Squeers a guardian angel." Yet on this sunshiny summer morning, with hope and sunshine and confidence in his handsome, boyish face, Lieut. Gray came bounding up to the presence of the regimental commander as though that sour-visaged soldier were an indulgent uncle who could not say him nay. A stylish open carriage in which were two remarkably pretty girls and a gray-haired, slender gentleman, had reined up in the street opposite the entrance to the row of officers' tents and Canker had ripped out his watch, with an ugly frown on his forehead, for three of his companies had just marched in from drill, and three of their young lieutenants, on the instant of dismissal, had made straight for the vehicle and he half-hoped to find they had lopped off a minute or so of the allotted hour. The sound of merry laughter seemed to grate on his ears. The sight of Gray's beaming face seemed to deepen the gloom in his own. Instinctively he knew the youngster had come to ask a favor and he stood ready to refuse.

"Colonel, I'd like mightily to go over and see that review this morning, sir; and Mr. Prime is good enough to offer me a seat in his carriage. May I go, sir?" "You can't go anywhere, sir, with the tents of your company in that disgraceful condition. Just look at them, sir; as ragged as a wash line on a windy day." And Canker scowled angrily at the young fellow standing squarely at attention before him.

"I know that, colonel, but the sun did that while we were out at drill, and the men will straighten everything in ten minutes. I'll give the order now, sir." And Billy looked as though refusal were out of the question. "You'll stay and see it done, sir, and when it's done—to my satisfaction—will be time enough to ask for favors. Mr. Gordon, send word to the company commanders I wish to see them here at once," continued the senior officer, whirling on his heel and terminating the interview by so doing. It was in Gray's mind for a brief minute to follow and plead. He had made it tell many a time with an obstinate university don, but he knew the carriage was waiting—the carriage load watching, and deep down in his heart there was a disappointment. He would have given a big slice of his monthly pay to go with that particular party and occupy the seat opposite Amy Lawrence and gaze his fill at her fair face. He well-nigh hated Squeers as he hurried away to hail his first sergeant and give the necessary orders before daring to return to the carriage and report his failure. His bright blue eyes were clouded and his face flushed with vexation, for he saw that the rearmost regiment was even now filing into the Presidio reservation afar off to the north, and that no time was to be lost if his friends were to see the review. The distant measured boom of guns told that the general in whose honor the ceremony was ordered was already approaching the spot, and away over the rolling uplands toward the Golden Gate a cavalry escort rode into view. Billy ground his teeth. "Run and tell them I cannot get leave," he called to a fellow sub. "Squeers has set me to work straightening up camp. Turn out the company, sergeant! Brace the tent cords and align tents," and a mournful wave of his forage cap was the only greeting he dare trust himself to give, as after a few minutes of fruitless waiting, the vacant seat was given to another officer and the carriage rolled rapidly away. A second or two it was hidden from his sight behind the large wall tents along the line of fence, then shot into full view again as he stood at the end of the company street look-

ing eagerly for its reappearance. And then occurred a little thing that was destined to live in his memory for many a day, and that thrilled him with a new and strange delight. He had never been of the so-called "spooney" set at the 'varsity. Pretty girls galore there were about that famous institute, and he had danced at many a student party and romped through many a reel, but the nearest he had ever come to something more than a mere jolly friendship for a girl was the regard in which he held his partner in the "mixed doubles," but that was all on account of her exuberant health, spirits, general comeliness of face and form, and exquisite skill in tennis. But this day a new and eager longing was eating at his heart; a strange, dull pang seemed to seize upon it as he noted in a flash that the seat that was to have been his was occupied by an officer many years his senior, a man he knew only by sight and an enviable reputation, a man whose soldierly, clean-cut face never turned an instant, for his eyes were fixed upon a lovely picture on the opposite seat—Amy Lawrence bending eagerly forward and gazing with her beautiful eyes alight with sympathy, interest and frank liking in search of the sorely disappointed young officer. "There he is!" she cried, though too far away for him to hear, and then, with no more thought of coquetry than a kitten, with no more motive in the world than that of conveying to him an idea of her sorrow, her sympathy, her perhaps pardonable and exaggerated indignation at what she deemed an act of tyranny on the part of his commander, with only an instant in which to convey it all—her sweet face flushed and her eyes flamed with the light of her girlish enthusiasm—in that instant she had kissed her hand to him, and then Col. Armstrong, turning suddenly and sharply to see who could be the object of interest so absorbing, caught one flitting glimpse of Billy Gray lifting his cap in quick acknowledgment, and the words that were on the tip of Armstrong's tongue the moment before were withheld for a more auspicious occasion—and it did not come too soon.

