

"Safe, safe, in my arms!" exclaimed Jones, as he alighted. "Now, beloved, all thy perils are over. Let me untwist the rope from your wrists. How it must have hurt you! That's it."

As the rope still hung out of the window without being pulled up by any one, it appeared probable to Jones that she had secured it to the bed-post, and thus escaped without the assistance or knowledge of any of her companions.

Nevertheless, he thought he discerned more than one face at the window, but it was too dark to be certain.

"But, how is this, dearest! you do not speak! You turn away your head; your form hangs heavily on my arms. Great Heaven! she has fainted; the exertion has been too much for her. Whatever shall I do?"

Jones began to be quite frightened. He had scarcely bargained for such a disaster as this.

How he would be able to lift her over the garden railings he hardly knew; and unless she revived, the prospect of supporting her weight (which was scarcely so light as he had expected) for an indefinite distance, was not pleasant.

However, there was no help for it so clasping her inanimate form, our poet hastened, or rather staggered, down the garden walk.

He had not proceeded far, when, his fair burden somewhat obstructing his view, he stumbled against some invisible obstacle (which we inform the reader in confidence was the handle of the garden roller).

Down he fell, his beloved Laura bounding from his arms with a sort of jerk, and falling head downwards on the gravelled path with a violence that could scarcely fall to do her some serious injury. Yet she uttered no exclamation.

"Oh, horror! could it be that she was killed instantaneously?"

As soon as he could Jones picked himself up, all bruised and shaking, his head all in a whirl, and his anguish indescribable.

"Oh, Laura! Laura!" he exclaimed, bending over her prostrate form.

When, as luck would have it, the moon emerged from behind a cloud, and shining down brightly on the scene, revealed a fact by which the poet was completely overwhelmed.

The dress was Laura's, and so were the boots, so was the mantilla; but the face—simply a paper mask, fixed on an old bonnet, the hands and gloves filled out with some soft material, the whole form—in short, Jones was about to clope with a lifesize doll, ingeniously constructed by Laura and her friend Netty out of a number of old clothes, and let down out of the window by means of the rope!

Byron Jones was aghast at the discovery. He thought at first his eyes deceived him; but no, the fact was only too evident; and, in addition, he heard an undoubted peal of laughter ringing in the air.

Looking up, he beheld the mirth-convulsed face of Laura and three of her companions, gazing at him from the window, and also that of Bob projected from the attic above them, and lighted up by a mischievous grin. Never was a "sell" more complete and heart-crushing.

Burning with vexation, the poet fled the scene, and tore his coat terribly through the rapidity with which he got over the front railings.

His passion was cured; but he perceived on reflection that, if Laura had acted cruelly, he, at least, had tempted her to do so by making himself ridiculous.

From that hour, not only did he never venture near Minerva College, but he addressed no more poetic epistles to "Lalla Rookh" (except a last farewell and that was a "stinger").

Furthermore, he soon left off "invoking the muse" altogether, doffed the Byronic collar and Greek cap, and gave himself up to the more solid studies of Messrs. Coddy's office.

The last time I heard of him he was getting a tolerable good practice as solicitor on his own account.

As for "Lalla Rookh," she did go to the Vale of Cashmere, but it was with her husband, Mr. Owen Wilford, who holds a lucrative Government situation in that poetic region.

An English medical journal gives warning against wearing green kid gloves, because physicians have found that the hands of those wearing gloves of this color soon become covered with an eruption difficult to cure, as the poison seems to enter the system. These gloves were dyed with arsenic, though not all green kids are so dyed, yet it is regarded safer to wear some other color.

"Susie," said a teacher to one of her pupils, "you shouldn't make faces.—You will grow up homely if you make faces." Susie looked thoughtfully into the teacher's face a moment, and then innocently asked:

"Did you make faces when you were a girl?"

If a young lady of twenty is attractive, how is it one who has "five twenties?" Would there be in such a case "sufficient bonds for a union?"

A promising young man is all very well; but better have a paying one.

ENIGMA DEPARTMENT.

All contributions to this department must be accompanied by the correct answer.

