

WHY MY HAIR TURNED WHITE.

"Wallace, how queer it is that your hair should turn white. You are younger than I, and mine has scarcely a touch of gray in it."

"Ah, old fellow, my hair is gray, but not with years. I was thirty-four a week ago. People are always surprised when I tell them my age, and no wonder, for I look at least sixty. Would you like to hear how I come by my general appearance? Yes? Well then fill your glass and take a fresh cigar."

The last speaker, was a handsome, well-built fellow, with bright, kindly eyes and well-cut classical features. Any one who saw him for the first time would be sure to exclaim, "What a wonderfully preserved old gentleman!" for his locks were of snowy whiteness, which, in spite of the evident youthfulness of face and form, impressed one with the idea that he was an old man. He and his companion were seated by the fire in a beautifully furnished little smoking-room. A table stood between them, with glasses, a decanter, and a box of cigars, as I Herbert Wallace spoke he pushed the latter toward his companion, and, crossing his legs commenced his tale.

"I have been married nearly ten years, but at the time at which my story opens, as the novelist say, I was a bachelor, and in the full enjoyment of the bliss of a successful courtship. My fiancée's family lived at Barleigh, about twenty miles from Exeter, the country town. I was staying with them, and I can assure you that Ethel and I thoroughly enjoyed the summer month. There was only one drawback to our pleasure, and that was the presence of a certain Hugh Rawdon. This man was, I think, as far as outward appearances went, the most splendid specimen of the *genus homo* that I have ever seen. Over six feet in height, he possessed a frame that might have served as a model for a statue of Hercules. His face, too, was a most handsome one; but withal there was a shifty expression in his eyes not calculated to invite a stranger's confidence. I hated this man for his evident attention to Ethel, who, as I believed then, and know now, both disliked and feared him. But he was in great favor with the old people for he was rich, having lately returned from Australia, where he had, to use his own expression, 'made his pile' (how he never said,) and being more over, a distant connection of the family.

"Having business to discharge at Exeter, I one evening announced my intention of spending a few hours in that old place. 'I shall start early to-morrow,' I said, 'and return about four in the afternoon'."

"Then Herbert," said Ethel, "I wish you would get mamma a little bottle of chloroform. Her face is troubling her again, and nothing but that is of any use."

"My business at Exeter over, I purchased a bottle of chloroform, jumped into the train, and punctually at four o'clock I was approaching the house at Barleigh. Leaning on the gate was Rawdon. As soon as he saw me he shouted out 'Hallo, Wallace, old boy, I've been waiting for you; come for a sail, will you? It is a glorious day'."

"So it was, and nothing loth, I consented. We went down to the little beach and presently reached a tiny boat house on the beach, just out of the reach of the spring tides. Rawdon producing the key ran out and launched as fine a little pleasure boat as ever skipped over the waves. The mast was steered, the sail run up and sheeted home, and Rawdon taking the helm, we stretched straight out to sea.

"When we had been tacking backward and forward, on and off shore, for an hour or more, Rawdon enlivening the time with tales of his Australian experiences, I suggested that we would return. Rawdon would not hear of it—the evening was so cool, the sunset so glorious; besides, the ladies had gone to the Vicar's and they were sure to stay late.

"I was only too glad to acquiesce for I was passionately fond of the water; but when the sun had actually set I felt that it would be an act of discourtesy to our host and hostess to stay out any longer. I told my companion so, and insisted on returning.

"In an instant," his whole manner changed. He sprang up, almost upsetting the little craft with the violence of his motion, and, coming close up to me, said in a deep hoarse voice "Herbert Wallace, you will go back no more!"

"I was utterly dumfounded with astonishment. At first I thought he was only perpetrating a foolish joke, but when I glanced into his eyes and saw there an awful fire of madness, my wonder soon gave way to fear. Yes, I say it without shame, I was thoroughly frightened. If you have never been (as most likely you have not) face to face with a madman, alone with him, far out of reach of human help, you will have no right to charge me with cowardice; and if you have had some such awful experience, you will not wish to do so."

"There he stood, glaring down upon me. Slowly, without removing his eyes from my face, he put his hand behind him and drew from a hip-pocket a small Colt's revolver.

"Move one inch, and I blow your brains out," he said. With his unoccupied hand he cast loose the billiards and the sail fell with a thud. Still covering me with the revolver, he next threw both oars overboard, and then sat quietly down opposite me.

"My dear Rawdon," I began, but he interrupted me fiercely.

