THE OLD HOUSE.

Stands a house of somber gray,
And beneath its roof, for shelter
From the storm, I stood one day.
Every darkest nook and cranny
Spiders claimed for dim retreat.
On the floor a velvet carpet
Turned to dust beneath my feet
Broken windows partly boarded
Helped me grudgingly to see
All the prints of Time's firm fingers
Working here so ceaselessly.

Wilder rose the storm each moment;
Swiftly fell the summer shower.
Sre I knew it slumber bound me
In that lonely place and hour.
Is lept the old house wakened
From its dream of death and mold,
And through every lace-hung window
Sunshine filtered, as of old.
Gone the dusk from web-hung corners,
All the threads were brushed away,
And the air was sweet with laughter

And the air was sweet with laughter Of the children at their play.

I could see them all: The father,
With a wee one on each knee,
While the mother bent in beauty
O'er her darlings tenderly;
Out among the summer spiendor
Strolled a lad and lassie fair.
With a wreath of crimson roses
He has decked her curling hair.
Eyes of brown and blue are meetir
In an ecstasy of bilss;
Tender hearts and lips together
Seal their troth in that first kiss.

I could see them all: The father,

Slowly then the shadows deepened Round the stair step where I lay. As I wakened from my slumber, Storm and dream had passed away. -Farm and Home.

My Strangest Case

BY GUY BOOTHBY.

Author of "Dr. Kikola," "The Beautiful White Devii," "Pharos, The Egyptlan," Etc.

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CHAPTER II.—CONTINUED.

"Our case is as follows," he began. "As I have told you, we have been in China for several years, and during that time we have had the good fortune to enroll not a few well-known names among our converts. To make a long story short, we were so successful as to be able to persuade even the mandarin of the province to listen to our message. He was an enormously rich man, one of the richest, perhaps, in China, and was so impressed by the his death-bed, he left to us for the benefit of the mission all his wealth, in gold, silver and precious stones. It was a princely legacy, and one that would have enabled us to carry on our

mission with such success as we had mever dreamed of."
"But if you were so lucky and so much in love with your profession, how does it come about that you are in

England now?" I inquired.
"I will tell you why," he answered, leaning toward me and tapping with his fingers upon the edge of the writ-fug-table. "It is a sad story, and the mere telling of it causes me more pain than you would believe. You must understand that at the time of the mandarin's death an English traveler, who had been passing through the west-ern provinces, reached our city and took up his abode with us. Needless to say, we were overwhelmed with grief at the loss of our patron. The treasure he had presented us with we took to the mission and deposited it in a safe place. We had no suspicion of any sort of treachery. I fear my companion and I are not men of the world, that is to say we do not go about suspecting evilof our neighbors."
"I think I understand," I said, "You

brought the treasure home, put it In what you considered a safe place, and one day awoke to find your estimable guest missing and the treas-ure gone with him. Have I guessed cor-

"You have hit the mark exactly," Kitwater replied. "We woke one day also ourselves and our mission serious compromised. The relations of the dead man not only accused us of having alienated him from the faith of his forefathers, but also of having robbed could not but admit that we had been presented with the wealth in question, and when it was demanded of us we could only explain that we had lost it cition for yourself. At the best times the foreigner is not popular in China, and our situation was particularly unpleasant. Situated as we were In one of the wildest portions of the empire, and accused of the basest sacrilege, that is to say of violating the home of a dead man, we could hope for small mercy. robbed us had entirely disappeared, and no trace of him could be discovered. To attempt to offer any explanation, or to incriminate him, was out of the question. We could only suffer in silence.

He paused and heaved a heavy sigh. "And what form did your punishment take?" I inquired, for I was beginning to be interested in their story.

"Can you not see for yourself?" the man answered, "Can you not see that I am blind, while my companion is dumb? That was what they con-demned us to. By that man's villainy I am destined never to look upon God earth again, while my companion will never be able to converse with his In the world, yet out of it."
I looked at them both in amazement.

Their tale seemed too terrible to be tone. And yet I had the best of evi-"And why have you come to me?

give you back your sight, nor your friend his power of speech."

But you can help us to find the man who brought this misery upon us," Kitwater replied. "That is what we have come to ask of you. He must not be permitted to enjoy the wealth he cais) duty, and that duty it must per- ery we owe the mutilations we have

form. We are not overburdened with riches, in fact, we are dependent upon anxious to find him?" upon me yesterday, and who has the misfortune to be blind, is your uncle?" the bounty of another, but if you can help us to recover the sum that was help us to recover the sum that stolen from us, we will gladly pay whatever you may ask! We cannot ter."

