



THE GIFTS OF YESTERYEAR.

The ice has skimmed the water in the puddles by the way. And blooms are dead and scattered that were glowing yesterday. But though they're scattered under foot, Or floating through the air, They're just as bright in memory— No frost can reach them there.

GAMBLING WITH FATE. By William Wallace Cook. Author of 'The Gold Gleamers', 'A Story of the Greater Texas', 'Why? How?', 'His Friend the Enemy', 'Hogers of Hater', 'Etc., Etc.'

CHAPTER VII.—CONTINUED.

Darrel groped his way forward and ran against a table. After a pause he took a match from his pocket and struck it against the table-top.

In the dim light he saw the old traveling-bag open before him. Clean linen met his startled gaze, a razor and shaving materials, a sole leather case containing toilet articles and a small round mirror.

A bit of candle, planted in its own drippings, stood in the center of the table, while two other candles, unused, lay near it. Darrel applied the flickering match to the candle-wick and then, from sheer weariness, fell on an old stool at the table side.

For a space he rested, his eyes taking in the objects spread out before them and growing keen for the slightest detail. One-half of the opened traveling-bag lay over some papers. Pushing the bag aside he saw a small heap of letters and a red morocco book, well worn and marked in tarnished gilt: "Junius McCloud."

His gaze roved elsewhere and in an instant he was brought up standing, limbs rigid and eyes staring. Near the papers, and lying so that it had been hidden by the opened traveling bag, was a revolver whose ebony stock was carved with a death's head.

Murgatroyd's! Sudden strength swept through Darrel's body and he plucked the candle from the table-top and whirled around, holding the light above his head.

At the other end of the room was a bunk built against the wall. Beside the bunk, across another stool, were the corduroys, neatly folded.

A form lay in the bunk—a still form whose wide, unmoving eyes seemed fixed upon the intruder. Darrel heaved a deep breath. The form was not that of Murgatroyd but of the easterner.

How came Murgatroyd's revolver there? There were a dozen things Darrel wanted to do, all at once, but he set his hand to the thing nearest him.

Picking up the revolver he examined it. That it was the same weapon he had held in his hands a few hours before five cartridges, their lead tips marked with an "M," convinced him beyond all peradventure.

The weapon was a .45 and the empty shell of the sixth cartridge lay under the hammer. Darrel's breath came hard and quick as he laid the revolver back on the table.

He knew it. Murgatroyd had committed the murder for the purpose of involving him and fate, working circuitously, had developed Murgatroyd's guilt through the agency of Junius McCloud, otherwise the man in corduroys.

Life is a game of chance, Darrel reasoned, and every man plays it through with Fate for an opponent. It is perform an "honorable game," for Fate will tolerate none of your short-circuit gentry.

In turning away, Darrel saw a paper bag on a shelf near the head of the bunk. The bag contained food. Famed as he was he began eating at once, carrying the bag to the table and clearing a place in front of him.

McCloud, Darrel reflected, had been a fastidious person. The fugitive recalled his furtive wiping of the dishes at the Half Way house and wondered to note that even then, as he lay in the bunk, his face was cleanly shaven and his hair neatly brushed.

There were no marks of violence on McCloud's person and it must be that he had taken something to hurry himself out of the world. His burden of guilt had been greater than he could bear and he had made his preparations and left life like a gentleman.

In the midst of his meal, Darrel heard the impatient whinnying of the horse. The animal was probably in need of water and Darrel went out at once, pulled up the picket-pin and led the horse to the creek. Then, after seeking out a fresh range, he drove the pin into the ground once more and returned to the house.

A bold expedient had suggested itself to Darrel. Sweeping the uneaten food aside he picked up the diary and opened it.

A third of the leaves were gone, having been torn ragedly from the book and undoubtedly destroyed. On the remaining leaves there was not a scrap of writing.

A sigh of disappointment escaped the man and he laid down the book and drew the little heap of letters in front of him. Suddenly he paused.

