A Song.

"I want you to put me where I can see the ocean."—*President Garfield to the Surgeons.*

Afar from the deep blue sea,
Afar from thy choral of waves,
A child who hath roamed by thee
For thy murmuring music craves;
For the laugh of thy billows that bound
In play amid shells on the shore,
Or dashing o'er rocks that resound
A troubled and stormy roar.

Let him for the greenwood sigh
Whose home is its leafy bower—
Whose hearth at the twilight hour
Offers emblems of peace to the sky.
His may be the breeze
That rustles the forest flower,
Or stirreth a thousand trees
To an anthem of strength and power.

But give me the sea-girt isle,
My forefathers' home and grave,
That basks in the mutual smile
Of sunlight and rippling wave.
Its billows seem all my own,
And the skies more dear to me,
Whose arch rests fondly down
On the breast of the heaving sea.

Only a Private Secretary.

"Both are handsome, and have equally accomplished manners, I hear. They will make a most welcome acquisition to the limited society of this poor little village," remarked Claudia Thorne, with great animation, that was suddenly augmented by the appearance of an elegant equipage that she had just seen coming down the pleasant, shadowy street. "There they are now, Aggie, dear," she continued, excitedly; "and is not that carriage altogether too stylish for this dreadfully unfashionable and prosy place? and that prancing, peckled, reddish horse must be a priceless 'flyer,' I think," she commented somewhat doubtfully, for she was conscious of her utter deficiency in equine lore.

Meanwhile the spirited, dappled roan—an animal neither extraordinarily fine nor fast—was trotting past the garden gate, the senescent blossoms of the lofty locust trees falling in white showers over gilded harness and glittering wheels.

"The gentleman—the one with that Saxon and distinguished look and the tawny, curling hair and beard—he who is driving, must be the millionaire who, I am informed, is the son of a nobleman, but is too Americanized or republicanized to assume his illustrious title. The other, with the dark hair and stoutish figure, must be the private secretary or traveling companion. One can always discern the difference between the patrician and plebeian, can one not?"

"Certainly I have no such subtle gift of discrimination—in the sense you infer. One whose soul is ignoble must be plebeian, I think, however aristocratic the birth or *tout ensemble* of that one may be," answered Agnes Rothsay, quietly.

She and Claudia Thorne were cousins and ostensibly friends, and were living together a life of genteel economy, having jointly inherited a small legacy devised by an eccentric relative recently deceased whom neither had ever seen.

In the picturesque and tiny hamlet of Rosehithe—a haven of roses—they had made their summer home.

Agnes had been pleased and contented with the small tranquil place, with its wide, grassy, umbrageous streets, and sparse clusters of quaint houses builded about the obtuse, wooded angle of crags that jutted into the tumbling waters, just where a wild, narrow stream frothed into the surf of the sea.

But Claudia had thought it all—the serene seclusion, the isolated but imposing scenery, simple habitants with their homely way—uninteresting and insufferably dull.

They were very unlike—those two young ladies, who had yet all the bloom and brightness of fresh, sweet womanhood.

Miss Rothsay was a tall and notably graceful blonde, with that rarely and peculiarly fair complexion that no care can wrinkle and no time can yellow. Her fine features were much too mobile for the artistic Grecian type, and her large eyes—splendid and indescribable—were too passionful and tender to be gray, and too discerning and imperious to be the ideal and poetic blue. Her magnificent masses of hair had the subtle and beautiful shades of amber and ruddy auburn; and her attitudes, her action, her manner of speaking, were distinguished by a majesty, a dignity and a gentle graciousness that were as natural as irresistible. Among inferiors she would have been misunderstood and possibly hated, feared and traduced. Among her peers she was loved and revered.

Claudia Thorne belonged to quite a dissimilar sphere of mind, feeling and volition. She had more cunning than intellect; she was more emotional than sympathetic; she liked only the excitement that could be made egotistically sensational, and she was inordinately ambitious for a very eminent social distinction. She hated the deceased legator who had bequeathed her a humble competence instead of an exhaustless income. It would seem that she was pitifully unappreciative of small favors—that she sadly lacked the sense of gratitude. Nevertheless, she was a witching little lady, with ever restless fairy feet and singularly pretty, elfish hands. She was dark and petite; her hair was jetty black, and her black eyes were brilliant with mesmeric hues; she had red, laughing lips, and a dainty scarlet color always wavering over her babyishly rounded cheeks. She affected the *naive* with the most flattering success.