It was only four days after that initial meeting in the general's tent the foggy evening of the girl's first visit to camp, but both in city and on the tented field there had been several occasions on which the colonel had been in conference with Mr. Prime and in company with the young ladies.



It thrilled him with a new and strange delight.

Junior officers had monopolized the time and attention of the latter, but Armstrong was a close observer and a man who loved all that was strong, high-minded and true in his own sex, and that was pure and sweet and winsome in woman. A keen soldier, he had spent many years in active service, most of them in the hardy, eventful and vigorous life on the Indian frontier. He had been conspicuous in more than one stirring campaign against the red warriors of the plains, had won his medal of honor before his first promotion, and his captaincy by brevet for daring conduct in action long antedated the right to wear the double bars of that grade. He had seen much of the world, at home and abroad; had traveled much, read much, thought much, but these were things of less concern to many a woman in our much married army than the question as to whether he had ever loved much. Certain it was he had never married, but that didn't settle it. Many a man loves, said they, without getting married, forgetful of the other side of the proposition advanced by horrid regimental cynics, that many men marry without getting loved. Armstrong would not have proved an easy man to question on that, or indeed on any other subject which he considered personal to himself. Even in his own regiment in the regular service he had long been looked upon as an exclusive sort of fellow—a man who had no intimates and not many companions, yet, officers and soldiers, he held the respect and esteem of the entire command, even of those whom he kept at a distance, and few are the regiments in which there are not one or two characters who are not best seen and studied through a binocular. Without being sympathetic, said his critics, Armstrong was "square," but his critics had scant means of knowing whether he was sympathetic or not. He was a steadfast fellow, an unwavering, uncompromising sort of man, a man who would never have done for a diplomat, and could never have been elected to office. But he was truthful, just, and as the English officer reluctantly said of Lucan, whom he hated: "Yes—damn him—he is brave." The men whom he did not seem to like in the army and who disliked him accordingly, were compelled to admit, to themselves at least, that their reasons were comprised in the above-recorded, regrettable, but unmistakable fact—he didn't like them. Another trait, unpopular, was that he knew when and how to say no. He smoked too much, perhaps, and talked too little for those who would use his words as witnesses against him. He never gambled, he

rarely drank, he never lent nor borrowed. He was a bachelor, yet would never join a "mess," but kept house himself and usually had some favored comrade living with him. He was 49 and did not look 35. He was tall, erect, athletic, hardy and graceful in build, and his face was one of the best to be seen in many a line of officers at parade. His eyes were steel gray and clear and penetrating, his features clear-cut, almost too delicately cut, thought some of the best friends he had among the men. His hair was brown, sprinkled liberally with silver; his mouth, an admirable mouth in every way, was shaded and half-hidden by a long, drooping mustache to which, some men thought and some women said, his tapering white fingers paid too much attention, but I doubt if a knowledge of this criticism would have led to the faintest alteration in the habit. Generally the expression of Armstrong's face was grave, and, on duty a trifle stern; and not ten people in the world were aware that humor could twinkle in the clear, keen eyes, or twitch about the corners of that mobile mouth. There were no five who knew the tenderness that lay in hiding there, for Armstrong had few living kindred and they were men. There lived not, as he drove this glorious August morning to the breezy uplands beyond the camps, one woman who could say she had seen those eyes of Armstrong's melt and glow with love. As for Amy Lawrence, she was not dreaming of such a thing. She was not even looking at him. Her thoughts at the moment were drifting back to that usually light-hearted boy who stood gazing so disconsolately after them as they drove away, her eyes were intent upon an approaching group that presently reclaimed her wandering thoughts.

