

REALITIES.

To live the eager life of men,
To burn with deathless courage when,
Full of a noble faith, they praise
The glory of our later days
Or when, with prophet-sight, they try
To pierce the wonder of the sky.

To watch the consecrated face
Of nature, till each simple grace,
Each winter glow or tropic bloom,
Each shadow, hinting of the loom,
Translates its meaning into words
Like sound into the song of birds.

These are realities, whereof
I speak as one may speak of love;
And these, like precious things, are wrought
Into the mass of my thought,
Which may be wild and sad, or all
The measure of a whippoorwill.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

Colonel Augustus Chopleigh, late of Her Majesty's Indian Army, lived in stately retirement upon his snug little estate in one of the pleasantest of the home counties. From an outsider's point of view, the Colonel seemed to possess most things which are generally considered to constitute mundane happiness. His liver had survived pawnees, curries, and a tropical sun intact; his income was ample; he belonged to two or three good London clubs; he had an excellent cellar of wine; he was a J. P., respected by his neighbors and worshipped by his tenants; and he rode to cover on the best of cattle. Yet with all this, the Colonel had two eternally grinning skeletons in his cupboard.

The first was the possession of a ne'er-do-weel son, and the second was the non-possession of a wife.

Augustus Chopleigh junior, although a ne'er-do-weel in the eyes of a parent who was more rigid and precise than are most gentlemen who have breathed the atmosphere of barracks and cantonments during the best parts of their lives, was, after all, but an ordinary, "every-day young man." He betted a little, it is true; he belonged to a club where play was sometimes high of an evening; he could drink his claret like a man; he was a connoisseur in cigars; he possessed two or three long tailor bills; and he was given to staying in town sometimes for a week at a time. Still, after all, what could be expected of a high-spirited young fellow who had received a first-rate education, and was therefore unfitted for any serious walk in life; who was good-looking, who dressed well, who found life at stately Dum Dum Hall a little monotonous at times, and who had a handsome annual allowance?

But in the eyes of the Colonel all these little peculiarities were heinous crimes, and the poor old gentleman, as he pondered in the solitude of what he called his "study," saw very clearly that unless the young man was settled in life with a well-bred, well-connected girl, he would infallibly follow, at headlong pace, that broad road which leads to destruction.

Often alone at Dum Dum Hall, deprived of the society of his son, and not caring very specially for that society when offered, it was hardly to be wondered at that the Colonel yearned for a suitable partner in his exile.

The memory of the departed Mrs. Chopleigh could hardly be said to be yet green, for she had succumbed to an aggravated attack of jungle fever some twenty years before, when Augustus, junior, was but a stripling in plaid dresses and bare legs. It might be said that the remedy was easy. Why didn't the Colonel take unto himself a second Mrs. Chopleigh? There were plenty of eligible spinsters who would have jumped at an offer from such a fresh-faced, active, wealthy gentleman, who was but little beyond the prime of life. There was, however, an almost invincible obstacle. Unlike most military men, Colonel Chopleigh was painfully shy; perhaps remembrances of the departed Mrs. Chopleigh, who was known as the Dum Dum Tartar, had driven out the youthful assurance which had won her; at any rate, the flutter of a petticoat awakened feelings within the gallant Colonel's breast which were not to be stirred by a horde of yelling, mutinous Sepoys, or by the stiffest bull-finch in the county. He had loved at a distance a score of times, but had never placed himself within speaking reach of the various objects of his affection.

Suddenly matters took a different turn.

A young lady of strikingly prepossessing appearance—Millicent Vanjohn, only daughter of the Rev. Aloysius Vanjohn, the only vicar—had been espoused by the Colonel proceeding up the lane which ran parallel with his grounds, as he paced along his favorite shrubby walk. Being on his own property had inspired him with courage; he had gazed at her, and she had blushed and looked down. He hurried into the house, and shut himself up in his study.

"I am fifty-five," he said to himself. "I am—well, I am well-looking; my waist-coat is of decent girth; I have a good complexion; and a man is only as old as he feels. Why shouldn't I? I may be called an old fool. Well, there are plenty of older fools in the world, I—yes—I will!"

