

MY BOY.

What the stars are to the sky,
What the light is to the eye,
What the river's to the sea
Is my darling boy to me.

What the dew is to the flower,
What the vine is to the bower,
What the leaf is to the tree
Is my darling boy to me.

Sweeter than the violet,
Pure as lily-bud, still wet
With the early morning dew,
Is my darling, good and true.

When the dreams of youth are done,
When the light of age creeps on,
May I lean, with pride and joy
Upon thee, my darling boy!

CAPTURING A LUNATIC

Alf Dixon, Tom Giffard and I had gone up the river camping out; we had done our second day's work. It was early morning on the third day, glorious weather. I was in the boat getting the steering lines in order; Giffard and Dixon were on the bank, talking to Dr. Rawley. As I understood it the doctor was at the head of a private asylum for lunatics. He had been taking a constitutional when he happened to fall in with us just as we were sitting down to our open air breakfast; the chance meeting led to Giffard's inviting him to share our campy meal. He did.

He was a pleasant fellow, not too old and not too young. I liked him exceedingly. We talked of things in general, and of lunatics in particular. Something led to his mentioning—I think it was speaking of the cunning of a certain class of lunatics, and the difficulty of keeping them within four walls—the fact that one of his inmates had escaped a day or two previously, and had not yet been retaken. This was the more singular as it was tolerably certain he had not gone far, and search had been made in every direction.

As Giffard and Dixon were saying good-bye, preparatory to getting into the boat, the doctor laughingly said: "Should you happen to come across him, I shall consider you bound to bring him back safe and sound. He's a man of about 44 or 45, tall and bony, iron-gray hair, and has a curious habit of showing his teeth and winking his left eye. Don't look for a raving lunatic; for the most points he's as right as you or I. He's wrong in two things. Whatever you do, don't let him lose his temper; for whenever he does, though ever so slightly, he invariably goes in for murder; he's all but done for two keepers already. And don't talk to him of England or Englishmen; for if he should get upon his native land, he'll favor you with some observations which will make you open your eyes."

We laughed. Alf and Tom shook hands with him and got into the boat. We promised if we should meet him, we should certainly see him returned to custody. Alf stood up and shoved us from the shore; we sang our last good-bye, and left the doctor standing on the bank.

It was a beautiful morning. The river was delicious, clear as a crystal; we could see the bottom, and every stone and pebble on it, just a gentle breeze fanning the surface of the water into a ripple. We lit our pipes and took it easily. I am a good bit of a traveler, know many lovely nooks and crannies in foreign lands; I have lived abroad as much as at home, but I will match the higher reaches of our own Father Thames for beauty and for charm against any scenery in Europe. And on the early summer morning, after a spell of glorious weather, it is in all its prime; the water so cool, so clear, the banks so green, so charming; the stately trees on either side, and the mansions, seen over the meadows, are peeping among the trees. You may choose your Rhine, your Garda, or your Magiore, or your Bay of Naples, but leave Cookham and old Father Thames for me.

Presumably we had come for river beauties and the camping out—presumably; but as a matter of fact there was a young lady lived not so far ahead, a mutual friend, Lillian Travers. Separately and jointly we had a high opinion of Miss Travers, not only for her beauty, but for other things as well; and having come so far, we hoped we should not have to return until at least we had a peep at her. Unfortunately, though we knew Miss Travers, we had no acquaintance with Mr.—there was no Mrs. We had met the young lady at several dances and such like; but on one occasion she was under the chaparrage of old Mrs. Mackenzie. Apparently Mr. Travers was not a party man. But Lillian had promised to introduce us to him whenever she got a chance, and we were not unhopful she would get the chance now. So you see the little riverward excursion had more in it than met the eye.

We went lazily on, just dipping our oars in and out; smoking, watching the smoke circling through the clear air. And all thoughts of the doctor and his parting words had gone from our minds. We talked little, and that little was of Lillian and the chance of meeting. We had gone some two or three hundred yards; we were close to the shore. Alf could almost reach it by stretching out his oar. We were dreaming and lazily, when suddenly some one stepped out from among the trees. He was close to us—not a dozen feet away.