"We cannot blame you," Kitwater "We cannot blame you," Kitwater

"But this is a most unheard-of request," I said. "How do you know where the man may be at this mo-

"We do not know, or we should scarcely have asked your assistance,' Kitwater replied, with some show of reason. "It is because we have heard of your wonderful powers in tracing people that we have come to you. Our only cause for attending the trial at which you saw us was to hear the eviconclusions f.om it. That those conclusions were complimentary to you, our presence here is evidence of. We know that we could not put our case in better hands, and we will leave it with you to say whether or not you will help us. As I said just now, my companion is dumb, while I am blind; we cannot do much ourselves. Will you not take pity upon us and help us to find the man who betrayed and ruined

you will find him. All we ask you to do is to bring us face to face with him. We will manage the rest. It will be strange then if we are not able to get him to a proper way of thinking."

This was the most unusual case I had had to do with, and for the moment I scarcely knew what to say. I turned to the blind man once more. "Have you any idea where the man

went after he robbed you?"
"He crossed the province of Yunnan into Burmah," he replied. "After that he made his way through Rangoon, and

shipped on board the steamer Jema-dar for London." "When did the Jemadar reach Lon-

"On the 23d of June," he answered. 'We have made inquiries upon that point.

I made a note of this, and then coninued my inquiries.

"One other question," I said. "While we are on the subject, what do you suppose would be the total value of the treasure of which he robbed you?'
"That is very difficult to say," Kit

water replied, and then turned to his companion and held out his hand. The other took it and tapped upon the palm with the tips of his fingers in a sort of dot-and-telegraph fashion that I had never seen used before.
"My friend says that there were 93

stones, all rubies and sapphires; they were of exquisite luster and extraor-dinary size. Possibly they might have been worth anything from £170,000 to £250,000."

Were the men telling me the truth, I asked myself, or were they trying to interest me in the case by exaggerat-

ing the value of the treasure?
"What you say is almost incomprehensible," I continued. "I trust you will forgive me, but can you substan tiate what you say'

"When we say that we are willing to pay your expenses in advance if



GOOD MORNING, MISS KITWATER,

will try to find the man, I think we are giving you very good proof of our bona fides," he remarked. "I an he remarked. afraid we cannot give you any other, seeing, as I have said, that we are both poor men. If you are prepared to take up our case, we shall be long gratitude to you, but if you can not, we must endeavor to find some on else who will undertake the task.

"It is impossible for me to decide now whether I can take it up or not, I said, leaning back in my chair and looking at them both as I spoke. must have time to think it over; there are a hundred and one things to b considered before I can give you a direct reply."

was silence for a few mo ments, and then Kitwater, who had been holding his usual mysterious communications with his friend, said: "When do you think you will be able to let us have an answer?"

"That depends upon a variety of circumstances," I replied. "It is a matter difficult to average. In the first place there is no knowing where the don; he may be in America; he may b in any other portion of the globe might cost £500 to find him, it might cost £5,000. You must see for your

"In that case we should be prepared to give security for the first-named amount, or pay you half in advance, Kitwater replied. "I hope you do not think, Mr. Fairfax, that we are endeaver oring to play you false? You can se for yourself that our injuries are per manent, and, as far as they go, are a least evidence concerning the truth of our story. You can also see for your self how this man has behaved to wards us. He has robbed us of all we hold valuable, and to his act of treach

"I do not wonder at that at all," I said. "My only feeling is that I must

replied. "Yet you must surely understand our anxiety for a definite and immediate answer. The man has had a onsiderable start of us already, and he has doubtless disposed of the jewels ere this. At whatever price he sold them, he must now be in possession of a considerable fortune, which rightly belongs to us. We are not vindictive men; all we ask is for our own.

"I quite agree with you there," I re-lied. "The only question in my mind is, who shall get it for you? Let me explain matters a little more clearly. In the first place I have no desire to of-fend you, but how am I to know that

the story you tell me is a true one?"
"I have already told you that yo will have to take our word for that, he said. "It will be a great disappoint ment to us if you cannot take the matter up, but we must bear it as we have borne our other misfortunes. When we realized the way you managed those bank people we said to each other: 'That's the man forus! If any-"But he may be at the other end of the world at this moment?" I said. "That does not matter," he returned. It naturally comes to us as a disappointment to find that you are not willing to take up the case."