Miss Vanjohn was walking at the identical spot at the identical hour the next day after that, and so on for more than a week, and each day the same

little dumb comedy was played—sheep's eyes on the part of the Colonel, blushes and lookings-down on the part of Miss Mellicent Vanjohn.

Did Miss Vanjohn walk up that lane so regularly with a fixed purpose? Of course she did.

Punctually at 4 o'clock every afternoon, Mr. Augustus Chopleigh Jr., met her at the top of it. It was rather an odd thing to do—the daughter of a well-known parson meeting *sub rosa* the son of an equally well-known colonel. The following conversation explains it:

"Oh, Gus! I begin to feel so awfully guilty, meeting you like this! Why can't we love each other openly? There's nothing to be ashamed of in it."

"For more than one reason, my darling. I've a bad reputation down here; all fellows here in country places who go up to town, belong to a club, drive down to Ascot, take medicinal B-and-S's, and so on. If the old man were to know that I was spooning you, he'd rush off to your father and warn him. If your father were to know, he'd rush off to mine and tell him that I wasn't a fit aspirant for the hand of his daughter."

"But is your father such a terrible old gentleman, then? What is he like? I've never seen him."

"No, I don't suppose you have. He fights shy of anything with a petticoat on it like the plague. I've known him out a good run short because there were ladies along with him in the same field, and he was afraid in case of an accident he'd have to assist them. He's a tall old fellow, with a fresh complexion and a gray moustache, and always wears shepherd's plaid trousers, Summer and Winter. Why, what's the matter?"

"O dear! O dear! Gus, don't go on, please don't, or I shall die of laughing!"

"Why, what is there to laugh at in it, Millicent? By Jove, if you saw him in a temper you wouldn't laugh!"

"Why, my dearest Gus—he's—he's in love with me!"

"The old boy—my father—in love with you? Nonsense, my dear—nonsense, I say. Why, he's more afraid of a girl than of an earthquake, or a boa-constrictor, or anything. What on earth makes you think he's in love with you?"

"Why, Gus, every day when I come along here he's walking in the garden. I've always taken him for the steward, or some one, and he makes such eyes at me. Oh, you'd laugh if you could see him. I try not to, but I know I blush and look awfully silly."

"By Jove, Millicent, it's no laughing matter—that it isn't. A man's father has his rival in love!"

That evening Mr. Gus appeared at home at an unusually early hour.

"Well!" was the greeting of his parent. "You're not here so precious early, with that good-gooey face, for nothing, I'm sure, you young scamp! When you turn up punctually to dinner I know you want something out of me. But mind, not another halfpenny do you get. I've already advanced your quarter's allowance, and if you've been squandering it on actresses and race-meetings, and unlimited loo, and dinners at the Bristol, I don't help you. And not only that, sir, but I'm going to put a stop to it. Once for all—and Augustus Chopleigh's a man of his word—I don't care if Stultz, or Goiding, or Moses, or any of them come down and dun you at this very door, not a rupee do you get out of me."

"What a deuce of a hurry you're in, father!" said the young man. "I don't want any money."

"Well, what the dickens is it then?" said the old gentleman, seeing that his son looked confused.

"Why—well, I'm in love, that's all," replied Gus; and I'm going to be married to the best girl in England—a perfect lady, well bred, well connected, and—"

The effect of this speech upon the old Colonel was electrical. He jumped up from his end of the table, almost upset Parker, who was handing him the chilies, rushed towards his son and shook his hand heartily, his face beaming with excitement and pleasure, as he exclaimed, "You're sure of what you say? It isn't Fiffine of the Jolity, hey? A lady, well bred, well connected—"

"I've been a bit of a scamp, perhaps, father," said the young man; "but I've never gone in for low fern, so, when I tell you she's all that could be wished for you must believe me."

"Of course I will; of course I do!" roared the Colonel. "Who is she?"

"Well, I don't want to give you her name just now, for many reasons, but you may take my word for it that she's nobody to be ashamed of," said Gus.