Enigma.

I am composed of twenty-one letters—My 21, 16, 3, 6, 17, 14, and 9 is an animal. My 3, 20, 3, 4, and 8 designates a certain portion. My 21, 7, 1, 11 and 20 is the name of a mount. My 21, 4, 11, 16, and 9, is an article of female dress. My 8, 12, 7, and 14, is a county in Ohio. My 18, 2, 15, and 13 is a small bird. My 10, 19, 5, 20, and 3, is a fold. My 17, 1, and 6, is a house of entertainment. My whole is the name of an American poet.

Answer to Geographical Enigma No. 1—
"The Conflagration of Moscow."

AN ABSURD ADVENTURE.

MARK TWAIN in his book entitled "Roughing it," gives a humorous account of the manner in which himself and two comrades were lost and how after traveling for some time in a circle they concluded to camp for the night. Plainly the situation was desperate. We were cold and stiff and the horses were tired. We decided to build a sage-brush fire and camp out till morning. This was wise, because if we were wandering from the right road and the snow-storm continued another day our case would be the next thing to hopeless if we kept on.

All agreed that a camp fire was what would come nearest to saving us, now, and so we set about building it. We could find no matches, and so we tried to make shift with the pistols. Not a man in the party had tried to do such a thing before, but not a man in the party doubted that it could be done, and without any trouble—because every man in the party had read about it in books many a time and had naturally come to believe it, with trusting simplicity, just as he had long ago accepted and believed that other common book-fraud about Indians and lost hunters making a fire by rubbing two dry sticks together.

We huddled together on our knees in the deep snow, and the horses put their noses together and bowed their patient heads over us; and while the feathery flakes eddied down and turned us into a group of white statuary, we proceeded with the momentous experiment. We broke twigs from a sage bush and piled them on a little cleared place in the shelter of our bodies. In the course of ten or fifteen minutes all was ready, and then, while conversation ceased and our pulses beat low with anxious suspense, Ollendorff applied his revolver, pulled the trigger and blew the pile clear out of the county! It was the flattest failure that ever was.

This was distressing, but it paled before a greater horror—the horses were gone! I had been appointed to hold the bridles, but in my absorbing anxiety over the pistol experiment I had unconsciously dropped them and the released animals walked off in the storm. It was useless to try to follow them, for their footfalls could make no sound, and one could pass within two yards of the creatures and never see them. We gave them up without an effort at recovering them, and cursed the lying books that said that horses would stay by their masters for protection and companionship in a distressful time like ours.

We were miserable enough, before; we felt still more forlorn, now. Patiently, but with blighted hope, we broke more sticks and piled them, and once more the Prussian shot them into annihilation. Plainly, to light a fire with a pistol was an art requiring practice and experience, and the middle of a desert at midnight in a snow-storm was not a good place or time for the acquiring of the accomplishment. We gave it up and tried the other. Each man took a couple of sticks and fell to chaffing together. At the end of half an hour we were thoroughly chilled, and so were the sticks. We bitterly execrated the Indians, the hunters and the books that had betrayed us with the silly device, and wondered dismally what was next to be done. At this critical moment Mr. Ballou fished out four matches from the rubbish of an overlooked pocket. To have found four gold bars would have seemed poor and cheap good luck compared to this. One cannot think how good a match looks under such circumstances or how lovable or precious, and as sacredly beautiful to the eye. This time we gathered sticks with high hopes; and when Mr. Ballou prepared to light the first match, there was an amount of interest centered upon him that pages of writing cannot describe. The match burned hopefully for a moment and then went out. It could not have carried more regret with it if it had been a human life. The next match flashed and died. The wind puffed the third one out just as it was on the imminent verge of success. We gathered together closer than ever, and developed solicitude that was rapt and painful, as Ballou scratched our last hope on his leg. It lit. Shading it with his hands, the old gentleman bent gradually down and every heart went with him—everybody, too, for that matter—and blood and breath stood still. The flame touched the sticks at last, took gradual hold upon them—hesitated—

took a stronger hold—hesitated again—

held its breath five heart-breaking seconds, then gave a sort of a human gasp and went out.

