A Modern Undine

I fear to say it, be it but a breath,
Lest I should see those swiftly startled eyes
Glance fearfully, as those eyes will I know,
When in love's dawn thy childhood's sweetness dies.

I fear to speak, to see those blushes burn
With new sweet meaning in thy womanhood;
I fear to give the touch which will dispel
Thy innocence, be it for woe or good.

Perhaps those steadfast eyes will coyly droop,
And curling lashes lie on blooming cheek,
When through thy heart love's words will pierce for aye,
And through thy life another's life will break.

I fear—Oh! Love, I love so tenderly—
Thy childish, girlish visions to dispel;
If those pure eyes would look less calm and deep,
How sweet the story my fond lips would tell.

I fear to mar the tenor of thy life
By hands whose tender, unfamiliar touch
Might frighten thee, or my sweet tale were told,
Of how I'd die, in loving thee so much.

"Sweetheart," I cannot wait; my heart must tell
The secret that has brightened all my past;
Ah! Love, how sweet upon this tale to dwell
When in thy radiant eyes love beams at last

PRIZE LILIES.

"Five of them, Uncle Kress," said Tibbie, triumphantly. "Great, rich scrolls, as white as cream, each with a golden spear rising out of its heart, and surrounded by rank, green leaves, crouching over the edge of Grandma Dallas' old majolica pot."

"Heyday, heyday!" said Uncle Kress, who sat among his manuscripts in the latticed library, with one quill-pen back of his ear and one in his hand. "Our little Tibbie is getting poetical. Golden spears, eh? White as cream? So I shall have to hand over the prize to you, shall I?"

"Circumstances point in that direction, Uncle Kress," said Tibbie, with a gleeful sparkle to her eyes. "Ten dollars in gold. Don't you wish you had been less rash in registering promises?"

"What will Isabel say?" shrewdly questioned Mr. Kress, as he began to cut a new quill-pen, with a keen-bladed penknife.

"Poor Isabel, she is so vexed about it," said Tibbie. "I really think, Uncle Kress, that if she could have done it with her glances, she would have blighted every one of those calla-lily buds of mine."

"Tut, tut, tut!" said Mr. Kress, slicing diligently away at the quill. "Well, Uncle, I only say what I think. But where are you going to put the lilies? On the reading-desk, or at the foot of the font?"

"Haven't made up my mind yet," said Uncle Kress. "Take them around to the church Saturday afternoon, and I'll decide at the eleventh hour where they shall stand."

So Tibbie Kress ("her given name," as the old ladies phrase it, was Elizabeth) went merrily home, thinking what she should do with the precious gold-eagle, which was to be the prize for the pot of calla-lilies; and in the midst of her exultation there came a pang of pity for Isabel, whose lilies had all gone to leaf, and produced never a bud at all.

"A new bonnet is what I need most," said Tibbie, as she surveyed her limited wardrobe—"a bonnet of split straw, with Nile-green ribbons, and a cluster of daisies and mignonnette—a real springy spring bonnet."

Which was an entirely feminine decision, especially when it was taken into account that Tibbie had not had a new bonnet in a year, and that Harold Vannecker always came down to the little Westburgh church on Easter Sunday.

Isabal and Tibbie were sisters in blood. Mentally and morally they were as unlike as if they had been born on different continents.

Isabel was a dark-browed, rich-lipped girl, who bore a grudge against fate for having made a school teacher of her instead of an heiress. Tibbie was a plump, smiling young damsel, who accepted circumstances as they came, and made the best of them.

And Mrs. Duckworth, the matronly old lady with whom they boarded, expressed her opinion very plainly, "that Miss Tibbie was worth a dozen of Miss Isabel, and so Mr. Vannecker thought, too, or she was off her calculations!"

"Well," said Isabel, contemptuously, as Tibbie came into the sitting-room, which the two girls shared in common, "I suppose you have been to the parsonage, to crow over me."

"Don't be vexed, Bell," said Tibbie, depreciatingly. "Of course, I had to tell Uncle Kress that the lilies were ready for him."

"And to demand the prize?"

"I had a right to claim his promise, Bella."