He was a tall man, rather over than under six feet. He was dressed in a

dark brown suit of Oxford mixture; he had a stick in his hand, wore a billy cock hat, and his coat was buttoned right up to his throat. He had light whiskers, a heavy drooping mustache, hair unusually long, iron-gray in color. He might be a soldier retired from his profession, or an artist out painting—he certainly looked a gentleman.

We were passing on when he raised his stick and shouted out, "Stop!" It was a regular shout, as though we were half a mile from him. We stopped, although it was an unusual method of calling attention.

"Gentlemen," he said, still at the top of his voice, "I should be obliged if you could give me a seat. I have a long way to go, and I am tired."

We looked at him and each other. It was a free-and-easy style of asking a favor, but he seemed a gentleman and an elderly one. Common politeness dictated civility.

"I am afraid," said Alf, "we have hardly room; she's only built for three." "Oh, that doesn't matter," he said, "you can put me anywhere, or I'll take an oar for one of you."

I was at the point of making a point-blank refusal, not appreciating his off-hand manner, but Alf thought differently.

"All right," he said, "we don't mind if you don't. Steer her in, Jack."

I steered her in. No sooner were we near the shore than, quite unexpectedly, he stepped almost on my toes, rocking the boat from side to side.

"Hang it!" I said, "take care, or you'll have us over."

"What if I do?" he returned. It'll only be a swim; and who minds a swim in weather like this."

We stared at him, the coolness, not to say impertinence of the remark, was amazing. Begging a seat on the boat, knowing it was full, and then telling us he didn't care if he spilled us into the river! He seated himself by me, setting the boat see-sawing again, crushing me into a corner; and without asking with your leave or by my leave, took the steering lines from my hands, and slipped them over his shoulders.

"Excuse me," I said, making a snatch at them; "but if you'll allow me." "Not at all," he said, "I always like something to do, and I expect you've had enough of it."

His coolness was amusing; he was impetuous. I know I for one regretted that we were such mules as to have anything to do with him. We waited in silence a second or two.

"Come," he said, "when are you going to start?"

"Perhaps," said Alf, a bit nettled, "as you're in our boat a self-invited guest, you'll let us choose our own time."

The stranger said nothing; he sat stolid and silent. Tom and Alf set off rowing; the stranger steered right across the stream.

"Where are you going?" said Alf. "Keep us in."

"I'm going into the shade; the sun's too strong."

He had the line, we could hardly insist on his keeping one side if he preferred the other. He took right to the opposite bank, under the shadow of the willow trees. For some minutes neither of us spoke. With him cramming me on my seat, and ramming his elbows into my side, my position was not pleasant. At last I let him know it.

"I don't know if you are aware you are occupying all my seat."

He turned on me short and sharp. All at once I noticed his left eye go up and down like a blinking owl; his mouth was wide open, disclosing as ugly a set of teeth as I should ever care to see. Like a flash Mr. Rawley's words crossed my mind; tall, strong, about 45, iron-gray hair, a habit of showing his teeth and winking his left eye. Gracious powers! was it possible we had a lunatic with us unawares? I know the possibility, nay the probability, of such a thing made me feel more than queer. If there is anything in the world I instinctively fear, it is mad persons. I know little of them; have never been in their company. Possibly my ignorance explains my dread; but the idea of sitting in the same boat and on the same seat with a man who—

Dr. Rawley's warning, "Don't let him lose his temper, or murder will ensue," made me bound from my seat like Jack-in-the-box. The boat tipped right out of the water, but I didn't care. The man was glaring at me with cruel eyes; my muscles were strung, my fist clinched, every moment I expected him at my throat.

"What the dickens are you up to?" asked Alf. "What's the matter with you?"

"Excitable temperament, hot-blooded youth," said the stranger.

I could have said something had I chosen, but I preferred discretion; I didn't like his eyes.

"N-o—nothing," I said. "I think I'll sit in the bow." I didn't wait to learn if any one had objections, but swinging around I scrambled past Alf, and tripped full length on to Tom's knees. The boat went up and down like a swing; it was a miracle she wasn't over.