"All right, all right; I won't ask any more questions. So long as you are going to steady down with a good, lady-like wife, I don't care," said his father.

"By god, Gus, I thought you were going to be a millstone round my neck for the remainder of my life. And now, my boy, you've astonished me, I'm going to astonish you. What do you think is about the most unlikely thing I should do?"

"Give up hunting?" replied Gus, "or sell your orchids? or put up for the county? or—"

"No, no; nothing of that kind," said

the Colonel, chuckling. "I'm—I'm going to be married too."

The son affected the greatest astonishment. The Colonel continued:

"But look here, my boy, it won't interfere with your prospects, and—when I say I'm going to be married, I mean that I have my eye on some one, and I rather think, alement that some one has a reciprocal eye on me. I'm not such an old bird, eh?"

"Not a bit of it," replied Gus; "and may I ask who the fortunate object of your attentions is?"

"Well," answered the Colonel, laughing, "I've a good mind not to tell you, you dog, as you keep me in the dark about your innamorata. But I will. Do you know Miss Vanjohn?"

"Tall girl, brown hair, brown eyes?" asked Gus, innocently.

"Yes, yes—that's the one! She's going to be Mrs. Chopleigh the second," said the Colonel, rubbing his hands gleefully. "I think—ahem! that if I can screw up my pluck, I shall speak to her to-morrow."

That evening the Reverend Aloysius Vanjohn received an unexpected visitor in the shape of Mr. Augustus Chopleigh. Urged by the desperate aspect of matters, the young man had resolved to face the terrible parson, as he believed him to be, and to lay the whole state of affairs before him. To his glad surprise, the reverend gentleman, who was really a good fellow, and thought very well of Gus, laughed heartily at the notion of the Colonel's suit, and promised Gus that Millicent should marry him when and where he pleased.

"I say, Gus," roared the Colonel, as they were leaving the smoking-room for bed; "promise me you'll bring Mrs. Chopleigh here directly after you're married."

A few days after, Millicent Vanjohn was quietly and unostentatiously made Mrs. Augustus Chopleigh in London. Faithful to his word the young man wrote informing his father of his marriage, and telling him that he should run down on the following day to introduce his bride to her new father.

The Colonel was at dinner—that is to say, he was playing at dinner, for what with his own consuming passion and the eager expectation with which he awaited the arrival of his son and daughter-in-law, he sent away almost untasted every dish that was set before him.

The door-bell rang. The Colonel jumped up to answer it himself, but checked the movement.

"No, no," he said; "I'll have it a surprise to the last."

Gus entered.

"Here I am father!" he said.

"Yes, yes; but where's—?" said the Colonel impatiently.

Gus went out, and reappeared with Millicent.

The Colonel staggered at first, and something like a frown gathered on his brow. But he recovered himself, and with a smile that illuminated his whole face, said, addressing Millicent:

"I am indeed delighted to welcome you to my house as a—daughter." Then turning to his son, he added, "Gus, my boy, you've had an uncommonly narrow escape!"

A Woman Gambler.

"What man has done man may do," has long been a favorite maxim of the moralists and the copy-books, but it is reserved for the philosophy of the mining camp to demonstrate that "what man has done woman may do also."

Amid the general din of the saloon, and rising above the general confusion, the tinkling sound of ivory chips may be heard the words, "queen high," "pair kings," "bet two beans," and the like, uttered in a soft but penetrating voice which attracts one on entering the door. Making my way to a corner of the room, and elbowing a path cautiously through a pack of men, I saw a remarkable sight. Before one of the ordinary poker tables sat a woman of no ordinary beauty.