Nobody said a word for several minutes. It was a solemn sort of silence; even the wind put on a stealthy, sinister quiet, and made no more noise than the falling flakes of snow. Finally a sad-voiced conversation began, and it was soon apparent that in each of our hearts lay the conviction that this was our last night with the living. I had so hoped that I was the only one that felt so. When the others calmly acknowledged their conviction, it sounded like the summons itself. Ollendorff said:

"Brothers, let us die together. And let us go without one hard feeling toward each other. Let us forget and forgive bygones. I know that you have felt hard towards me for turning over the canoe, and for knowing too much and leading you around and around in the snow—but I mean well; forgive me. I acknowledge freely that I have had hard feelings against Mr. Ballou for abusing me and calling me a logarythm, which is a thing I do not know what, but no doubt a thing considered disgraceful and unbecoming in America, and it has scarcely been out of my mind and has hurt me a great deal—but let it go; I forgive Mr. Ballou with all my heart, and—"

Poor Ollendorff broke down and the tears came. He was not alone, for I was crying too, and so was Mr. Ballou. Ollendorff got his voice again and forgave me for things I had done and said. Then he got out his bottle of whiskey and said whether he lived or died he would never touch another drop. He said he had given up all hope of life, and although ill-prepared, was ready to submit humbly to his fate; that he wished he could be spared a little longer, not for any selfish reason, but to make a thorough reform in his character, and by devoting himself to helping the poor, nursing the sick, and pleading with the people to guard themselves against the evils of intemperance, make his life a beneficent example to the young, and lay his down at last with the precious reflection that he had not been living in vain. He ended by saying that his reform should begin at this moment, even here in the presence of death, since no longer time was to be vouchsafed wherein to prosecute it to men's help and benefit—and with that he threw away the bottle of whiskey.

Mr. Ballou made remarks of similar purport, and began the reform he could not live to continue, by throwing away the ancient pack of cards that had soled our captivity during the flood and make it bearable. He said he never gambled, but still was satisfied that the meddling with cards in any way was immoral and injurious, and no man could be wholly pure and blameless without eschewing them. "And therefore," continued he, "in doing this act I already feel more in sympathy with that spiritual sarnalia necessary to entire and obsolete reform." These rolling syllables touched him as no intelligible eloquence could have done, and the old man sobbed with a mournfulness not unmingled with satisfaction.

My own remarks were of the same tenor as those of my comrades, and I know that the feelings that prompted them were heartfelt and sincere. We were all sincere, and all deeply moved and earnest, for we were in the presence of death and without hope. I threw a way my pipe, and in doing it felt that at last I was free of a hated vice and one that had ridden me like a tyrant all my days. While I yet talked, the thought of the good I might have done in the world and the still greater good I might, *now* do, with these new incentives and higher and better aims to guide me if I could only be spared a few years longer, overcame me and the tears came again. We put our arms about each other's necks and awaited the warning drowsiness that precedes death by freezing.

It came stealing over us presently, and then we bade each other a last farewell. A delicious dreaminess wrought its web about my yielding senses, while the snow-flakes wove a winding sheet about my conquered body. Oblivion came. The battle of life was done.

I do not know how long I was in a state of forgetfulness, but it seemed an age. A vague consciousness grew upon me by degrees, and then came a gathering anguish of pain in my limbs and through all my body. I shuddered. The thought flitted through my brain, "this is death—this is the hereafter."

Then came a white upheaval at my side, and a voice said, with bitterness:

"Will some gentleman be so good as to kick me behind?"

It was Ballou—at least it was a towzled snow image in a sitting posture, with Ballou's voice.

I rose up and there in the gray dawn, not fifteen steps from us, were the frame buildings of a stage station, and under a shed stood our still saddled and bridled horses! An archen snow-drift broke up, now, and Ollendorff emerged from it, and the three of us sat and stared at the house without speaking a word. We really had nothing to say. We were like the profane man who could not "do the subject justice," the whole situation was so painfully ridiculous and humiliating that words were tame and

we did not know where to commence anyhow.