"Is the fellow mad?" roared Alf. At the word "mad" the stranger rose up straight as a post. "Mad!" he said, "do you know, sir—" He checked himself and sat down. "Pooh! he's only a boy."

In passing Tom I whispered in his ear. "The lunatic," I said.

"What!" said Tom, right out loud. "Hold your row, you confounded donkey! It's the man from Dr. Rawley's."

"The—"

He was going to say something naughty—I know he was, but he stopped short and stared at him with all his eyes. Either Alf overheard me, or else the same idea had occurred to him at the same moment, for he stopped dead in the middle of a stroke, and inspected the man on the steering seat. Tom and Alf went on staring at him for a minute or more. I kept my head turned the other way to avoid his eyes. All at once I felt the boat give a great throb. I turned, there was the stranger leaning half way out of his seat, looking at Alf in a way that I shouldn't have dared to have him look at me.

"What's the meaning of this insolence?" he said.

The question was not unwarranted; it could not have been pleasant to have been stared at as Alf and Tom were staring then.

"I beg your pardon," said Alf, as cool as a cucumber. "To what insolence do you refer?"

Tom actually chuckled; I couldn't have chuckled for a good deal; it seemed to me not only impudent, but risky; I couldn't forget Dr. Rawley's words about the homicidal tendencies. He turned red as a lobster; I never saw such an expression come over a man's face before—perfectly diabolical. To my surprise he sat down and spoke as calmly and deliberately as possible.

"Thank you," he said; "I shall not forget this."

There was a sound about his "I shall not forget this" I did not relish. Alf said nothing. Tom and he set off rowing as coolly as though nothing had happened. I extemporized a seat in the bow, and tried to make things as comfortable as possible.

I noticed, although Alf and Tom were so cool, they hardly took their eyes off him for more than a second at a time. His behavior before their furtive glances was peculiar, he couldn't sit still; he looked first at one bank and then at the other; his eyes traveled everywhere and rested nowhere, his hands fidgeted and trembled; he seemed all of a quiver. I expected him to break into paroxysms. If I hadn't called out he would have run us right into the shore, when I called he clutched the other string violently, jerking the boat almost round. I heartily wish him at Jericho before he had come near us.

No one spoke. We went slowly along watching each other. At last he said something.

"I—I will get out," he said, in an odd nervous way.

"With pleasure," said Alf; "in a minute."

"Why not now? Why not now?" he said, shaking from head to foot.

"Where are you going to get—into the river?" I admired Alf's coolness, I envied him.

The man glowered at him; for a moment he looked him full in the face. I never saw a look in a man's face like in his. Alf returned him look for look. Slightly almost perceptibly, he quickened his stroke. A little lower down was a little hamlet with a well-known inn and a capital landing stage. When we came alongside, the stranger said "This will do; I'll get out here."

He turned the boat ashore. No sooner were we near enough then he rose in his seat and sprang on the beach. There were several people about—watermen and others. Alf was after him in an instant. He rose almost simultaneously and leaped on shore; he touched him on the shoulder.

"Now come," he said. "Don't be foolish; we know all about it."

The other turned on him like a flash of lightning. "What do you mean?"

But Tom was too quick for him; he was on the other side and took his arm. "Come," he said, "don't let's have a row."

The stranger raised himself to full height and shook off Tom with ease. He then hit right and left in splendid style. Tom and Alf went down like ninespins. But my blood was up. I scrambled on shore and ran into him, dodged his blows and closed. I am pretty strong. He was old enough to be my father, but I found I had met my match and more. I was like a baby in his arms. He lifted me clean off my feet and threw me straight into the river. It was a splendid exhibition of strength.

Tom and Alf finding their feet, made for him together, and scrambling out the best I could, I followed suit. You never saw such a set-out. We clung to him like leeches. The language he used was awful, his strength magnificent; though we were three to one, he was enough for all of us. Of course, the bystanders, seeing a row, came up; they interferred and pulled us off.

"Here's a pretty go! What's all this?" said one.

"Stop him! Lay hold of him! He's a lunatic!" said Alf.

"A what?" said one man.

"He's a lunatic, escaped from Doctor Rawley's asylum."