The traces of refinement had not yet been obliterated by coarse associations and reckless dissipation. She was dressed in a tight-fitting gown, sitting about the bust like the waist of a riding-habit, and adorned with a double row of startling gilt buttons. On her head was a jaunty jockey cap of blue, but its little visor shading a face whose delicate lines and marked individuality would in any other place have secured for its possessor immediate notice as a cultivated, intellectual power. Yet there she sat, dealing the cards with a graceful ease born evidently of a long practice in similar scenes. Careless of the rough talk and ribald jokes of the men, the female gambler dealt the cards, raked in the chips, paid losses, replied to the sallies of the men and attended to business with a devilish insouciance and calmness that was simply horrible. A more painful sight I never saw, for there was a refinement of wickedness about the scene which robbed it of the vilest of the stunts and invested that woman in the corner of a mining-camp gambling house with a horror that was simply satanical.

A good smile is the sunshine of wisdom.

Conscience is man's most faithful friend.

Art of Grafting.

Every farmer's boy should learn to graft. Few occupations give more pleasure or a greater reward. To convert a wild and thorny tree into one bearing large and delicious fruit is a wonderful and fascinating process. Grafting need not be confined to fruit trees. Ornamental trees and shrubs which are nearly related to each other may be grafted. Several kinds of roses may be grown on the same bush, and differently colored lilacs may be mixed on the same stock. Grafting is an easy art to acquire. Simply making the scions live is but a part of the operation on fruit trees, however. One must plan for the future top of the trees. He must graft such limbs as should make permanent factors in the top he is building, and while he should avoid grafting too many limbs, he should likewise avoid grafting too few. In either extreme too much cutting for the good of the tree will have to be done. If too few limbs are grafted, it will be necessary to cut too many branches off entirely during the process of grafting. If too many limbs are grafted, it will be necessary to cut many of them out in a few years to prevent crowding. It must be remembered that a grafted branch will occupy more room than a natural branch, for the scions branch and bush out from the point of their insertion. How many limbs, and which ones, to graft must be learned by experience and judgment.

The kind of grafting most likely to be practiced on the farm is that known as cleft grafting. The process is a simple one. Saw off the limb to be grafted where it is an inch or less in diameter; trim the edges of the "stub" smooth, and split it with a large knife, or a cleaver made for the purpose. The cleft should not be more than four inches deep at the most. A wedge is now inserted in the center of the cleft, and a scion is set on each side of the stub. The scions are made of twigs of last year's growth. They should be cut before the trees show any signs of starting in the spring. When the scion is prepared ready for setting it should contain about three buds. The lower end is cut wedge shaped by slicing off each side of the scion. On one side of this wedge-shaped portion, and midway between its top and bottom, should be left one of the buds.

When the scion is set this bud will be deep down in the side of the cleft in the stub, and will be covered with wax but being nearer the source of nourishment it will be the most apt of any buds to grow, and it will readily push through the wax. The scion is set into the cleft by exercising great care that the inner surface of the bark in the scion exactly matches the inner surface of the bark on the stub. A line between the bark and the wood may be observed. This line on the scion, in other words, should match this line on the stub. Wax the whole over carefully and thoroughly. Do not leave any crack exposed. Wax which is pretty hard, and which must be worked and applied with the hands is commonly best. We have given several good recipes for grafting wax. We would recommend that grafting be not confined to the orchard. Experiment. Try pears and apples on wild crab and thorns. One must not look for success on trees much different from the scions, but there is room for experimenting, and more light is needed.

Flagellation Still Practiced.

The church of the Penitentes, in Santo Domingo, Mexico is 250 years old, and in it flagellation is still practiced by the remnant of the Aztecs that worship there. The day of flagellation is Good Friday. Although the penitents are all Catholics, all the Catholics are, it is said they are discouraged by the priesthood. They strip their bodies to the waist, and having provided themselves with scourges, they beat themselves and each other over the shoulders and back with them until the flesh is terribly lacerated. This is done walking in procession, one of their number voluntarily leading and bearing a heavy wooden cross bound to his neck, under which he staggers nearly bent double, his flesh lacerated by the scourges of his followers. Many have died of exhaustion under this penance. If the victim lives to reach the church, the cross is suspended therein, with the bleeding sufferer still bound to it, where he remains until he faints under loss of blood. The penitence often pays the penalty of his life in this vicarious atonement for his sins.

Farming Scraps.