"I have not said that I am not willing," I answered; "I only said that I am not going to commit myself until I have given the matter due considera-tion. If you will call here at four o'clock to-morrow afternoon, I shall be able to give you a definite answer.

"I suppose we must be content with that,"said Kitwater, lugubriously. They thereupon thanked me and

ose to go.
"By the way," I said, "does this man Hayle know that you are in England?" The blind man shook his head.

"He thinks we are lying dead in the ingle," he said, "and it is not his fault that we are not. Did he suspect for a moment that we were alive in the same country as himself, he'd be out of it like a rat driven by a fer-ret from his hole. But if you will give us your assistance, sir, we will make him aware of our presence before very

Though he tried to speak unconcern edly, there was an expression upon the man's face that startled me. that, blind though he was, I should not care to be in Mr. Hayle's place when

they should meet.

After they had left me I lit a cigar and began to think the matter over. I had had a number of strange cases presented to me in my time, but never one that had opened in such a fashion as this. A man robs his friends in the center of China; the latter are tor-tured and maimed for life, and come to me in London to seek out their be-trayer for them, in whatever part of the globe he might be. The whole thing seemed so preposterous as to be scarcely worth consideration, and yet, try how I would to put it out of my mind, I found myself thinking of it continually. The recollection of the blind man's face and that of his dumb companion haunted me awake and asleep. More than once I determined to have nothing to do with them, only later to change my mind, and vow that I would see the matter through at any

cost to myself. Next morning, however, saner counsels prevailed. An exceedingly remunerative offer was made me by a prominent trust company, which at any other time I should have had no hesitation in immediately accepting. Fate, however, which is generally more responsible for these matters than most folk imagine, had still a card to play upon Messrs. Kitwater and Codd's behalf, and it was destined to overthrow all my scruples, and what was more to ultimately revolutionize the conduct of my whole life.

CHAPTER III.

Towards the middle of the morning I was sitting in my office, awaiting the coming of a prominent New York detective, with whom I had an appointment, when my clerk entered to inoffice, and desired to see me if I could spare her a few minutes.
"Who is she?" I inquired. "Find out

that, and also her business."

"Her name is Kitwater," the man replied, when he returned after a moment's absence, "but she declines to state her business to anyone but your-

"Kitwater?" I said. "Then she is a relation, I suppose, of the blind man who was here yesterday. What on earth can she have to say to me? Well. minutes, so you may as well show her in." Then to myself I added: "This is a development of the case which I did not expect. I wonder who she vife, sister, daughter, or what, of the blind man?"

I was not to be left long in doubt, for presently the door opened and the young lady herself entered the room. I say "young lady," because her age could not at most have been more than one or two-and-twenty. She was tall and the possessor of a graceful figure, while one glance was sufficient to show me that her face was an exceedingly pretty one. (Afterwards I discovered that her eyes were dark brown.) I rose and offered her a

"Good morning, Miss Kitwater," I said. "This is an unexpected visit. Won't you sit down?"

When she had done so I resumed my at at the table. "Mr. Fairfax," she began, "you are

the great detective, I believe?"
I admitted the soft impeachment with as much modesty as I could assume at so short a notice. She cer-

tainly was a very pretty girl.
"I have come to talk to you about She stopped as if she did not quite

I said.

"Yes! He was my father's younger and only brother," she answered. "I have often heard my father speak of him, but I had never seen him myself until he arrived in England a month ago with his companion, Mr. Codd. Mr. Fairfax, they have suffered terribly I have never heard anything so awful

as their experiences."
"I can quite believe that," I answered. "Your uncle told me something of their great trouble yesterday. It seems wonderful to me that they should have survived to tell the tale."

"Then he must have told you of Hayle, their supposed friend" (she spoke with superb scorn), "the man who betrayed them and robbed them of what was given them?"

"It was for that purpose that they called upon me," I answered. "They were anxious that I should undertake the search for this man."

[To Be Continued.]