Coming up Point Lobos avenue strode a party of four—all soldiers. One of these, wild-eyed, bareheaded, disheveled, his clothing torn, his wrists lashed behind him, walked between two armed guards. The fourth, a sergeant, followed at their heels. Miss Lawrence had just time to note that the downcast face was dark and oval and refined, when it was suddenly uplifted at sound of the whirling carriage wheels. A light of recognition, almost of terror, flashed across it, and with one bound the prisoner sprang from between his guards, dove almost under the noses of the startled team, and darted through the wide open doorway of a corner saloon. He was out of sight in a second.

[To Be Continued.]

Puzzling Orders.

A chemist is making a collection of the queer orders he receives from people who send children to the store for things they need. Here are a few samples of them: "This child is my little girl. I sent you a penny to buy two sitless powders for a groan up adult who is sick." Another reads: "Dear daughter, please give bearer pennies worse of Auntie Toxyn for to garble babi's throte, and oblige." An anxious mother writes: "You will please give the little boy pennur worth of epace for to throw up in a five months' old babe. N. B.—The babe has a sore stummick." This one puzzled the druggist: "I have a cue pain in my child's diagram. Please give my son something to release it." Another anxious mother wrote: "My little baby has eat up its father's parish plaster. Send an anecdote quick as possible by the inclosed little girl." The writer of this one was evidently in pain: "I haf a hot time in my insides and wich I wood like it to be extinguishd. What is good for to extinguish it? The inclosed sixpence is for the price of the extinguisher. Hurry, please."—Pearson's Weekly.

The First He'd Seen.

A captain in a regiment stationed in Natal when paying his company the other day chanced to give a man a Transvaal half-crown, which, as one would naturally expect, bears the image and superscription of President Kruger. The man brought it back to the pay table and said to the captain: "Please, sir, you've given me a bad half-crown." The officer took the coin without looking at it, rang it on the table, and then remarked: "It sounds all right, Bagster. What's wrong with it?" "You look at it, sir," was the reply. The captain glanced at the coin, saying: "It's all right, man. It will pass in the canteen." This apparently satisfied Bagster, who walked off, making the remark: "If you say it's all right, sir, it is all right; but it's the first time I've seen the queen with whiskers!"—London Answers.

A Woman's Tear.

The tears of lovely woman had been a mystery through the ages, but James Smithson, the founder of the Smithsonian institution, determined that the secret should be a secret no longer. One day he saw a tear slipping down a lady's cheek and instantly sought to catch it in a small vial which he carried constantly with him. One-half the precious drop escaped, but, having preserved the other half, Mr. Smithson submitted it to reagents, and next day published to the world the fact that it was simply microcosmic salt, with muriate of soda and three or four saline substances held in solution.—Youth's Companion.

Where the Trouble Lay.

"Do you think you can clear him?" asked the devoted wife of the lawyer. "I hope so, ma'am," replied the lawyer, "but I'm afraid—"

A Touching Death.

First Boer—Poor Schmidt! He met his death during that last engagement. Second Boer—How did it happen? First Boer—He had his whiskers shot away and died of a broken heart. —Town Topics.

A Delightful Effect.

Artist—Those evergreens on the north side of your house have a delightful effect! Farmer—I should say they had. Them trees keep off the wind and save 'bout eight dollars' worth o' firewood every winter.—N. Y. Weekly.

THE PLACE FOR A POOR MAN.

Alameda, N. W. T., Canada, Dec. 22nd, 1899. Mr. B. Davies, Canadian Government Agent, St. Paul, Minn. Dear Sir—As I promised you about two years ago that at some future time I would let you know what I thought of Western Canada and the chances of a poor man making a start and supporting a family at same time, so will write a few facts concerning my own experience the past 21 months, and what I have done, any able-bodied man can do, provided he will work.