And she seemed very childishly ingenuous, indeed, when she first smiled beguilingly into the admiring eyes of him whom she supposed to be wealthy and titled.

Apparently that first meeting was entirely accidental.

The gentleman had been piscatorially busied in a deliciously cool niche among the willows, whose foliage of topaz and emerald left flickering shadows along the margin of a still pond where a strata of wild rock had dammed the stream, and where a myriad of silvery fins glanced through the clear, brown water. He had heard a lazy and irregular sound of oars, and had glanced with small interest across the high green reeds and low flower-de-luce, to see a gaudily gilded and very small skiff rocking dangerously among the water-lilies just before him.

The single occupant of the boat was a brunette fay, wearing a fancy costume of some dark, ruddy-bronze stuff, with golden-hearted lily-buds in her corsage and an aigrette tipped with white and gold in her jaunty bronze velvet cap.

As the young gentleman regarded her with a half-enchanted gaze, she extended her dusky, jeweled hands toward a snowy blossom, dropping her oars with a pretty, careless gesture. The next instant the oars were drifting slowly away on the sluggish current; the next instant there was a splash and a musical cry for help.

The light craft was capsized, and Claudia Thorne was struggling and gasping among the lilies.

How the spectator of the catastrophe rescued her he could never quite clearly remember; however, he might never forget the sensation of pleasurable triumph he felt as she lay at last helplessly in his arms—a saved, thankful nymph, so drenched and seemingly frightened that one much less gallant and susceptible than he must, perforce, have said to her something very flattering and agreeable.

That episode was the beginning of a charming little romance.

"If my mishap be known I shall only be ridiculed," declared pretty Claudia, diplomatically, whereas she had purposely caused the accident. "I have always been awkward with my oars. There is a standing prediction, I believe, that I should be capsized some time. I must invent some neat fiction to account for these wet flounces and this poor spoiled hat."

She was turning slowly away, and her manner would seem to express that her gratitude was too great to be uttered in the ordinary phraseology considered conventional on such an occasion.

The gentleman imagined that he understood that simulation of graceful timidity. He thought her the handsomest, the most ingenuous, and the most charming young lady whom he had ever met.

"Shall I never see you again?" he queried, almost beseechingly.

"Perhaps you may," she returned, with a coquettish and bewildering smile. "I row or ride or walk every morning in this delightful place. I am absurdly fond of the bridle path along the river bank, and of the cool promenade among the willows."

"And so am I," he asserted, quickly and respectfully. "I shall see you often; but perhaps you will not think proper to recognize me, if we should meet?" he supplemented, uneasily.

With seeming bashfulness she averted her bright face and brilliant eyes; but, as she vanished among the golden green willow shadows, she murmured "*Au revoir*," in encouraging accents.

Claudia went slowly homeward. Her mood was thoughtful and speculative.

"He is certainly interested, and perhaps infatuated," she mused, with great satisfaction. "I shall meet him often, and long before we shall be formally introduced I shall be the betrothed wife of my titled millionaire, whom, most fortunately for poor, ambitious, deceitful me, I already adore."

With all her unwomanly faults, Claudia keenly comprehended that a marriage without reciprocal love is only an unholy sham.

The flirtation under the willows progressed as she had predicted, and as favorably as she could desire.

"I shall allow you to tell me nothing about yourself at all. Practical details would spoil all the romance of our pleasant summer dream," asseverated Claudia one morning. She spoke with a semblance of that blind and absolute faith that she well knew pleases and flatters and deceives even the shrewdest of lovers. And moreover, she presumed herself to about become a modern Lady Burleigh, although one might doubt if she would ever be very conscientiously perplexed

"With the burden of an honor
Unto which she was not born."

"But our romance is no summer dream, darling," protested Herbert Saunders, earnestly. "You are to be my wife, you know, and before we are married I should like you to thoroughly understand my social and financial rank."

"I will listen to no prosy explanations," she persisted, pressing her pretty hands over her ears. "I love you and will be a dutiful wife, trying always to make you happy and our home pleasant. Is not that sufficient?"