Isabel bit her lip.

"I shall never try to bloom lilies again for Easter,' said she. "It's all nonsense!"

Tibbie did not answer.

Had Isabel's lilies bloomed, and hers failed, she told herself, she should not have withheld sympathy and congratulation from her more fortunate rival.

That new bonnet—the first new bonnet that Tibbie had ever bought out and out from a milliner in New York—what a marvel of richness and freshness and beauty it was!

How had she ever been satisfied with the commonplace creations of her own fingers, made out of sponged silk, dyed ribbons, and flowers which were so utterly unflower-like? These were the merest apologies; this was a bonnet!

Tibbie could not help feeling pleasantly conscious of it as she passed up the church aisle that morning, wondering if it became her—secretly glad to think that Harold Vannecker would be there to see her wear it.

But as she settled herself into her own cosy little corner of the church-pew, she chanced to glance up, and to her surprise there was the painted majolica pot and the rich, arrow-shaped leaves seeming to overflow its brim with greenery on either side; but not a solitary lily was to be seen.

Was she dreaming? Where were the five royal scrolls of whiteness which had lifted up their imperial heads when she carried in the pot last night?

Roses blossomed on the altar; bouquets of white carnations flung spicy sweetness on the air; slender ropes of smilax were festooned along the rails, with here and there a knot of violets fastened in; a vase of cut callas stood on the reading-desk. Out of all the Easter lilies that Tibbie had watched grow and expand to their pearly perfection, not one remained.

She thought the time never would come when she could see her uncle come down the steps, with his sermon-case under his arm, and his old-fashioned soft hat pulled over his brow.

In the breezy church-yard the willow boughs swayed to and fro, the short grass was starred with dandelions, and the bland spring sunshine folded everything in a veil of gold; but a cloud seemed to descend over all these things when Tibbie caught the grave, reproachful look on her uncle's face.

Harold Vennecker stood beside Mr. Kress; he lifted his hat to Tibbie; but the girl scarcely noticed his presence.

"Uncle, you are vexed with me!" she cried. "What is it? Is it the bonnet? Did you think it was too gay? And oh, uncle, what became of the lilies?"

Uncle Kress looked gravely at her.

"I scarcely expected such a tricky thing of you, Elizabeth," said he. "If you had wanted the ten dollars so badly, why didn't you tell me, and I would have given it to you, out and out? But deceit—even practical joking—God's altar is not the place for that!"

Tibbie had grown very pale.

"Uncle," she gasped, "I don't understand you!"

"We will not discuss it further," said Mr. Kress, waving his hand. "You will find your lilies lying out there under the southern eaves. Take them and go!"

Tibbie was turning vaguely in the direction to which her uncle pointed, but Mr. Vannecker was before her. Stooping down, he gathered up a handful of coarse paper scrolls with gaudily-painted yellow pistils in their centres.

"Paper Lilies!" gasped Tibbie—"artificial ones! But I don't understand this! What does it all mean? Where are my lilies?"

"These are the lilies that I found fastened rudely in among your green leaves this morning," said Mr. Kress, coldly. "It was a poor jest to play, a deception which was self-evident in itself. Not like you, Elizabeth—no, not like you!"

Tibbie looked from her uncle to Mr. Vannecker without a word. For the moment it seemed as if speech were frozen upon her lips, but all at once she broke into a piteous cry.

"Who has been tampering with my lilies," she wailed—"my white, beautiful lilies?"

"I think I have a clew to this puzzle," said Mr. Vannecker, calmly. "I was in the back of Durivage's book-store, yesterday, looking at an old black-letter edition of Chaucer, that he had laid aside for me, when a lady came into the front department and asked the price of some paper lilies that lay on the counter. Instinctively I looked up, for they were the very things I had laughed at, asking Durivage jeeringly if he supposed that any one would be insane enough to purchase such monstrosities as that; and he had replied that there was more imitation in that sort of thing than I had any idea of. To my astonishment the lady was Miss Isabel Kress, and she bought the lilies and went out. We came down from New York in the same train, but I was prevented from going and speaking to her by a man who button-holed me on business matters, and I do not think she knew of my being near. When I strolled past the church last night, I saw Isabel Kress herself going in. I stopped and asked the old sexton if the church was open.