What right had he to read that correspondence? He boasted of being honest and honorable; was there anything honest or honorable in reading another's letters, even though that other were dead?

It was a fine point and it is to Darrel's credit that it occurred to him. There is a time, however, when necessity makes its own laws and Darrel, with a half-apologetic look in the direction of the bunk, was soon deep in the matter before him.

CHAPTER VIII. DARREL AND THE LETTERS OF JUNIUS.

First, Darrel arranged the letters in sequence according to their dates. Then he began his perusal with the earliest, following through each one down to the last.

The most frequent writer was one Lawrence Ormsby whose name was as often abbreviated to "Lorry" or "L. O.," as signed in full. He appeared to be a devoted friend of McCloud's.

The very first letter was from Ormsby, bore date at New York and the envelope showed it had reached McCloud in St. Paul. Part of it was especially significant.

"... We still have faith in you, Junius, for God knows how much those unfortunate spells, over which you have no control, has helped in your undoing. It is not so hard to live down the past. Other men have done worse and have retrieved themselves. Simply renounce all intercourse with this man who has been your ruin. That is the first and most important step. Then, if there is anything holy for you on earth or above it, swear by that never to stake another dollar at play. ..."

You say this man has a strange influence over you—a weird and malign power which you cannot fight against—and that it is impossible for you to keep away from him. Nonsense! Brace up, my boy, and be a man. If you cannot do this for yourself, do it for the sake of your family, for love of the girl who is to link her fate with yours. If all these influences are powerless to sway you, then certainly you must go your own course and forfeit the esteem of all who know you, including that of your friend, LORRY.

"Unfortunate spells." The words rang in Darrel's brain. A clue to their meaning was found in a brief letter bearing, in its upper, left-hand corner, the card of a New York physician.

You question me as to the cause and eventual result of those recurring conditions you find so difficult to understand. The phenomena are sensory. Nerves are like harp-strings; played upon too freely by an excitement so intense as you develop, they grow suddenly mute, the melody of life dying out of them. Again and again the music will come creeping back, then finally fall to return from those mysterious regions whence all life comes and withers, at the last, it flies for all time.

This is your knowledge and your warning, and if I write in unprofessional terms, I am yet sure that you will understand. Save yourself while there is time! The haunting phrases of this letter appealed to Darrel. He had a soul for poetry and had occasionally set his hand to verse.

Although he read and re-read the written words for the mere pleasure they gave him, as a clue to the "unfortunate spells," they remained only a clue and nothing more.

words of the first letter, gave Darrel pause. His own heart smote him for prying thus into the very core of McCloud's privacy. Yet had he not the right?

That revolver proved a connection with Murgatroyd, and Murgatroyd, to Darrel's mind, stood all but convicted of the murder of Sturgis. The fugitive read on.

The first letter was all that a lover might expect from his betrothed, but the second throbbed in every line with bitter anguish, broke the golden chain of love and released him from his vows.

For all that the letters revealed begging upon Darrel's affairs they might have been left unopened by stranger eyes. A sickening horror pulsed through the fugitive's veins and he hastened his reading.

At the very last was this, from Ormsby: "... I have taken the liberty to refer to you, under a communication of even date herewith, a Miss Elsie Avery and her aunt, Mrs. Gorton. They will arrive soon in Anaconda on a peculiar mission. Any aid you may render Miss Avery and Mrs. Gorton will be gratefully received by them and deeply appreciated by me. Whatever you do in their behalf will serve to fill your mind and withdraw it from your own misfortunes.

Darrel wrinkled his brow over this epistle. It suggested an unknown quantity which might play havoc with his projected equation.

Every other scrap of information gleaned from the correspondence proved favorable to the fugitive's plan. This last letter of Ormsby's alone made him hesitate.

Half an hour's reflection, however, decided the matter. It was a leap in the dark, but he would take it.

CHAPTER IX. DARREL'S LEAP IN THE DARK.