Claudia spoke with sincerity. For love was producing one of those beautiful and mysterious psychological phenomena that occasionally redeem the most faulty souls.

"Is not that sufficient, Herbert?" she iterated, with a smile, that the man who loved her thought superlatively artless.

"Certainly it ought to be so," he allowed, half doubtfully, and unpleasantly conscious of an indefinable sense of dissatisfaction. "But still I think it best and wisest for any lady to know thoroughly the prosy and practical part of life of the man to whose keeping she consigns her freedom and happiness."

But the willful girl would not listen. In her vain egotism she imagined that she already know as much, or more, than he could possibly tell her.

That night they met at a garden party—a rather *recherche* affair with an afternoon of croquet and tennis and an evening of dancing and banqueting under a round, opaline moon, among magnificent old trees of oak and elm.

In the midst of the festivity, while Claudia was for a moment alone in a cool, arboreous nook fantastically illumed by the paly red light of a gorgeous paper lantern swinging from an arch of thick ivy, she saw Agnes Rothsay approaching.

Miss Rothsay wore a simple and exquisite costume of darkest, richest violet silk, with sprays of snowy, odorous eglantine in her hair and corsage. She looked very happy as she stopped beside her pretty cousin.

"Claudia, dear, will you congratulate me?" she whispered, bashfully. "I am betrothed—really affianced to the baronet. One day while you were rowing after lilies, the pastor's wife brought my Jack for a formal call. He was foolish enough to honor me with his admiration, and he sent all those lovely flowers you wondered at so much. But I was never quite sure he loved me until to-day. But only a little while ago he met me down there among the willows and wild roses, and he told me how very dear I had become to him, and he kissed me, Claudia, and he kissed this ring before he put it on my finger." She flung aside a bit of delicate lace drapery and presented a graceful hand upon which glittered a magnificent ring of diamonds and gold. "I am very happy, cousin dear, for I know that my Jack is one of the noblest of all men. I should revere him just the same, if he were a bricklayer instead of being a baronet."

"Your Jack—the baronet! What do you mean, Agnes!" gasped Claudia.

Miss Rothsay for a moment regarded her cousin with much perplexity. But just then two gentlemen advanced through the vista of green branches hung with grotesque illuminations of gaudy irridescence.

"Hush, dear, Mr. Esmond is searching for me, I think. He is coming this way, and Hubert Saunders—his private secretary—you know, is with him."

Claudia Thorne stood motionless and voiceless. She could not utter one word, not even when Agnes and the baronet had gone, leaving her alone with the lover who regarded her with a troubled, loving gaze.

Possibly he comprehended all, but if he did, his affection was too loyal to be weakened by the fault of the handsome girl who he knew loved him.

"Why are you so white and mute, my darling?" he inquired, tenderly. "Would you be more fond of me, dear, do you think, if I happened to have wealth and a title?"

All that was womanly and redeeming in her ambitious and subtle nature conquered the sharp pang of her disappointment.

She was only conscious that he was dearer to her than rank or riches, and unspeakably grateful that he so generously forgave a folly that she was aware he more than suspected.

"No wealth and no title could ever make my respect and affection for you greater," she assured him with simple earnestness.

He was pleased and satisfied with the frank answer.

"My pretty Claudia," he said; "I shall make your wifehood so happy that you will never regret marrying only a private secretary."

"If I was as bald as you," said Gus De Smith to one of the most prominent citizens of Austin, "I would wear a wig." "I don't see why you should ever wear a wig," was the quiet response; "an empty barn don't need any roof."

PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSORS.

How Vice-Presidents Tyler, Fillmore and Johnson Took the Oath of Office of President.

Since the day on which Washington took the oath of office and entered upon his duties as President of the United States, on the 30th of April, 1789, until now—a period of more than ninety-three years—only three Vice-Presidents (exclusive of General Arthur) have succeeded to the presidency: John Tyler in 1841, Millard Fillmore in 1850, and Andrew Johnson in 1865. The official proceedings under which each qualified have a peculiar interest at this time, and as comparatively few people now living can recall them, they are given precisely as they appear in the written minutes of the proceedings of the Senate of the United States. The minutes are as follows:

TUESDAY, April 6, 1841.