"Noa, not reg'lar open," he answered; "but there's a young lady a-puttin' flowers in."

"Naturally I thought of Tibbie, here, and went in. But it was not Tibbie that I saw in the far end of the church, stealthily breaking off the white blossoms in the great majolica pot and inserting the odious paper imitations in their place—it was Isabel. I stood still and watched her as she transferred the real lilies to a basket that hung on her arm, as she gathered her shawl around her and glided out again, with a strange evil smile on her face, quite unaware of me standing in the shadow of the gallery.

"It was a strange pantomine. I did not understand it then, but I understand it now. Miss Isabel Kress bore her sister some grudge, and sought to be revenged."

"Yes," said a quick, excited voice close by, as Isabel emerged from the sheltering shade of a group of laurels, "it is all true, every word of it! I meant to take down Tibbie's pride, and I've done it—for a moment at least. There's my confession—make what you will of it!"

And with a short, shrill laugh, she swept away, her lip curved contemptuously.

"My dear," said Mr. Kress, drawing Tibbie close to him, "forgive me. I judged too suddenly; but I didn't think it was in Bell's nature to be so vindictive."

"Let me walk home with Tibbie, sir," said Mr. Vannecker. "You are in a hurry, and she does not seem able to walk fast."

They did not make great haste back to Mrs. Duckworth's cottage—not by any means. They walked around by the river, where the leaf buds were swelling and the air was a faint, sweet smell of growing grass; they lingered under the alders, and stopped to rest by the moss-grown churchyard wall; and when at last they reached the cottage, and Vannecker parted from her at the door, old Mrs. Duckworth nodded her head and looked wondrously wise.

"I don't a bit mind my pudding being over-baked now," said she. "Bless me! don't I know what it all means? There's a ring on her finger that wasn't there this time yesterday; there's a look in her eyes that warms my heart. Well, well, Easter is a lucky day to get engaged upon!"

And Mrs. Duckworth was not far wrong in her conjectures.

Marry in your own religion.

PERILOUS SPINSTERS.

No Flirt so Dangerous as a Single Woman at 55.

"I don't like it," he said, bad temperedly. "That's the 10th old lady who's fallen in love with me."

"I think that's complimentary to you."

"Is it? Oh, yes. That's all right. I go to a party, and the old lady takes me into a corner and begins to talk to me, and she has a pretty daughter, and there's an ocean of pretty girls, and I see somebody I want to dance with, and the old lady says:

"'You don't want to dance. Sit here and talk to me.'"

"Well, why don't you get out and dance?"

"I can't. A nice old lady, who flatters you by asking your opinion of her daughter's beaux, and tickles your vanity with all sorts of pretty little touches—I tell you, my boy, you may talk as you like about young women and widows, and spinsters and flirts, but there isn't any flirt in creation so dangerous as a single woman at 55, whose hair is just sprinkled with silver. They have ways about them. Confound it all, I remember getting quite spoony on an old lady of 60, who was too old to dream of disguising her age."

"You laugh! All right. Some day you'll catch it, perhaps. But you don't seem to be lovable. If they'd only get mad and let you alone. But, no, they simply take a snub quietly and wait the next chance."

"I don't think that's everybody's experience."

"May be not. That makes it all the worse. You see, an old lady is privileged to talk out, even about love, and when she talks of love, you think she means as a son or something like that. Then you find out it's just the same kind of love as anybody elses, and you've kind of encouraged it and accepted it, especially if she has money. Even money is no good. I knew an old widow lady of 65, who was passionately attached to me, and when she died she left all her money to a congregation. I tell you I'm not going to stand it any more. The next old lady who falls in love with me will get left, and don't you forget it."

HOW CIGARS ARE MADE.

A Brief Description of the Process of Manufacturing Them.

The process of cigar-making shows a vast amount of skilful work, fairly mathematical in its exactness, and in many cases artistic in the extreme.