With a pair of scissors taken from the sole-leather toilet-case Darrel cut off his full beard. Then he went down to the creek and brought back some water in a collapsible cup of the sort affected by travelers who have an aversion for public drinking utensils.

In a small shaving mug, lettered "J. McC." in gilt monogram, he stirred up a lather with perfumed soap and silver-mounted brush. The razor had an ivory handle and the hollow-ground blade of rare and tempered steel threw the candle light brilliantly as he drew it back and forth over the strop—the gold-mounted strop of a sybarite.

Presently Darrel's white face was as smooth and clean as a child's and he studied it in the mirror and compared it line by line with the delicate features of the man in the bunk. There was a striking resemblance.

Who says that fate does not favor the bold? Or that a man's fortunes are ever at so low an ebb she does not blow a straw of hope across his path? Darrel was more than satisfied. A swim in the creek and a brisk rub with a rough towel sent the blood tingling through his bruised and weary limbs.

Already he was a different man. But the transformation was not yet complete. Neatly laundered linen and fresh silken undergarments were among the stores of the old traveling bag. He dressed himself slowly and deliberately, by and by standing forth in the dead man's shoes and corduroys, appareled completely from head to heel.

In the pockets of the garments he found many things. A silver cigar-clipper, a cigar case, a seal purse containing \$500 in bills, a card case, a key ring, a pen-knife and a magnificent gold watch, bob and seal.

His mud-splashed, brier-torn garments he left on the chair in lieu of the corduroys, disturbing nothing that had been his own. Reckoned dollar for dollar he was leaving twice the amount in valuables that he was taking.

"In stepping from one life into another," he said to himself, "there must be a fair exchange. But this is better than fair. I leave with him more personal property than I appropriate and a better reputation than he has to give. I am an innocent man believed to be guilty, while he is guilty, but supposed to be innocent. His innocence must shield me while I work out my own salvation."

Standing beside the bunk, Darrel gave the calm face and stony, staring eyes a long farewell look. McCloud was a young man to have "stepped aside" so early in the game of life.

He had come west to live down misdeeds of the east. There was nothing strange in that, for many a man had done likewise.

could come to analyzing, in words, the emotions of the moment. McCloud had gone into the unknown of death while this other fugitive was steering towards the unknown in life.

Over the head of the bunk Darrel left his verse, impaling it on a sliver of wood. Then he packed McCloud's belongings in the traveling bag and started from the hut. At the door he paused and turned, his eyes on the still form in the bunk.

"I leave you here, Nathan Darrel," he said, "an innocent, well-meaning man who fared ill at the hands of others and who tried to be honest but could not be honored. Now let us see how well Junius McCloud retrieves himself."

Half an hour later he was riding through the gray dawn, mounted on the calico cayuse and with the old traveling bag fast at the saddle-candle. [To Be Continued.]

A REFRESHING CHANGE. One Man Who Was Not Looking for a Tip for Doing a Small Service.

A professor of geology in a Massachusetts college has a story to tell of a Colorado mining camp which shows that stars shine in the darkest firmaments, says Youth's Companion. Desiring to spend his vacation in a practical study of mines, he got letters of introduction to all the chief engineers and mine superintendents in Colorado, and visited one mine after another under the most favorable conditions.

His letters were from two or three well-known men, and opened to him many shafts where strangers were strictly forbidden. The only difficulty was in approaching mines which were under guard. Labor troubles had made it necessary to put patrols about many of the shafts.

Approaching a coal mine which he was especially anxious to visit, he was stopped by a huge Irishman, who told him to "be aff."

"I have a letter to the superintendent."

"No matter. Ye're not allowed beyond this shanty."

"I'll show you the letter."

"How could I know 'twas true?" "But won't you take it in to the superintendent?" "An' I've me post?" "Here is a quarter. You take it and get this letter to the superintendent."

"A quarter, is it? An' the letter?" "Wait till I hail Gimpey an' get him to watch while I go in."

He put his hands up to his mouth and called. A man appeared beyond a ridge.