Instead of lending a hand, the man went off in a roar of laughter, and the others joined. The stranger looked frantic with rage. A gentleman stepped out from the crowd. "There's some mistake," he said, "this gentleman is Mr. Travers, of Tollust Hall."

You could have knocked us all three

down with a feather, I do believe. Could it be possible? Could we have been such consummate idiots as to have mistaken a sane man for a lunatic? and that man Lillian Travers' father! I could have shrunk in my boots; I could have run away and hid myself in bed. To think that we should have dogged and watched, and insulted the man of all others in whose good books we wished to stand—Lillian Travers' father! Never did we three men look such fools as we did then. We were so confoundedly in earnest about it; that was the worst of all. I don't care what you say; you may think it a first-class joke; but he must have been an eccentric sort of an elderly gentleman. If he had behaved sensibly, if he had made one sensible remark, he would have blown our delusions to the winds.

We tendered our apologies as best we could to the man we had so insulted; but he treated us and them with loftiest scorn, and we got one after the other into the boat amidst the gibes and jeers of an unsympathetic crowd. And as we rowed from the wretched place as fast as our oars would take us, we each of us in our secret heart declared we should never forget our adventure with a lunatic. And we haven't. From that day to this I have never seen Lillian Travers, nor do I wish to.

Girl Farmers of Dakota.

A broadshouldered, compactly built young woman, with brown face and hard hands, sat in the Lake Shore depot, waiting for the departure of a train East. She had just arrived in town from Dakota. "We don't waste any time in foolishness out our way," she said to a young man who seemed to be acquainted with her. "There is no love-making on my half section. It's nothing but No 2 wheat from May to August. That's what we are out there for. Now, I own and manage a farm of 320 acres, and this year I took out a crop of 18 bushels to the acre and sold it, got the cash, put it in the bank, discharged all my men but one, who will look after things this winter, and I'm off for a little fun down East. Marriage?" said she, in response to remark by her companion; "that's what all the good-for-nothing cranks of men that I see from plowing time to harvest can talk about. What do I want to get married for? There are more than 300 of us girl farmers in Dakota, and we will hold a convention sometime. I never saw a man yet that I would have money. I intend to farm it until I get money enough to live on comfortably, and then I'll see. I'm in the habit of doing about as I please. There was a nice young fellow in my neighborhood last July, who tried to be very gallant and wanted to help me whenever I did any work. If I chopped a little wood he wanted to do it. If I went after a pair of water he wanted to carry it. If I put a bag of grain on my shoulder he insisted on giving me a lift. He was a pretty nice boy, but he made me tired. One day I wanted the hay-rick on the wagon, and I took hold of one end and clapped it up on the wheel so quick that it made him dizzy. 'Let me,' says he, but he only threw the whole thing down in trying to get the other end up. He didn't have the strength. Says I: 'Oh, go away. You don't eat enough No 2 wheat.' Then I put the rick up in good style. We meet lots of such fellows out there. They are good enough, I suppose, but when I want one I will send for him."

Twilight Cathedral Dance.

A tourist in Spain, says: the most curious privilege of the Seville cathedral is the so-called dance of Los Seises, which takes place every evening at twilight for eight consecutive days after the festival of Corpus Domini. As I was at Seville during those days, I went to see it. From what I had heard I thought it must be a scandalous buffoonery. I entered the church with my mind prepared for a feeling of indignation at the profanation of this sacred place. The church was dark; only the chapel was illuminated. A crowd of kneeling women occupied the space between the chapel and the choir; several priests were seated on the right and left of the altar. Before the steps was stretched a broad carpet, and two rows of boys from 8 to 10 years old, dressed like Spanish cavaliers of the medieval age, with plumed hats and white stockings, were drawn up opposite each other in front of the altar. At a signal given by a priest, a low music from violins broke the profound silence of the church, and the boys moved forward with steps of a contradance and began to divide, interlace, separate and gather again with a thousand graceful turns. Then all broke out together into a lovely, harmonious chant, which echoed through the darkness of the vast cathedral like the voice of a choir of angels, and a moment later they commenced to accompany the dance and chant with castanets. No religious ceremony moved me like this one. It is impossible to describe the effect produced by those small voices under the immense vault, these little creatures at the foot of the altar, that grave and almost humble dance, the ancient costumes, the prostrate crowd, and all around in darkness. I left the church with my soul as peaceful as if I had been praying.