The joy in our hearts at our deliverance was poisoned; well-nigh dissipated, indeed. We presently began to grow pettish by degrees, and sullen; and then angry at each other, angry at ourselves, angry at everything in general, we moodily dusted the snow from our clothing and in an unsociable single file we plowed our way to the horses, unsaddled them, and sought shelter in the station.

I have scarcely exaggerated a detail of this curious and absurd adventure. It occurred almost exactly as I have stated it. We actually went into camp in a snow-drift in a desert, at midnight in a storm, forlorn and hopeless, within fifteen steps of a comfortable inn.

For two hours we sat apart in the station and ruminated in disgust. The mystery was gone, now, and it was plain enough why the horses had deserted us. Without a doubt they were under that shed a quarter of a minute after they had left us, and they must have overheard and enjoyed all our confessions and lamentations.

After breakfast we felt better, and the zest soon came back. The world looked bright again, and existence was as dear to us as ever. Presently an uneasiness came over me—grew upon me—assailed me without ceasing. Alas, my regeneration was not complete—I wanted to smoke! I resisted with all my strength, but the flesh was weak. I wandered away alone and wrestled with myself an hour. I recalled my promises of reform and preached to myself persuasively, upbraidingly, exhaustively. But it was all in vain, I shortly found myself sneaking among the snow-drifts hunting for my pipe. I discovered it after a considerable search, and crept away to hide myself and enjoy it. I remained behind the barn a good while, asking myself how I should feel if my braver, stronger, true comrades should catch me in my degradation. At last I lit my pipe, and no human being can feel meaner and baser than I did then. I was ashamed of being in my own pitiful company. Still dreading discovery, I felt that perhaps the further side of the barn would be somewhat safer, and so I turned the corner. As I turned the one corner smoking, Ollendorff turned the other with his bottle to his lips, and between us sat unconscious Ballou deep in a game of "solitaire" with the old greasy cards!

Absurdity could go no farther. We shook hands and agreed to say no more about "reform" and "examples to the rising generation."

Pat and the Pig.

A countryman killing a pig and not wishing to divide with his neighbor which was the custom of the country, said to the man (who by the way was a son of the Emerald Isle):

"Pat, if I give to the neighbors who have given to me, a piece of pork I will have none left for myself. Can you tell me what I am to do?"

"Be dead, sir," said Pat; "it's meself, sir, that can do the same thing."

"Good," said the countryman, rubbing his hands and looking at Pat. "Now, tell me what am I to do?"

"Faith, sir," said Pat, "sure and when the craythur is cleaned, just be after hanging it against the door where every mither's son of them will see it, and early in the morning before any one is about, get up and take in your pig and hide it away, and then when your neighbors come tell them the pig was stolen."

"Capital idea, Pat," exclaimed the countryman. "I'll do that, by St. George."

So when the pig was cleaned it was hung up outside the door so that the neighbors could see it. The countryman anxiously awaited the approaching night, and at last retired to bed but not to sleep. Pat under cover of the darkness of the night, crept around the house and stole the pig.

What was the astonishment of the countryman when at early dawn he arose to hide away his pig, but found no pig there can be better imagined than described. In the midst of his bewilderment, Pat came in with his usual "top o' the morning to you, sir," and giving him a knowing wink said:

"Masther, how about the pig?"

"Well, Pat, the pig was stolen in reality."

"Faith and that sounds just as natural as though you had lost your pig."

"But, you blockhead, I told you the pig was stolen."

"Faith and begorry, masther, the divil a bit o' me thought you could do so well. Just stick to that; it's as natural as life."

"By St. George," roared the now irate countryman. "I tell you the pig was stolen."

"Och! be jabers," says Pat, "stick to it and your neighbors will believe you, and divil a bit of it they'll get. Faith, I did not think you could do so well."

The baby oyster is not much bigger than a fair sized pin's head at the end of a fortnight, and at three months only of the size of a split pea. In a year he will become as large as an ordinary penny, and at the end of four years' growth he is fit for the market.

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