The deft fingers of women are largely employed in the manufacture of cigars, and the skilled labor of women is generally preferable to that of men. Working with tobacco softens the skin of the hands to such an extent that you seldom find a person engaged in the manufacture of cigars who does not have genteel hands. Neither does the tobacco discolor the hands. The reporter saw women making cigars in Denver recently whose hands might well have been the envy of the finest lady in the land. Those with long, taper fingers seemed to be the most successful manipulators, and rolled the pliant tobacco into the most exact shapes, much as the soft fingers of some aristocratic lady roll fancy lamp-lighters for a church affair.

The finest grade of tobacco comes from Havana and is used for what is called filling. The wrapper used mostly throughout the Union, is the Sumatra leaf, and is the handsomest and best in use.

In the first place all tobacco is moistened with water, and left standing between twenty-four and forty-eight hours, according to the texture of the tobacco. It is then stripped, that is the stem is taken out, and the leaf opened and spread between two boards for the purpose of keeping it open, and of giving it a flat surface. In this stage, the leaf is dried, and worked into cigars as fillers. The greatest precaution is always taken, that the filler be perfectly dry, or it cannot be smoked, and therefore the cigar would not fulfill its purpose in the least.

Cigars are rolled on flat stones by a deft motion quite indescribable to those who have not seen it. The rolling is but the work of an instant; the tobacco is laid on the stone, the practiced fingers touch it—one minute more and there is a cigar of perfect proportions, which is rapidly passed along to the next man, who snips off the pointed end with a small cutting machine made for the purpose, after which it is passed to another man who ties it up into a bundle with many others of its kind. As a rule the inside wrapper, called the binder of a cigar, is composed of either Connecticut or Wisconsin tobacco, which, on account of its being very thin and flimsy, and having little taste, does not in the least mar the taste of the Havana filler. Although there are a great many cigars made without binders; still as a rule, the cigars supposed to be made without them are nearly all binders. After the filler is enclosed in the binder it is termed in the trade a "bunch;" the outside binder is then cut, rolled and finished, which completes the process of making what are known as "hand-made cigars."

Cigars are also made in moulds in blocks of twenty forms, or shapes of cigars. These blocks are grooved in the exact shape of the cigar when finished. "Bunches" are made by hand and placed in these grooves, after which a cover fitting the mold exactly is placed over it, like a cover, and is heavy enough to act as a press upon the cigar under it.

In cheap work 300 bunches are prepared at once, inferior cigars being made this way for the reason that they can be made so much cheaper and faster. These are naturally not as good as the hand-made cigars, as machine-making somehow spoils the flavor of the tobacco. They are more shapely than the hand-made cigars and look better, but it is said, do not taste so well.

The secret of the tobacco trade is to make cigars even, spongy and well filled out. The tobacco must be worked in proper condition, and it takes an experienced man always to determine upon what that condition is. After the cigars are made they are assorted in as many colors as the tobacco will run, some varieties running many more than others. It is generally selected in five colors, after which each color is selected into five, six, seven, or even a dozen shades, the bundles running into fives, tens, fifties or hundreds. Loose cigars are also packed in boxes fifty in number.

Fine cigars nowadays run entirely in light shades, and inferior ones in dark. Fashions in cigars change just as they do in everything else, and are no more like they were ten years ago, than is a lady's bonnet of the present time, like one made a dozen years since. The principal method of obtaining dark tobacco is by steaming it in a closed chamber, which is the process called re-sweating.

At the larger Denver factories the reporter found many Spaniards and Bohemians employed, most of whom are very skillful workmen. Women are seen everywhere, and numbers of children earn from $5 to $7 per week making cigars. The workmen are paid by the thousand, the best of them earning from $18 to $20 per week.

One of the proprietors said he had smoked for thirty-five years, and he believed it had never hurt him in the least.