I left Traverse country, March 20th, 1898, landed in Alameda at noon the 21st, with \$3.55 in my pocket, a stranger and among strangers, and when my family came in Oct., 1898, my wife had nearly \$10, or barely enough to pay freight on her stove, sewing-machine and clothes and beds. I commenced work March 28th, also made entry for homestead same day (the man I started work for loaning me \$15 to pay entrance fee), and I have earned or at least received \$478.10 in wages since then, and have been idle at least 2 months of the 21 since I came. The homestead I took had 12 acres broke by a former occupant. I paid \$20 to have it replowed in July, '98, and the seed wheat for it cost me \$8.25. I let it to a neighbor for 1/2 in elevator clear of all expense except the seed, and this fall I received \$70.10 for my part of the crops off of the 12 acres, so my total receipts the past 21 months has been \$548.10, and my expenses besides living for self and family have been as follows: Entrance fee (\$5.00 being paid for cancellation).....\$ 15.00 Summer following 12 acres..... 20.00 Seed for same..... 8.25 Cost of house, besides my own labor on same..... 75.85 20 acres of breaking and double discing same..... 60.00 \$179.10 My half of wheat..... 70.10

Net expense on homestead.....\$109.00 We moved on our homestead July 10th, 1899, have 32 acres in good shape for crops in 1900. My wife joins with me in sending best wishes to you and yours. You can truly say to any poor man who pays a big rent to get a farm (somebody else's land) or works for wages to support a family, that I have personally tried both in Minnesota and tried hard to make a success of it, but found to my sorrow that after working hard a poor living was all I could get out of it, and after nearly 2 years of Western Canadian life I will say that I am very thankful to you for helping me to decide to try it in Canada. Yours respectfully, W. H. KINKADE.

THE WISE VIZIER.

He Quickly Looked the Matter Over and Executed the Whole Outfit.

Abdullah the Vizier was bored. He sat on a mighty heap of embroidered cushions and frowned at the black and white squares of the tessellated court and the perfumed fountain in its center. "Summon my three wise men," said Abdullah, and the three wise men stood before him. "Speak, Son of Wisdom," said the vizier to the eldest of the wise men "and tell me why I am weary of th world." And the wise man smoothed his silvery beard with his long, thin hand and spoke: "O Father of the Fatherless! O wisest of all wise men in this the west country of the world! that thou art bored is but a dispensation of Providence, for so wise art thou that none may grasp the reason of thy boredom." And Abdullah frowned and made a sign, and the eldest of the three wise men was taken from Abdullah's presence and hanged upon the nearest sycamore.

And the second wise man was summoned before Abdullah, and in answer to the vizier's question he who was known as the Reader of the Moon opened his mouth and spake: "Too wise art thou, O Father of the Faithful; thou canst but be bored, for to thy wisdom must all things seem foolish." And Abdullah made a sign, and the second wise man was hanged beside the first.

Then trembling and afeared stepped forward the third and last of the wise men. Wrinkled was he as a pomegranate wetted by the rain and shivered by the morning sun. He waited not for the question of the vizier, but raising his voice he cried in shrill tones: "O vizier, the reason of thy boredom is not far to seek. This world is wide, and thou, O vizier, hast eyes, and hands, and feet, and senses, even as other men. Thou art a fool, O vizier, therefore art thou bored and weary of the world."

And Abdullah laughed a hearty laugh and raised him up from off the cushions. "Truth hast thou spoken," said the vizier, "and the others lied, knowing that they spake not the truth. Therefore shalt thou not be hanged as were they, but shalt lose thy head at the hands of All the Executioner."

And it was done even as Abdullah the Vizier commanded.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

First Boer—Poor Schmidt! He met his death during that last engagement. Second Boer—How did it happen? First Boer—He had his whiskers shot away and died of a broken heart. —Town Topics. A Delightful Effect. Artist—Those evergreens on the north side of your house have a delightful effect! Farmer—I should say they had. Them trees keep off the wind and save 'bout eight dollars' worth o' firewood every winter.—N. Y. Weekly.

\$500 Reward

The above Reward will be paid for information that will lead to the arrest and conviction of the party or parties who placed iron and slabs on the track of the Emporium & Rich Valley R. R., near the east line of Franklin Housler's farm, on the evening of Nov. 21st, 1891. HENRY AUCHINCLOSS, President.

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