Every farmer in reading a paper will often see something in it which it would be of service to him to remember. He will perhaps see suggestions the value of which he would like to test or hints by which he would like to be governed in his future operation, but after reading it the paper is thrown down, probably never to be seen again. To avoid this he should clip from the paper the article he wishes to preserve and remember, and paste it in a scrap book kept for the purpose. Such a book at the end of a few years would be both interesting and valuable.

Ex-Queen Isabella.

Says a popular lady writer: I do not think that Queen Isabella at any period of her life could have been considered handsome. She in no wise resembled the dark-eyed, imperious beauty, her mother. But in her young days youth and freshness, joined by that divinity that doth hedge a sovereign, undoubtedly caused her to be credited with a certain degree of personal attractions. Up to the present season the Queen has resided in France ever since her de-thronement. It was in Paris she signed the act of abdication in favor of her son, now King of Spain. Her ponderous figure and good-natured face are as well known at the opera or in the Bois de Boulogne as were those of the Empress Eugenie in bygone days.

Her embonpoint is really extraordinary, and she increases her apparent size by always dressing in pale, delicate tints, pearl gray in the daytime and white at night being her favorite colors. Her features are large, her eyes blue, and her complexion florid. At times her skin bears the marks of the hereditary Bourbon malady, scrofula, from which the entire royal family of Spain are great sufferers. Her manners are charming. No Princess in Europe returns a salutation with a more admirable blending of courtesy and dignity, or receives a visitor with more royal grace.

During her residence in France Queen Isabella has been much tormented with financial difficulties. She is as extravagant in her charities as in her personal expenditure. She used when she first came to Paris to bestow \$20 on every beggar that asked alms of her. When remonstrated with her answer was: "Could a Queen give less?"

She is passionately fond of dress, and is one of Worth's most assiduous customers. It was through her influence that her present daughter-in-law, Queen Christina, ordered the greater part of her trousseau of that renowned king of fashion, instead of having all her dresses made in Vienna or Madrid. During the existence of the Spanish Republic Queen Isabella who reduced to such straits that she disposed of the greater portion of her large collection of jewels at auction. She furnished out the Royal table, it being supplied by a contractor at so much per diem. Yet, withal, her acts of kindness and generosity suffered no diminution. For instance, an ex-prima donna, who now resides in Paris, and who in by-gone years was a reigning favorite in the Opera House in Madrid, sees her drawing-room and ante chamber filled annually with a collection of choice and costly plants by order of the Royal lady, who was once among the most assiduous of her hearers. And this graceful and kindly attention was maintained all through the period of Queen Isabella's pecuniary difficulties. These, however, came to an end so soon as Alfonso XII. ascended the throne of Spain.

The Queen does not get along well with her new daughter-in-law. Queen Christina is very intellectual, very high spirited and a thorough Austrian in many respects. She detests the national pastime of the bull-fight. Being asked once by one of her own countrywomen how she could endure it, she made answer:

"You know I am terribly near-sighted. Well, somehow I always forget to take my eyeglass with me."

On the other hand, Queen Isabella is a most ardent patroness of the sports of the Spanish arena. This point of difference, united to a multitude of others, has hindered the two royal ladies from becoming fast friends. They keep out of each other's way—that is all.

Indecision.

Of the many causes which hinder men from attaining success, indecision is undoubtedly one of the most potent. Without any determined course marked out for themselves, youth launched out into the great ocean of life, depending more upon chance than any fixed laws whereby a definite result might be obtained. Thinking to-day, perchance, to amass a fortune through some particular channel, they to-morrow diverge from it for some other. So they pass their lives continually varying, always discontented with the present, and never looking to the future for brighter days which their indecision does not warrant them to expect.

An Interesting Incident.

Middle-aged people will recollect a pretty incident of Queen Victoria's coronation. When the great nobles of the realm came in turn to swear allegiance to the fair young girl, her gray-haired uncle stepped forward to kneel with the others. But she hastily descended the steps of the throne, raised him, and reverently bent her head for his blessing.

Civility.