WANTED MONEY, NOT MORALS Story of the Cynicism of the Late Li Hung Chang Told by a Well-Known Promoter,

The late Eugene Stanislas Kostzka de Mitkiewicz used to tell a story of the cynicism of Li Hung Chang, says the New York Times. Mitkeiwicz, a professional "promoter," spent some of the best years of his life in an unsucssful attempt to engineer the establishment of a great Chino-American bank. Millions were involved, and it was necessary to secure the favor of Earl Li. Mitkiewicz obtained an interview with him, and explained scheme. The Chinaman listened grave-

"It is a . . ilanthropic plan, is it not?" he said at length. "You desire by means of this bank to bring about moral and social reforms in my country, I suppose. You wish to civilize

us, to save our souls."
"We wish to do nothing of the kind," answered the adventurer. "This is simply and solely a commercial enter-prise. We don't care a rap for your prise. We don't care a rap for your morals, and I may say for myself, personally, that it is a matter of supreme indifference to me whether any of your ouls are saved or not.'

s almond eyes twinkled. "Ah," he said, "you are not like other Europeans who come to China. They are all interested in our moral well being. You say you want merely to make money. It is strange. I have heard of such men before, but till now I have never met a European who had

not the spiritual good of China at Her Promised Doll,

heart."

This is the story they tell of a cunning little five-year-old girl whose nurse had been promising her all summer a little coon doll when the family reached the city, if she would be very good and obedient. This was a delightful promise, and the little girl was as good as a little five-year-old could be. Then the family came back to the city a little earlier than usual, and something interesting happened—a brand-new baby came to the house. It was a funny, red-faced little creature, which only a loving mother and experienced nurse could possibly consider beautiful, but was a great thing for the little girl, who had never before in her short life seen a real live baby. "There is a great surprise for you," said the nurse, taking the five-year-old stairs, where the little new sister was lying snuggled up under a canopy of muslin and ribbons "What do you think of that?" she continued, lifting the little girl so that she could the funny little face on the white pillow. And the little girl was as much pleased as everyone had ex-pected she would be. She gave the nurse a big hug as she cried: nursie, is that my coon doll?"-N. Y.

Volunteers in South America.

Volunteers in South America.

gentleman in Boston who spent a number of years among the various little South complies who gives an interesting account of the methods of one these small states when it comes to a question of making war. The "navy" of the particular power referred to consists of a single old-fashioned, sidewheel steamer, armed with one gun. In time of peace she is engaged in hauling freight up and down the river which runs close to the capital. of the periodical wars, not so very long ago, the president of the republic took charge of the steamer and started up stream on a recruiting expedition, leaving his senior general in charge of the military preparations at the capital. A couple of days later the steamer returned, and some 70 miserable-looking natives, each firmly bound with a strong rope, were marched off and turned over to the general with a note from the president, which read: "Dear Genpresident, which read: eral: I send you herewith 70 volun-Please return the ropes at teers. Please return tonce."—Boston Herald.

How He Fer.
A certain chief justice of the supreme court in one of the western tates was noted for his disinclination to admit that he was ill, as well as for his roundabout method of expres-One day he was approached by the

state librarian, who courteously asked after his health. "William," said the judge, cautious-

ly, "I am not well, but I am better than I was when I was worse than I now am."-Detroit Free Press.

Against All Precedent, Percy Vere-I still think there is hope for me; although she said "no," she was very sympathetic.

the end of you. No woman ever marmow how to proceed.

"Then the gentleman who called pathetically.—Philadelphia Press.

"Get Married"

By HENRY CLEWS, Head of the Banking House of Henry Clews & Co.

HIS is about marriage.

Much of it is based upon my own experience, for the sole purpose of making my words as effective as possible.

Generally speaking, young man, if you want to be really successful in the development of your character, in the attainment of culture, in the broadening of your sympathies, in becoming a better man and therefore a happier man,

DO IT AS SOON AS YOU CAN SUP-PORT A WIFE.

Then five years later you will be thanking me and everyone else who told you to be sensible. Here is my own case-merely to prove my interest in the subject:

I married twenty-seven years ago, so you will note that I have had experience. When I mar-

ried I assuredly was not the man I am to-day. I was in Wall street fighting for a living, and I had to bear all the losses and privations incident to the beginning of a career downtown.

My wife had been accustomed to wealth and a fine establishment. Yet she did not disdain to share my comparatively poor lot. Because I had a fairly good income I was compelled to keep up a certain appearance, and no one but a man in that position can realize the shifts to which he may be reduced in order to keep his end up.

Now here is the point I want to emphasize, because the chances are it will be your experience: My wife aided me in my career to success as only a good wife can. Children came to us. I HOLD THAT A CHILD IS ALWAYS A SPUR TO A MAN. I know that the birth of each little one urged me to renewed efforts in work. That is the case with every man who is worth anything in the world. Just think about your married acquaintances and you'll realize that

For illustration—Mr. Horton, afterward president of the Western Union, often told me that he began married life on \$250 a year, and that it took his wife six months to save the money for their first

Now there is an example for all girls and men to follow.