All classes of men smoked, he said—professional men, business men, scientists, authors, day-laborers—and one seemed to enjoy it as much as another; there was no way of deciding upon what class smoked most. Physicians were inveteterate smokers, but so, he repeated, were men from all other walks in life. As a rule, he thought a man will chew tobacco or a cigar when he is worried, but will not smoke unless his mind is comparatively at rest. Smoking was a great after-dinner enjoyment, and, he thought, promoted digestion. It never made him sleepy, but rather roused his brain and made him able to think better. Men, on an average, smoked about four cigars per day, at an expenditure of about 50 cents. Cuban and South American women were great smokers, but he had seldom seen respectable women smoke in this country.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

"And you saw her often?" asked a listener of the English lady who was speaking of Mrs. Browning. "Yes, very often. I was in Italy that winter. She had come down to Rome for a little change, and I went to see her almost every day. Ah, that was something to remember!" "Was she beautiful?" asked the listener. "Tell me about her."

"No, she was not what people call beautiful; but she was more and better. I can see her now, as she lay there on the sofa. I never saw her sitting up. She was always in white. She wore white dresses, trimmed with white lace, with white fleecy shawls wrapped around her, and her dark brown hair used to be let down, and fall all about her like a veil. Her face used to seem to me something already not of the earth—it was so pale, so pure, and with great dark eyes that gleamed like stars. Then her voice was so sweet you never wanted her to stop speaking, but it was also so low you could only hear it by listening carefully."

"Was Mr. Browning there?"

"Oh, yes, and he used to watch her as one watches who has the most precious object in the whole world to keep guard over. He looked out for her comfort as tenderly as a woman.

"I think there never was another marriage like that; a marriage that made two poet souls one forever. Don't you notice how Browning always speaks of finding again the 'soul of his soul'? It was easy enough to see that that was just what she was. And the boy was there, too, a little fellow, with long golden hair, and I remember how quietly he used to play, how careful he was not to disturb his mother. Sometimes he used to stand for a long time beside her, with her 'spirit-small hand,' as her husband called it, just playing with his curls. I wonder if she could have known that she was going away from him so soon.

"Sometimes I have thought he felt some premonition of it, he was so quiet and loving and unlike other children; but perhaps it was only because his father had taught him, above all things, not to 'disturb mamma.'"

"The end came soon after that?"

"Yes, very soon. Only think, that was a quarter of a century ago, and the son is a bluff, hearty-looking Englishman now, painting pictures and carving statues, and the husband's hair has grown white as snow, and no other woman has ever taken the place she left vacant. Well, I'm glad I saw her when she was only almost but not yet quite an angel."

The Remedies of Our Ancestors.

Before the diffusion of a knowledge of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, in 1619, the theories of medicine were based almost entirely upon the writings of Galen, a physician of Pergamus, who lived under the writings of the Roman Emperors Hadrian, the Antonines, Commodus and Severus, in the second century of our era. The practice of the healing art was mostly made up of the use of simples—herbs or minerals—the form or source of which gave an idea of their use. Blood-letting, burning the skin with the hot iron, the application to it of balsams and various drugs having a pleasing or disgusting odor, horrible farragoes or sometimes hundreds of heterogeneous materials, blistering, frictions, bathing in certain springs or rivers supposed to have some wondrous power over certain ailments, applications to the skin or taking into the stomach of oils coming from all sorts of sources—such were the remedies of our ancestors.

Emetics and cathartics held high rank alongside of blood-letting. Rational medicine, the child of patient observation and physiology, was not born. Chemistry had not emerged from the mist of alchemy, and had furnished only a few valuable products for the relief of suffering. The "nepenthe" of the ancient and middle-age writers was probably a secret preparation of opium.

HE OVERSIZED HIM.

An Amusing Scene which Occurred in a Paris Theatre.

Pay-Director Murray, of the United States Navy, is very tall, and is endowed with a physique in full proportion to his height. When sitting, he holds himself very erect, and a ordinary-sized person, if seated behind the genial naval officer, would experience considerable difficulty in obtaining a view of what was passing in front.

Several years ago, while in Paris, Pay-Director Murray visited the Grand Opera House, and was enjoying the performance very quietly, when his pleasure was suddenly interrupted by the mutterings of an individual seated directly behind him. Turning slightly around to discover the cause of his annoyance, he found a diminutive Frenchman in perfect rage over something which was unintelligible to him. Raising his opera-glasses, to obtain a better view of one of the performers, his astonishment may be imagined when he felt his arm pushed down, and a voice trembling with anger hissed into his ear:

"Will you seet down, sair, iv you please?"