"See that no wan crosses here till I'll be back!" called the Irishman. "Now ye shtand here an' I'll take your letter."

He went up the path and out of sight round the turn. The works were far from the outposts. Soon he came back.

"Sure, he says he'll see ye an' ye can go in, but why he lets ye is more than I can see. You sendin' him a quarter and him earnin' twenty-five thousand a year!"

"You—you gave him that quarter?" "For sure. Who else would I give it to?"

The professor went by the big sentry with an expression between a grin and a scowl. When he introduced himself to the superintendent he began to apologize for the quarter.

GREAT CLOSED LAND. AS SUCH THIBET IS KNOWN AMONG ASIATICS.

British Are Now Trying to Conquer the Mysterious Country of the Fanatical Lamas and Magicians.

London (Eng.) Special. The news dispatches of the last few weeks telling of the attempts of the British force under Col. Younghusband to enter Thibet have been somewhat overshadowed by the details of the larger conflict in Asia, which at the present moment is the cynosure of the eyes of the civilized world.

China, Manchuria, Japan and Russia to the ordinary lay reader mean something concrete, something which even the most casual geographical student can understand. Thibet, "the great closed island," on the other hand; Thibet, the unknown, the isolated, the mysterious, is something which the great world at large looks upon with whimsical disinterestedness.

Nomads by inclination and by necessity, practically every male in Thibet is a soldier, and as they gain a greater part of their livelihood from brigandage and hostile forays, one tribe against another, it may properly be said that their entire existence is given up to unremitting warfare.

Should England succeed eventually in her purpose to add Thibet to her Atlantic domains, anyone who has ever been in Thibet can well ask: "What will she secure as compensation for this tremendous outlay of men and money?" All explorers in Thibet agree that the natural resources of the country are infinitesimal and that nothing of concrete value ever can be secured to repay for the enormous expenditure necessary to prompt from nature something which she will not yield even if strenuously urged.

British statesmen argue that Thibet will serve as the great "buffer" to Russia's expansive ambition in India, but the fact that most impresses any Thibetan traveler who has toiled for weary months at a halting pace through these



NATURAL CASTLE IN THIBET. (Rugged Fortification Encountered by British Expedition.)

barren and inhospitable wilds is that Thibet left to herself would dampen even Russian ardor for expansion.

For scientists and geographers the opening of Thibet will mean much. The secrets of the mysterious city of Lassa, which has defied all attempts of white explorers to reach it, will be laid bare. Practically the last of the great unknown tracts of the habitable globe will disappear, and with the subsequent spread of civilization and humanizing influences will in turn disappear the curious features of one of the strangest races of the world.

As is natural to suppose, the features of the landscape are reflected in the natives themselves. As a race they are a dirty and filthy lot of the most degraded savages, building no substantial dwellings, except among the agricultural tribes in the eastern districts bordering on the Chinese frontier, but with their herds of yak and horses wandering over the country, living in small tents made of yak skins or in cave dwellings. By nature the Thibetan is a glutton and will eat wherever and whenever opportunity presents itself.

Both men and women are ugly, with huge features. They have great faith in the pernicious habit of disfiguring themselves with paint and strange tattoo marks and cicatrices. There is no settled form of government outside of the unstable hierarchy at Lassa, the constitution of society everywhere being simple. Almost every crime is condoned by payment, this leniency causing a brutality and bloody license which provoke long protracted feuds and wars. Life is held in little if any esteem and is taken upon the least compunction.

The real curse of Thibet, however, is the powerful lama hierarchy. These clergymen form nearly one-third of the entire population of the country and are rulers in substance if not in name. Magic, charms, fetich, rosaries and other "mystical" emblems constitute the main features of the cult of lama Buddhism. One of the most peculiar features of the Thibetan religious side of life is the prayer wheel. It forms a strange sight indeed to watch the Thibetans going about their daily avocations monotonously, and by practice apparently unconsciously, twisting these instruments.