Immediately after the decease of the President, Mr. Webster, Jr., chief clerk of the department of state, accompanied by Mr. Beall, an officer of the Senate, set out for the residence of the Vice-President, in Virginia, bearing to him the following letter:

WASHINGTON, April 4, 1841.

To John Tyler, Vice-President of the United States.

SIR: It has become our most painful duty to inform you that William Henry Harrison, late President of the United States, has departed this life.

This distressing event took place this day, at the President's mansion, in this city, at thirty minutes before 1 in the morning.

We lose no time in dispatching the chief clerk in the state department, as a special messenger, to bear you these melancholy tidings.

We have the honor to be, with the highest regard, your obedient servants.

DANIEL WEBSTER, Secretary of State.
THOMAS EWING, Secretary of the Treasury.
JOHN BELL, Secretary of War.
JOHN J. CRITTENDEN, Attorney-General.
FRANCIS GRANGER, Postmaster-General.

CITY OF WASHINGTON, D. C., Wednesday, April 7, 1841.

By the extraordinary dispatch used in sending the official intelligence to the Vice-President at Williamsburg, and similar dispatch by him in repairing to the seat of government, John Tyler, now President of the United States, arrived in this city yesterday morning at 5 o'clock, and took lodgings at Brown's hotel.

At 12 o'clock all the heads of departments, except the secretary of the navy (who has not yet returned to the city from his visit to his family), waited upon him to pay him their official and personal respects. They were received with all the politeness and kindness which characterize the new President. He signified his deep feeling of the public calamity sustained by the death of President Harrison, and expressed his profound sensibility to the heavy responsibility so suddenly devolved upon himself. He spoke of the present state of things with great concern and seriousness, and made known his wishes that the several heads of departments would continue to fill the places which they now occupy, and his confidence that they would afford all the aid in their power to enable him to carry on the administration of the government successfully.

The President then took and subscribed the following oath of office:

I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. JOHN TYLER.

APRIL 6, 1841

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, CITY AND COUNTY OF WASHINGTON, *ss.*—I, William Cranch, Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia, certify that the above-named John Tyler personally appeared before me this day, and although he deems himself qualified to perform the duties and exercise the powers and office of President on the death of William Henry Harrison, late President of the United States, without any other oath than that which he has taken as Vice-President, yet, as doubts may arise, and for greater caution, took and subscribed the foregoing oath before me.

APRIL 6, 1841. W. CRANCH.

TAYLOR'S DEATH.

The record of Zachary Taylor's death and the succession of Millard Fillmore is as follows:

Zachary Taylor, President of the United States, having deceased on Tuesday, the 9th of July, 1850, and Congress being then in session:

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
WEDNESDAY, July 10, 1850.

The following communication received by the secretary of the Senate was read:

To the Senate of the United States:

In consequence of the lamented death of Zachary Taylor, late President of the United States, I shall no longer occupy the chair of the Senate; and I have thought that a formal communication to the Senate, to that effect, through your secretary, might enable you the more promptly to proceed to the choice of presiding officer. MILLARD FILLMORE.

WASHINGTON, July 10, 1850.

The following message was received from the President of the United States by Mr. Fisher:

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:

I have to perform the melancholy duty of announcing to you that it has pleased Almighty God to remove from this life Zachary Taylor, late President of the United States. He deceased last evening, at the hour of half past 10 o'clock, in the midst of his family and surrounded by all his faculties. Among his last words were these, which he uttered with emphatic distinctness: "I have always done my duty—I am ready to die—my only regret is for the friends I leave behind me."

Having announced to you, fellow citizens, this most affecting bereavement, and assuring you that it has penetrated no heart with deeper grief than mine, it remains for me to say that I propose this day, at 12 o'clock, in the hall of the House of Representatives, in the presence of both houses of Congress, to take the oath prescribed by the Constitution, to enable me to enter on the execution of the office which this event has devolved on me.

MILLARD FILLMORE.

WASHINGTON, July 10, 1850.

A similar message having been communicated to the House of Representatives, and the necessary arrangements made between the two houses:

At 12 o'clock meridian.

The President of the United States, the heads of departments, the chief judge of the circuit court of the District of Columbia and the Senate of the United States having entered the hall of the House of Representatives.

The oath of office was administered to the President by the Honorable William Cranch, chief judge of the circuit court of the United States for the District of Columbia.