The request not only surprised the pay-director, but amused him intensely, and, with a most comical expression in his eyes, he then turned around, surveyed his acquaintance from head to foot, and slowly arose from his chair, stood erect, and, without uttering a word, quietly resumed his tormer attitude.

The mingled look of dismay and disgust with which the little Frenchman surveyed his hated neighbor, as he stood before him, six feet and six inches tall, caused a most decided laugh to go the rounds, and, being a sensitive little plant, he could not stand the awkward position in which he had unwittingly placed himself; so, with a desperate attempt at an apology, he hurriedly left the theatre.

No. 1.

"Pretty cold this morning!"

"Rather so."

"It looks as if we were going to have some frost; this is peculiar weather for this season of the year."

"So it is."

"What are you doing up so early?"

"To get ahead of the others."

This conversation took place at 3:45 o'clock between a reporter who was going home after his night's work and an expressman who had just arrived with his truck. He blanketed his horse and then tried to keep himself warm by exercising on the street.

"You see," said the expressman, "this corner is worth the most in our business and whoever gets here first is entitled to it. This is a good moving season, and we get loads early in the morning. We come down town sometimes at 3 o'clock, especially in the last and first weeks of the month when people move the most. Sometimes I meet another expressman on the road down town and you ought to see us race for first place on the stand. It's as good as going to the race course."

"What time do you go to bed?"

"About 8 o'clock at night; this gives us plenty of sleep. The horses can rest just as well standing in the street as in the barn. It must seem strange to you to see me down so early in the morning, but it is necessary for me to come as I have so much opposition. There are more trucks in the city than there are business for, and I have to work hard to make a living."

While the expressman was proceeding to tell of his hardships a laborer came along with a dinner pail on his way to work and engaged the truck to remove his household effects. A bargain was speedily made and the truck owner said as he lighted his clay pipe: "I did not come down for nothing. The job will keep me busy until noon, but I might not get another load during the afternoon. I have stood here many a day without earning a cent, and others have had worse luck than I, especially the new expressman. Those of us who have been in the business for years have regular customers. It takes a long time to build up a trade, but you keep what you've got as long as you give satisfaction."

Another expressman drove up a short time afterward and No. 1 shouted to him: "You got left this morning."

The Most Beautiful Woman.

Mr. Carl Becker, the portrait artist, has been making some very successful studies here. A water-color portrait of Justice Miller, of the Supreme Court, now exhibited in an art store, has been highly praised, and portraits in oil of Senator Palmer and Mrs. Joseph McDonald are now on his easel. The wife of ex-Senator McDonald is one of the most strikingly handsome women of her day, and every one has felt that Becker had a chance to distinguish himself with such a model to work from. It was after seeing Mrs. McDonald that Matthew Arnold cried: "Wife! wife! come here! I have seen the most beautiful woman in the world." Scores of people agree with Mr. Arnold in that extravagant praise, and every one acknowledges her great beauty. Becker has made a rather conventional portrait of the charming woman, giving only the head and shoulders, and allowing her to wear the velvet dress so long dear to portrait artists. Otherwise it is a most successful effort, and besides catching the sweetness of expression, with which Mrs. McDonald first wins and fascinates every one, he has shown the strength and character that there really is in that beautiful face. Mrs. McDonald's smile and her lovely eyes give so much animation to her face when speaking, that those who only watch her then hardly appreciate the strength that the same countenance expresses when in repose. Becker has just begun a portrait of Senator McDonald, who is giving him daily sittings now, as he expects to return to Indiana next week. Every visit that the Indiana leader makes here now is taken as a sign that he is to enter the cabinet or take a foreign mission, although he only continues now his habit of visiting the capital yearly, as he had always done after leaving the Senate.

Fate of Great Mine Discoverers.