"Silence, sir, and hear me. I have brought you out here to kill you. I have been thinking of this moment for days and weeks together brooding over it, glorying in it, feeding on it. Ha ha! you think I am mad. Yes I am mad, and he burst into a loud blood-curdling laugh that made my very flesh creep.

"Mad, yes!" he continued; but what has made me so? Hear me, Herbert Wallace, hear my story, and your doom just. Ethel! Oh how I loved her! For her I toiled, for her I fought, ay, for her I sinned. I loved with such love as so puny a mortal as you could not understand. But I was poor and dared not ask her to share my poverty. Two years ago I left England. Fortune favored me. I became rich, and returned, oh, heavens! to find her the plighted bride of a miserable atom, a morsel of humanity like you. Therefore you must die, but not alone. I had hoped that we might starve together, but you might be rescued. It is too great a risk to run. To-night, therefore, I will enjoy your misery, to-morrow we will jump overboard together. Think of Ethel, think of her, lost to you as to me forever! Ha! ha! ha! and again that awful laugh echoed across the waves.

"I have, and had, my fair portion of strength, but I was no match for Hugh Rawdon. Yet my only chance to overcome him, and either bind or hurl him overboard. He had replaced his revolver, apparently satisfied that I should offer no resistance, and seizing my opportunity, as soon as he sat down I sprang wildly upon him. With a yell, like the howl of a wild beast, he received me, and the next instant we were engaged in the most awful struggle ever man imagined. I had taken him at a disadvantage, and Life, Love, and Ethel seemed to lend strength to my arms and courage to my heart. He durst not let me go for an instant to reach the revolver, and gradually I pressed him back over the stern of the little boat. With a tremendous effort the madman recovered himself, and the next instant I was lying on my back in the bottom of the boat, with his knee firmly planted on my chest. Oh, the agony of that moment! I expected to be instantly pistolled, but to my astonishment Rawdon seemed calm and quiet.

"You had better not have resisted. Now I must tie you," was all he said. "Never giving me a chance of regaining my feet, he lifted me up and stretched me across the thwarts, binding me to them, hand and foot with the billiards.

"It was now quite dark. My only hope was that we might fall in with some smack or trader. Then my thoughts wandered to Ethel. One short month and we should have been married, and now—What would she do? Oh it was cruel! To die so young! What had I done to deserve it?"

"And so my thoughts wandered on disjointedly, but my reverie was interrupted by the madman. He had, for

the last hour or two, sat quite still but now he rose, and coming to me said:

"I am sleepy and tired. Such violent exercise as you have compelled me to take is not healthy in this warm weather, so, with your permission, I will lie under the thwarts and get a nap. I suppose I gave some involuntary sign or other mark of renewed hope for he added, 'Don't deceive yourself. The least movement will waken me. We are only postponing our entry into the next world till to-morrow. He lay down in the bottom of the boat, and presently his regular breathing told me that he slept.

"The sound seemed to give me courage. I determined to have one more battle for life, I wrestled for it seemed to me, hours with my bonds, pausing every now and then, to hear if my tormentor slept. At last I got one hand free, and in a very few moments more stood upright and released.

"But even though, so far successful what hope had I? Rawdon naturally much more powerful than I, would arise from his sleep like a giant refreshed, while I cramped and tired by bonds and watching should be like a baby in his hands.

"Just at that moment a drop of spray dashed into my face. I pulled out my handkerchief and wiped it off, and was replacing the handkerchief when I felt in a corner of my pocket a little hard packet. In an instant it flashed upon my mind, 'Here was my deliverer!' That little bottle of chloroform which I had bought in Exeter and forgotten till that moment would save my life. With a silent cry of prayer and thankfulness I drew it out. In spite of our dreadful struggle it had escaped uninjured. I pulled out the cork with my teeth, and folding my handkerchief into a pad, I saturated it with chloroform, and creeping to the sleeping maniac, laid it gently over his mouth and nose. Then I bound him as firmly as possible with every bit of rope in the boat and took away the revolver. He had not moved from the moment when he lay down.

"At length the morning came, and with it, in the distance, a sail. I signalled as well as I could, for I was still asfraid to shout. At last they saw me, and, bearing down, took me on board. Shortly after Rawdon awoke from his sleep, and when he saw that his prey had slipped through his fingers his ravings were frightful. I had escaped death, but since that awful night my hair has been as you see it. Eh? What became of Rawdon? Poor fellow! he died in an asylum two days after. Ethel and I were married a year later.

"That's the yarn, old fellow."

MADE TO FIT THE COFFIN.