—Of 60,000 Hebrews in New York city not one is a bartender.

Down the St. Lawrence.

"Several years ago," says a traveling editor, "the writer went through Howe's Cave, and a man of another party gave out so completely from fear at the gloomy surroundings that his entreaties to be taken out at first aroused the laughter of his friends, and then their alarm, as he was so demoralized by the cavern that he entirely lost his mental balance; yet it was said that he was an old soldier and a brave man. So with the rapids; delicate women often take delight in the lurches of the vessel and the visible signs of danger, while strong men retire below, though this is rare, the most of the passengers entering fully into the enjoyment of the scene. Long Sault Island forms two channels in the river at this place, the rapids being on the Canada side, while the American channel, though swift, can be used for tows at times. The turbulent waters can be seen before the rapids are actually reached. The passengers take their positions upon the sides of the boat, holding on to the rails, and the downward rush commences—a slide down a hill of water nine miles long. Four good men are at the wheel. 'But suppose the rope should break?' we asked. 'Oh, we have two men at the iron tiller,' was the reply. 'Suppose that breaks?' But the man only shrugged his shoulders expressively and rolled his eyes. The fact is if the steamer should set broadside on, she would capsize on the first rock she struck and go rolling down stream, but the chances are against it. The steam is slowed down at first, until a fair start is taken, and contrary to the general impression it is not shut off, but soon turned on in full force, to enable the vessel to keep steeerage way. The bubbling water now whirling about in violent pools, leaping into the air in waves of spray that fall upon the deck, the roar, the watchful appearance of the men at the wheel, and the occasional rock that appears alongside, give one a sense of excitement and danger that is quite agreeable. Some faces about are pale; a man had his arm wound about a rope, the other around his wife; some cling desperately to the rail. Nine miles of this. Quick turns, so sudden that at times it would seem as if the steamer would swing broadside on, but away she shoots in the new channel, headed for another target that looms up on shore, for this is what these curious objects are that appear here and there, and by keeping the ball on our bow headed for these for certain distances the rocks of the channel are avoided. The sensation is a singular one. One man said that he felt as if he was sliding down a hill on his back; another as if he was falling; while a lady was so affected by it that she became dizzy. In fact, the steamer is sliding down a hill of water, and at the same time the variously moving currents give the hull a curious quivering motion hardly describable.

"The first steamer that went through here," said an officer of the boat, wiping the spray from his face, "had a good deal of nerve; they went down with the chances all against them. It was the old Passport. The trip was made in 1848, and a man by the name of McGanon, who is still a pilot on the river, held the wheel. The first steamer that made all the rapids was the Gill. She went down by accident, they say; got golg and they couldn't stop her, so they crowded on steam and let her rip, and she went through all right."

The French Canadians.

Interesting as sections of ancient rocks or drifts to the geologist are those sections of the France of the seventeenth century in the lap of the nineteenth century in the new world to the sociologist. The ancient city of Quebec is still the centre of all the French Canadian life; and how full of quaint beauty and poetry it is only they know fully who have been wearied to death by the monotonous opulent sameness of American cities. The student who would make inquiries into this life, the music, the customs and the way of thinking among the people will find Cote de Beupre, a strip of country extending down the river in the vicinity of Quebec, a most accessible district, and at the same time possibly the most perfect illustration of what he desires to investigate. Not very long ago, the Abbe Ferland said, "In the habitant of the Cote de Beupre you have the Norman peasant of the reign of Louis XIV., with his legends, his songs, his superstitions and his customs." Unfortunately for him, he still sticks to old fashions in farming, as well as to old songs, and the stiff Lombardy poplar that his ancestors brought from France. He does not care to spend money on expensive agricultural implements. He enjoys social merrymakings more than political discussions, and prefers steady hard work by day, and smoking his native tobacco with his neighbors in the long evenings, to thinking over rash experiments on his narrow teres. At the head of the ancient social pyramid on the banks of the St. Lawrence stood the Governor-General and the bishop. The Governor was supreme, though with a bishop like Laval it was often a question which of the two was the Governor. Then came the seigneurs and the curés. The base was constituted by the habitants.