The superstitious belief is an old one that unless the discoverer of a camp meets an untimely or bloody end his find will never amount to anything; and this seems borne out by facts, since nearly all the discoverers of the great gold mines of the United States, with but few exceptions, have, as the saying goes, "died with their boots on." Of thirty-eight booming towns of early days, the locators of twelve were killed by bullet, three were buried in their creations by cave-ins and the rest drifted away with the tide of immigration, have become lost in oblivion or died and were buried in paupers' graves. George H. Fryer, from whom the celebrated "Fryer Hill," of Leadville, derived its name, died at Denver not long ago from an overdose of morphine administered by his own hand. Two years previous to his death he was worth a million or so, but he died a pauper and almost without a friend.

Old Virginny, after whom the "Consolidated Virginia" was named, and who sold his claim for $25, a pony and a bottle of whisky, came to his death by an overdose from a bucking mule near Dayton, Neb.

Bill Bodie, the discoverer of the great Standard mine in Mono county, Cal. slept his life away in a snow storm while making his way to the mines.

Colonel Storey, who gave his name to the county in Nevada where the Comstock is situated, was killed in battle by the Pyramid Lake Indians.

Thomas Page Comstock died a beggar in a strange land. "Old Pancake," as he was known in the mining camps, committed suicide at Bozeman, Mont., on September 27th, 1870, by shooting himself. He was the leader of the Big Horn expedition that was sent out by Nevada capitalists in search of the Lost Cabin mines, supposed to be somewhere among the Big Horn mountains. The expedition was a failure, and Comstock, whether from disappointment or from some other cause, while encamped near Bozeman, drove a pistol-ball through his head and died instantly. He was buried there, and his grave is unmarked and unknown.

Near the wild spot where twelve years before the hidden treasure of Alder gulch was first revealed to him, William Fairweather was laid down to rest. Like poor "Old Pancake," this erratic soul stranded on the shoals of dissipation, although each in his day had turned the key—the one silver, the other golden—which unlocked millions for others but nothing for themselves. William Farrell, who "struck" Meadow Lake, died a victim to remorse in one of the leading hospitals of San Francisco, "haunted by the spirits of 1,000 deluded pioneers and prospectors passing and repassing his dying bed." The locator of the famous Homestake, in the Black Hills, is said to have afterward turned road agent. Times going hard with him, he attempted to stop a stage loaded and prepared for just such emergencies, and he was planted alongside the road by the tender-hearted express agents whom he tried to rob and kill. Homer, of the Homer district, followed in the suicidal tracks of Comstock. After squandering a small fortune he shot his brains out on the streets of San Francisco. Doughnut Bill, "Old Eureka," Kelse Austin, Lloyd Magruder, "Ninemile Clark," George Hankinson, Henry Plummer and scores of others died violent deaths in one way or another, and reaped nothing from the rich finds each had made in his day. Doughnut Bill was planted in the Lone Mountain cemetery, in Utah, in 1868; a lone grave under a white pine tree in a frontier mining town of California tells where poor "Old Eureka" sleeps his last sleep; Kelse Austin was killed and buried in Elko county, Nevada, fifteen years ago.

Lloyd Magruder, while conducting a number of wagons loaded with treasure from Virginia City to the nearest railroad, was murdered and robbed by his teamsters, who were Plummer's outlaws in disguise; George Hankinson and Henry Plummer was hauled up by vigilantes and strung up without the delay and formality of a trial. In the early days of the mining camps of Montana, Plummer was elected sheriff of the camp about Virginia City. He was the first locator of the rich ground about Virginia City, but thought he could make more money, and quicker, too, by taking what was already mined, than by laboring in the gulch day after day and getting it by hard honest toil. But he was tripped up at last, and died a cringing, miserable coward on a gallows of his own construction.

But They Wrote No Fish Stories.

Many of the apostles were fishermen, my son, but you can read the Bible through and never find where one of them fills up a chapter of 1,500 words, telling how it took four hours and a half to land a ten ounce trout with a nine ounce rod of split bamboo. Indeed, the largest fish story in the Bible was told by a man who, so far as we know, never caught a fish in his life, but was rather taken in by one the first time he went to sea. The same rule holds good until this day. The man with the smallest string tells the biggest story.

A proverb is the wit of one and the wisdom of many.