DEATH OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

The death of President Lincoln and the taking of the oath by Andrew Johnson are thus recorded:

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 15, 1865.

SIR: Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, was shot by an assassin last evening at Ford's theater, in this city, and died at the hour of twenty-two minutes after 7 o'clock this morning.

About the same time at which the President was shot an assassin entered the sick chamber of the Hon. William H. Seward, secretary of state, and stabbed him in several places—in the throat, neck and face—severely, if not mortally, wounding him. Other members of the secretary's family were dangerously wounded by the assassin while making his escape.

By the death of President Lincoln, the office of President has devolved, under the Constitution, upon you. The emergency of the government demands that you should immediately qualify according to the requirements of the Constitution, and enter upon the duties of President of the United States. If you will please make known your pleasure, such arrangements as you deem proper will be made.

Your obedient servants,
HUGH MCCULLOCH, Secretary of the Treasury.
EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.
GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy.
W. DENNISON, Postmaster-General.
JOHN P. USHER, Secretary of the Interior.
JAMES SPEED, Attorney-General.

To the Hon. ANDREW JOHNSON,
Vice-President of the United States.

Mr. Johnson, in answer, appointed 11 o'clock A. M., at his rooms in the Kirkwood hotel, as the time and place where he would take the oath of office. It was duly administered to him by Chief Justice Chase, in presence of the Cabinet and several members of Congress.

Your Eyes.

The most serious trouble with readers and writers is, as might be predicted from their peculiar work, weak eyes. We find that engravers, watchmakers, and all others who use their eyes constantly in their work, take extra care to preserve them by getting the best possible light by day, and using the best artificial light by night. The great army of readers and writers are careless, and most of them sooner or later pay the penalty by being forced to give up night work entirely—some to give up reading except at short intervals, under the best conditions, and now and then one loses the eye-sight entirely, after it is too late to take warning.

Greek, German, short-hand or any other character differing from the plain Roman type makes a double danger. The custom is to laugh at all warnings till pain or weakness makes attention imperitive, and then it is often too late to avert the mischief. Few comprehend the vast number we call a million, but it takes a million letters to make a fair-sized volume of five hundred pages, forty lines to the page, fifty letters to the line. A reader makes an easy day of reading this, but his eye must go over a million letters.

We can do no better service to readers and writers than to call attention to this great danger of failure to take the best care, which is none too good for the eyes. Every tyro knows that he should have the best light for reading, should shun carefully early dawn or twilight, should always stop at the first sign of pain or weariness, etc. Most know that the glare from a plain white surface is very trying, and that the eye is relieved by a tint. Recent experiments in Germany are reported to indicate some yellowish tint as the easiest for the eyes. Dark papers, inks that show light color on first writing, faint pencil marks that can be read only by straining the eyes, are fruitful sources of mischief. So is bad writing. The bad paper, ink and pencils most of our readers will have too good sense to use.—*Literary Journal.*

"The Way of a Serpent on a Rock."

The movement of a snake in climbing a perpendicular surface, as I have observed it, is a vermicular, undulating motion, not spiral, but straight up the face of the surface. I have seen a black snake thus glide up a beech tree with that easy, careless grace of movement which is characteristic of that snake when moving over horizontal surfaces. The bark of the beech affords no inequalities into which the edges of the gastroslegal bands could be thrust claw-fashion, and I have no doubt that atmospheric pressure is the force that holds the snake against such surfaces in climbing, sucker fashion, as the boy lifts the brick with the piece of wet leather. I once knew a black snake to ascend a stucco-wall to the second-story window, and another I saw go up to the eaves of a carriage house to the swallows' nest, straight up the up-and-down boards. I have seen them glide from tree to tree and leap down from near the top of large trees, but never saw one descend by climbing down a smooth, perpendicular surface. I have no doubt of their ability to do so, however. I do not believe that this power is enjoyed by the copperhead or rattlesnake, or any venomous sort with which I am familiar, they being heavy and sluggish in their movements. I have seen them go up on leaning trees and crawl into the foliage of bushes, however.—*Forest and Stream.*

Valuable Suggestions.

Always tell the truth; you will find it easier than lying.

Always do a kind act in a kind way; to do it otherwise destroys its value.

Do a mean act in a mean way; so it will have a keener sting—for your own breast. But better not do it.