The worship of deceased ancestors is carried on among all tribes, the natives at different periods digging up the bones of these illustrious forebears and religiously washing them.

Ostriches in the Antipodes. Ostriches are being successfully reared in Australia. They produce magnificent white feathers, as much as 27 inches in length and 15 inches in width. The first birds were imported from Africa.



A prominent club woman, Mrs. Danforth, of St. Joseph, Mich., tells how she was cured of falling of the womb and its accompanying pains and misery by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—Life looks dark indeed when a woman feels that her strength is fading away and she has no hopes of ever being restored. Such was my feeling a few months ago when I was advised that my poor health was caused by prolapsus or falling of the womb. The words sounded like a knell to me, I felt that my sun had set; but Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound came to me as an elixir of life; it restored the lost forces and built me up until my good health returned to me. For four months I took the medicine daily, and each dose added health and strength. I am so thankful for the help I obtained through its use."—Mrs. FLORENCE DANFORTH, 1007 Miles Ave., St. Joseph, Mich.—\$5000 forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

"FREE MEDICAL ADVICE TO WOMEN." Women would save time and much sickness if they would write to Mrs. Pinkham for advice as soon as any distressing symptoms appear. It is free, and has put thousands of women on the right road to recovery.

\$500 Given Away. Write us or ask an Alabastine dealer for particulars and free sample card of Alabastine. The Sanitary Wall Coating. Destroys disease germs and vermin. Never runs or scales. You can apply it—mix with cold water. Beautiful effects in white and delicate tints. Note a disease-breeding, out-of-date hot water pipe preparation. Buy Alabastine in 5 lb. packages, properly bottled, of paint, hardware and drug dealers. Also on Druggists and Grocers. Alabastine Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., or 185 Water St., N. Y.

IS JEALOUS OF OUR NAVY.

Emperor William's Recreations Are Taken Up in Preparing Statistics for Reichstag. One of Emperor William's recreations on board the Hohenzollern is work on statistical tables about the natives of Germany, England and the United States. When he returns to Berlin he will present these tables in suitable showcases to the reichstag.

He is particularly anxious to show the people's representatives that, although the growth of the German navy has been accelerated, it must be hastened still more if it is to keep pace with the American navy. The emperor is convinced that he has far better material to man his ships than exists in America. The men of the coast districts along the Baltic and the North seas are unsurpassed, in his estimation, as naval material.

The number of men in the German fleet at present is 32,052, next year it will be 34,482 and at the close of 1906, 40,000 trained, reliable men. For a long time the Russian and the Japanese navies chiefly concerned Emperor William as a basis for comparison; now it is the American navy.

A Plain Warning. A young man in Emporia, Kan., had an open account with a local druggist for two years. The other day he called for his bill. The first item on it was a box of chocolates and the last was a nursing bottle. This ought to be a lesson to young men, remarks the Brooklyn Eagle, not to let accounts stand open so long.

IN AN OLD TRUNK.

Baby Finds a Bottle of Carbolic Acid and Drinks It.

While the mother was unpacking an old trunk a little 18 months old baby got hold of a bottle of carbolic acid while playing on the floor and his stomach was so badly burned it was feared he would not live for he could not eat ordinary foods. The mother says in telling of the case:

"It was all two doctors could do to save him as it burnt his throat and stomach so bad that for two months after he took the poison nothing would lay on his stomach. Finally I took him into the country and tried new milk and that was no better for him. His Grandma finally suggested Grape-Nuts, and I am thankful I adopted the food for he commenced to get better right away and would not eat anything else. He commenced to get fleshy and his cheeks like red roses and now he is entirely well."

"I took him to Matamoras on a visit and every place we went to stay to eat he called for Grape-Nuts and I would have to explain how he came to call for it as it was his main food."

"The names of the physicians who attended the baby are Dr. Eddy of this town and Dr. Geo. G. Newport, O., and anyone can write to me or to them and learn what Grape-Nuts food will do for children and grown-ups too." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Look in each pkg. for the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."