Underground Berlin.

All telegraph, telephone and electric lighting wires in Berlin are now underground. A popular German magazine furnishes some details of the underground plant of the city. The gas supply of Berlin furnishes light for 14,000 street lamps and 700,000 private burners, and although gas lighting was first introduced in that city in 1802, it has been steadily improved, meeting the increased demand and furnishing power for a great many small industries, so that the use of electric lighting has not diminished the production of gas. The pipes are laid under the sidewalks, and little inconvenience is caused ordinary street traffic for repairs or extensions. The water supply was first introduced in 1854 by a private company, but since 1873 it has been owned and managed by the city. Twenty-three great reservoirs supply the city by means of enormous pumps, through a well devised system of pipes, 17,000 water meters measure the supply for as many customers, while a complete system of filtering the water has been successfully introduced. A complete system of underground drainage, devised by the chief engineer of Berlin, a recognized authority in hygiene, Hobeck, begun in 1873, has been gradually introduced, providing canals underground of solid masonry, and supplementary system of earthenware pipes, through which all city wastage is carried off to great fields, where the drainage is recovered and utilized. Every house in Berlin is connected with this underground drainage by an approved system of pipes, and the rain water from the roofs and streets is also carried off through it. Every house, too, must have its water supply, and this is also regulated by law, with careful consideration of the needs of the inhabitants. Twenty-two steam engines with 3,160 horse power, in five stations, scattered throughout the city, supply the power for forcing all the waste of the million of people that inhabit Berlin out to a distant point. The cost of the city gas works in Berlin amounts in the aggregate to seven millions of dollars, of the water works to eight millions of dollars, and of drainage to eight millions, and of course the great proportion of this large capital of over twenty millions of dollars is invested in the work underground, and yet it is not complete. The city of Berlin has recently contracted with the German Edison Electric Light Company for a thorough system of underground wires, by which every street can be lit, and every house too if the owner chooses to introduce it. Water and light and drainage are now fully supplied, but Berlin is discussing the American plans for heat and power, to be supplied from central stations through underground pipes, under such system as may be approved by its local scientific authorities. Dr. Werner Siemens, one of the famous family, has submitted a plan for supplying heat from coal mines only a few miles from Berlin.

The Climbing Perch.

Most people have heard of the climbing perch of the Indian region, which gained the name from having been seen by its discoverer on the stem of a Palmyra palm, five feet above the ground, where it was apparently struggling, by means of the spines on its scales and gill covers, to get higher. As that happened nearly a hundred years ago, and there is no authentic instance of the fish having since been detected climbing trees, the occurrence may fairly be regarded as incidental rather than habitual. There is no doubt, however, that it travels long and far by land generally in the morning when the dew waters its path, although on one occasion Mr. E. L. Layard met a number of them journeying along a dusty road under a midday sun. They are said to form a favorite food of the boatmen on the Ganges, who have been known to keep them alive for five or six days without water, and to find them at the end of that time as lively as when first caught. The typical fish cannot breathe out of water, but the climbing perch can, because, above its gills and in the same cavity with them lies an organ, composed of a complicated system of thin bony plates, which acts as a lung. The fish was until lately supposed to fill this cavity with water and to make use of the latter from time to time in wetting its gills, just as the camel in the desert draws upon its internal reservoir of water in order to quench its thirst. This theory however, has not been able to survive the fact that those who have sought for water in this labyrinthine organ have never yet found it.

Rich Landholders.

Few people reflect upon the fact that the Indians are the richest landholders, in the United States. There are 237,000 of them, exclusive of the Alaska Indians, holding 151,397,668 acres of land. Some of the tribes own 3,000 acres per Indian. The average is about one square mile to each Indian, while a white man is not allowed more than one hundred and sixty acres of public land.

—Female pedestrian matches are prohibited in Allegheny, Pa. "Is man inferior to woman?" asks a correspondent. That depends on whether it is a married man or a bachelor.