It is unhappily true, I apprehend, THAT A GREAT MANY WOMEN IN THESE DAYS LOOK OUT FOR WEALTH AND DEMAND WHAT IT PRODUCES ALL THE TIME. They must have expensive dresses, they also want excessive luxuries. Such women not infrequently lack real love of home life. They simply look upon a husband as a convenience.

Please note here that I do not advise a young man just starting

out in life with only moderate means to marry that kind of a woman. Yet I do not altogether blame the woman of this kind, for she is the fault of our modern existence. Women that are good wives and mothers are naturally unselfish, and an unselfish woman is usually a

good wife. My advice to young men is to MARRY THE RIGHT WOMAN AS SOON AS YOU CAN AFFORD TO TAKE FAIRLY GOOD

CARE OF HER, and only increase your expenses in living as your means from time to time admit of doing so.

DROVE HIS RIVAL OUT. How a Milwaukee Drummer Came It

in His Line. traveling salesman for a wholesale house lately returned from the south with a good story, showing how he routed a Chicago competitor

Over a Chicago Competitor

from a profitable town of his terri-This particular town is in Texas, and in it are a lot of jolly good fellows, whose chief joy in life is guy-

ing the newcomers and initiating tim to a certain saloon, and after a couple or rounds of whiskies, to enleading to a fierce climax, in which

revolvers are drawn. They keep one

long six-shooter behind the bar for just such emergencies, relates a Milwaukee exchange.
Our traveling man fell in with a Chicago salesman carrying the same line and bound among other places for Texas. When the Milwaukee man discovered that it was his first trip south he scented some royal sport. He immediately wired ahead to the boys to prepare for a fresh victim. Then he proceeded to enlighten that tenderfoot on the character of the town and its citizens. He drew a graphic picture of their lawless lives.

ticularly on their settling all putes, great or small, with a bullet. the time the train pulled in at X the Chicago man was about making up his mind to erase that town from his list, even if he did lose his job. But his companion cheered him up by picturing the other side of the desperadoes' nature as most genial and hospitable. In fact, not to accept their hospitality was an affront, which would be ruinous to business, and at the same time not

their many feuds, and he dwelt par-

After supper they went for a stroll, and it was surprising how many friends the drummer met in the course of a block. They were delighted to see him again, and at once adopted his new friend. Their cordiality was, if anything, a trifle too vigorous, for they slapped him on the back and worked his hand like a farm pump. Then a drink was proposed. After the first round it was suggested by the Milwaukee man they shake dice for the second. The box was promptly set on the bar. The Milwaukee man threw and an-nounced: "Three sixes."

"Two, you mean," said the Texan, quickly sweeping them up.
"I tell you I threw three. I'm not

a blooming fool."
At this the contestant waxed furiously, and, pulling his gun, put it on the bar, saying: "Anybody that dis-putes my word settles with that!" Then the others mixed in with vari-

ous deadly weapons and language. the latter as appaling as the weap-

In the midst of the riot the long six-shooter was produced, at sight of which the tenderfoot, who had been them into the alleged customs of the purposely wedged in behind a table, gave one leap upon it, a second more wild and woolly west.

Their method is to take the victheir method is to take the vicand with just one sweeping glance

gage in a hot argument, eventually greased lightning.

When he reached the hotel he told them to send the police, his late

companion was being murdered. In the meantime the jolly good fellows gave way to uproarious mirth, and after another drink all round to the success of their sport they suggested doing it all over. The Milwaukee man was dispatched after the victim, to whim he was instructed to say that everything had been adjusted amicably. They waited for him to join them in order to apologize. They felt that he had left them under a misapprehension, in order to show there was no ill-will

they insisted that he return. This being the case, he consented, and the late desperate combatants vied with each other in handsome apologies for their apparently hasty proceedings. It made the victim feel so important he ordered gin rickies for the crowd. All was conviviality and harmony till a game of poker was started. Then came the cyclone, fiercer and wilder than before.

The air fairly sizzled with oaths blood-curdling threats were shrieked and bowie knives and revolvers were long six-shooter came on deck the Chicago man gave a cry like a lost soul, took one running jump clear through the screen, not unlike a cus performer, and was lost in the

darkness No explanations would reassure him. He put in the rest of the night packing his samples, and the next morning shook the dust of Texas from his trembling feet, leaving a clear field to Milwaukee's enterpris-

ing salesman.

Nothing ever comes that we really closely .- Washington (Ia.) Democrat,