Whatever you dislike in another correct in yourself.

Better be upright with poverty than wicked with plenty.

Time never rests heavily upon us when it is well employed.

Do your duty in that station of life in which God in His providence has placed you.

Mind your own business.

Carrying Pure Air in a Knapsack.

Successful experiments have been carried on by Mr. Warrington Smythe, at the New Seaham colliery, near Newcastle, England, with what is termed the Fleuss breathing apparatus. The importance of this invention will at once be apparent to those who are in any way acquainted with the risks from suffocation run by firemen and those employed under ground, where poisonous fumes are so liable to break forth and suffocate those who may be subject to them. With the aid of the Fleuss machine men can work without danger under all these mimical conditions.

The apparatus has the size and shape of a soldier's knapsack, its principal portion being a case of sheet copper, twelve inches long, twelve inches wide, and two and a half inches deep. The case is internally divided into four longitudinal compartments, fitted up so as to secure the complete circulation through them of the air that has been robbed of its oxygen by passage through the lungs. Each compartment is fitted with small cubes of india rubber sponge, coated with specially prepared caustic soda. The air that passes from the lungs of the man fitted with the apparatus passes through one side of a mouthpiece and down the corresponding short length of pipe over his left shoulder to the first compartment of the case.

There it goes through a finely-balanced valve, which gives way to the softest breath passing from the mouth, but is immovable to anything from the inside of the case. The partition of the first compartment fits closely up to the top of the case, but is about one inch open at the botton. This arrangement thus permits the respired air to pass down the first chamber and to enter the second at the bottom. Here it circulates to the top, where an inch opening in the next partition gives it passage into the third compartment, which it descends, to find a similar outlet at the bottom into the fourth chamber. Rising to the head of this compartment, the air thus purified from the deleterious matter that it has carried from the lungs passes through a valve into a pipe laid over the right shoulder of the operator. Oxygen is added by means of a small pipe that runs from the cylinder at the bottom of the case, and finds its opening close to the junction of the clean air-pipe and the before mentioned india rubber bag.

This latter performs the part of a reservoir of pure and properly oxygenated air, and by its presence the act of breathing is rendered easy and natural. In fact, the only limit to the space of time during which the apparatus enables the man to move about in the midst of poisonous gases is the capacity of the oxygen cylinder and the individual's physical ability to carry the copper knapsack about with him. The capacity of the cylinders at present in use is one-fourth of a cubic foot, and as the oxygen is pumped in under pressure of sixteen atmospheres, they hold four cubic feet of gas. The supply, which can be regulated through the medium of a valve, is calculated to last for a four hours' shift of work, although no man employed under such conditions of danger as require its use is kept at labor more than three hours.

An essential portion of the apparatus is the mask, to which is attached a mouthpiece screwed on one side to the pure-air pipe and india rubber bag, and on the other to the pipe conveying the expired air back to the compartment in the knapsack case.—*Rubber Era.*

A Soldier's Presence of Mind.

It was during the siege of Wagner, and the Union parallels were but a few hundred yards away from the grim black tubes that ever and anon "enbowled with outrageous noise and air—disgorging foul their horrid glut of iron globes." A line of abattis was to be built across a clear space in point-blank range of the Confederate gunners and sharpshooters in front.

"Sergeant," says the officer in charge, "go pace that opening and give me the distance as near as possible."

Says the sergeant (for we will let him tell the rest of the story):

"I started right off. When I got to the opening I put 'er like a ship in a gale of wind. What with grape, canister, round shot, shell and a regular bees' nest of rifle balls, I just think there must have been a fearful drain of ammunition on the Confederate army about that time. I don't know how it was, but I didn't get so much as a scratch, but I did get powerfully scared. When I got under cover I couldn't er told for the life er me whether it was a hundred or a thousand paces. I should sooner er guessed a hundred thousand.

"Says the captain: 'Well, sergeant, what do you make it?'

"Soon's I could get my wind, says I, 'Give a guess, captain.'

"He looks across the opening a second or two and then says: 'A hundred and seventy-five paces, say.'

'Thunder, captain,' says I, 'you've made a pretty close guess. It's just a hundred and seventy-one.'

"And," concluded the sergeant, after the laugh had subsided, "that's how I got my shoulder-straps."