Once a great merchant of Liverpool was asked how he had contrived to build up the large fortune he possessed; and he replied, with perfect sincerity: "Friend, by one article alone, in which thou mayest deal, too, if thou pleasest—Civility!"

The worst men often give the best advice.

Where boasting ends, there dignity begins.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

To be proud of learning is the greatest ignorance.

Happiness consists in the constitution of the habits.

Good, the more communicated, more abundant grows.

It is a good rule to be deaf when a slanderer begins to talk.

He that does you a very ill turn will never forgive you.

He's my friend that speaks well of me behind my back.

The way to forget our miseries is to remember our mercies.

Your present want will make future prosperity all the sweeter.

A woman who wants a charitable heart wants a pure mind.

He who waits to do a great deal at once will never do anything.

Good will, like a good name, is got by many actions, and lost by one.

Pride is the consciousness of what one is, without contempt for others.

Learn as if you were to live forever; live as if you were to die to-morrow.

Unless you wish to reap the same kind of a harvest, do not sow wild oats.

The common adage that delays are dangerous acts as spurs upon the resolution.

Men often judge the person but not the cause, which is not justice but malice.

To dread no eye and to suspect no tongue is the great prerogative of innocence.

The gifts of common providences are not compared to those of covenant love.

A woman may get to love by degrees; the best fire does not flare up the soonest.

Out in the world men show us two sides in their character; by the fireside only one.

Circumstances are the rules of the weak; they are but the instruments of the wise.

Humility is a virtue all preach, none practice, and yet everybody is content to hear.

As charity covers a multitude of sins before God, so does politeness before men.

The average man is made up of intelligence and prejudice—mostly of prejudice.

What is defeat? Nothing but education, nothing but the first step is something better.

Envy not the appearance of happiness in any man, for thou knowest not his secret griefs.

In the adversity of our best friend we often find something that is not displeasing to us.

Once loosen the latch-strings of honor, the door to crime and folly swings easily.

The Bible has suffered more in the hands of honest burglars than it has from skeptics.

Habit is a cable. We weave a thread of it each day, and it becomes so strong we cannot break it.

What are the best days in memory? Those in which we met a companion who was truly such.

If you hit the mark, you must aim a little above it; every arrow that flies feels the attraction of the earth.

A man must be excessively stupid, as well as uncharitable, who believes there is no virtue but on his own side.

Nothing is great but the inexhaustible wealth of Nature. She shows us only our faces, but she is million fathoms deep.

Philanthropy, like charity, must begin at home. From this centre our sympathies may extend in an ever-extending circle.

Consideration is the small coin of kindness and affability; it is current everywhere, with all, and always brings back a little friendship.

A loving act does more good than a fiery exhortation. What mankind needs is not more good talkers, but more good Samaritans.

There collection of a deep and true affection is rather a divine nourishment for a soul to grow strong upon than a poison to destroy it.

The man whose soul is in his work finds his best reward in the work itself. The joy of achievement is vastly beyond joy of reward.

He that does not know those things which are of use and necessary for him to know, is but an ignorant man, whatever he may know besides.

The man or woman whose part is taken, and who does not wait for society in anything, has a power which society cannot choose but feel.

How abundant are the men and women who crave martyrdom in leadership! How few are willing to honor themselves in the loyalty of service!

He who is conscious of his ignorance, viewing it in the light of misfortune, is more wise than one who mistakes superficial polish for real knowledge.

The misfortunes that we meet with are not God going away from us, but our dearest Father in Heaven stooping down to kiss us—God's shadow falling on us.

Conscience is a great ledger book in which all our offenses are written and registered, and which time reveals to the sense and feeling of the offender.

To be happy, the passions must be cheerful and gay, not gloomy and melancholy. A propensity to hope and joy is real riches; one to fear and sorrow, real poverty.

Resolve not to be poor. Whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness. It certainly destroys liberty, and it makes some virtues impracticable and others extremely difficult.

As the sun does not wait for prayers and incantations before he rises, but straightaway shines forth and is hailed of all, so do not wait to do good for applause and noise and praise, but do it with your own desire, and, like the sun, you will be loved.