A farmer from Ahnapée was in the city a short time since, and told one of our merchants of a case in that neighborhood illustrating how mean persons can become who make money-getting the object of their existence. The story is as follows: A family residing near Ahnapée and worth about \$6,000 in cash and lands are notoriously stingy and live like misers on a mere pittance. Recently the old woman was taken very sick, and came nigh unto death. She called her son and told him not to go to too much expense in arranging the funeral, and that a pine board box would be good enough for a coffin. Under her directions the son took measurements and nailed four pine boards together making not a very elaborate coffin, but recommending itself on account of its cheapness. After this the woman decided not to die and recovered. But her husband was taken sick and soon went the way of all flesh. Now the son was in a quandary, as he did not wish to go to the expense of making a new coffin, and the one already made was too short by several inches. He finally hit upon a plan, however, and taking an old saw amputated the limbs just above the ankle. This made every thing serene, the corpse fitted the box nicely, and the burial proceeded without a further hitch.—*Green Bay (Wis.) Gazette.*

An old bachelor suggests the following topic for discussion at the annual convention of the Fremont Young Ladies' Protective Association: "Resolved that a wife's wardrobe is dearer than herself."

PRECIOUS HINTS.

Select the girl.
If you have a rival, keep an eye on him; if he is a widower, keep two eyes on him.

Don't swear to the girl that you have no bad habits. It will be enough for you to say you never heard yourself snore in your sleep.

Don't put much sweet stuff on paper. If you do, you will hear it read in after years when your wife has some special purpose in inflicting upon you the severest punishment known to a married man.

Go home at a reasonable hour in the evening. Don't wait till the girl has to throw her whole soul into a yawn that she can't cover with both hands. A little thing like that may cause coolness at the very beginning of the game.

If you sit down on some molasses-candy that little Willie has left on the chair, while wearing your new summer trousers for the first time, smile sweetly and remark that you don't mind sitting on molasses-candy at all, and that "boys will be boys." Reserve your true feelings for future reference.

If, on the occasion of your first call, the girl upon whom you have placed your young affections, looks like an iceberg, and acts like a quiet, cold wave, take your leave early and stay away. Woman in her hours of freeze is uncertain, coy and hard to please.

In cold weather finish saying good-night in the house. Don't stretch it all the way to the front gate if there is a front gate, and thus lay the foundation for future asthma, bronchitis, neuralgia and chronic catarrh to help you worry the girl to death after she has married you.

Don't lie about your financial condition. It is very annoying to a bride who has pictured for herself a life of luxury in your ancestral halls to learn too late that you expect her to ask a bald-headed parent who has been uniformly kind to her, to take you in out of the cold.

Don't be too soft. Don't say: "these little hands shall never do a stroke of work when they are mine," and "you shall have nothing to do in our home but to sit all day long and chirp to the canaries," as if any sensible woman could be happy fooling away valuable time in that sort of a style; and a girl has a fine retentive memory for the soft things and silly promises of courtship, and occasionally, in after years, when she is washing the dinner dishes or patching the west end of your trousers, she will remind you of them in a cold, sarcastic tone of voice.

UNCLE STEAD'S POOR WOMAN.

"Uncle Stead" is what they called a shrewd old gentleman who used to live in Winthrop, a little way out of the village, up the side of the pond, near Readfield. One of his fellow citizens was named Lovejoy. Uncle Stead met Lovejoy in the village one day, and he said to him: "Lovejoy, there's a poor woman lives out on the edge of the town that needs some provisions. I'm willing to supply her, but I've sold my horse and have no means of getting the stuff to her. Now, I'll buy her a ham and some other supplies if you'll carry them out to her with your team."

Lovejoy said certainly, he'd be very glad to do it. Accordingly, Uncle Stead bought a barrel of flour, a ham a bucket of sugar, &c., and, telling Lovejoy where the woman lived, sent him off on the errand of charity with the good things in his pungi.

Lovejoy easily found the house where the woman lived. He unloaded the goods, putting like a grampus as he rolled the barrel of flour in and said to the woman: "Mr. Steadman sent you the provisions. He's a mighty kind-hearted man to send you all these things."

"Well, I don't know why he should not send them to me!" exclaimed the woman in surprised accents. "He's my husband."

No woman will love a man better for being renowned or prominent. Though he be first among men, she will be prouder, not fonder. But give love attention, kindness, and there is no sacrifice she would not make for his content and comfort. It is a man's own fault if he is unhappy with his wife in nine cases out of ten. It is a very exceptional woman who will not be all she can to an affectionate and attentive husband.

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