

AN ADAPTATION OF EXODUS.

Why There Were Many Plagues in the Captain's Quarters.

BY GWENDOLEN OVERTON.

To a certain sort of mind a saint is only to be known as a saint by the halo above his brow, and the Prince of Darkness himself would be devoid of identity without a pitchfork and cloven hoof. To such as these the knight-errantry of Drayton and Bartlett may seem problematical; but a knight-errant is one who succors beauty in distress, and who rides abroad redressing human wrongs. Whether he employs an obnoxious insect rather than a sword, as Drayton did, or whether he rides a S. C. government mule, as Bartlett was wont to do, is neither here nor there.

Bartlett was riding the aforesaid mule shortly after the time my story begins. He rode it up the line, its long gray ears wagging evenly and restfully, and came to a halt in front of the set of quarters where Drayton and his roomed. Drayton was sitting on the porch, his feet on the railing, his chair tipped back, and the visor of his cap pulled down on his nose. He pushed the cap to the back of his head as Bartlett came slowly up the steps.

"I wish you would get a horse," he complained. "If you could just realize the figure you cut on that old elephant!"

"That's a mule," corrected Bartlett, his arm around a pillar and letting his heels dangle as he perched on the railing. "It's also a very nice mule. It is no longer a shave-tail, but has reached years of discretion. The moment man or animal does that, his appreciative country straightway has him inspected and condemned. Horses may do for some, but not for one who has the duties of post quartermaster to perform. And, besides, I believe in the infantry and scorn a horse."

"The scorn," observed Drayton, "of the fox for the grapes."

"Don't rub it in," said Bartlett, dejectedly; "I'm miserable enough as it is."

"Thought you looked rather triste. I'm all sympathy. Go on."

Bartlett released his hold upon the pillar and folded his arms on his breast in an attitude combining stern endurance and precarious balance. "The Collines are going to rout the Lawrences out."

Now, the Collines were the family of Captain Collins—wife, mother-in-law on both sides, and three small children. They had that morning arrived in the post. Collins was in command of Troop L, which had been moved on some weeks before. If he had been well-disposed his entry should not have put the whole garrison, below his rank, in the throes of fear of a progressive "turning out." For there were empty quarters into which he might have moved exactly as well as not, and no one had been any the worse off.

"But Collins won't see it that way," Bartlett went on. "He ranks Lawrence, and his wife ranks him, you bet; and it's the wife and the mother-in-law who are going to have the Lawrences' set or bust."

"Throw them a few buckets of paint and calamine, by way of soap," Drayton ventured to suggest.

"Did," said Bartlett, briefly. "Offered them half the quartermaster's department, and a carpenter, and a blacksmith, and a farrier, too, if they happened to need one. Told them they could have any or all of the colors of paint in the rainbow, if they'd just be good—but those three Graces are going to have the Lawrences' house."

Drayton opined, with a little of the placidity, nevertheless, with which we all bear one another's burdens, that it was a very great and very profane shame. "There's that poor little woman with those little bits of kids, and just moved into those quarters, and got them all fixed up so prettily, and her garden started, too. Then, those Collines; they're a mean lot of cattle, anyway." He made a gesture of disgust, which turned the visor around over his left ear, and was silent for a minute through sheer wrath.

"I told Mrs. Lawrence they would be serpents on the wood cutter's hearth—"

"Serpents, now?" asked Bartlett; "they were cattle before; and you called that"—he pointed over his shoulder—"an elephant, whereas, in point of fact, it's a mule."

"I told her," continued Drayton, unmoved, "that it wouldn't pay. I know all about the Collines—served with them in Texas. I was sitting on Mrs. Lawrence's steps—I know that I usually am, so you can save yourself—I was sitting on her steps when the Collins outfit drove up. The ambulance stopped in front of the C. O.'s house, next door, and Collins jumped out and went in. The rest of them just waited. All would have been well if Mrs. Lawrence hadn't become tender-hearted in a most unnecessary way, and hadn't chosen to disregard any advice." He assumed the look of prophecy fulfilled. "I told her to sit still and not get excited and do something rash; gave her the benefit of my knowledge and experience. But it wasn't any use. She made me dry up and hang on to the kids, while she ran down to the ambulance and invited the whole caboodle to come in and rest and refresh themselves. They came. You can bet your life they came—or they wouldn't have been the Collines. I saw Dame C.'s weather eye taking in the house. I could see she liked it, and I knew there'd be trouble. Mrs. Lawrence kept them to luncheon—the whole seven of them. Asked me, too; but the kids were

raising Cain, and the abode of peace was transformed, so I lit out."

"Well, I guess she's sorry now—if that's any comfort to you. For the Collines are not only going to have those quarters, but they're going to have them quick. Even the C. O. got at Collins. But it wasn't any use. 'My wife likes the quarters,' says he. And that's all."

They sat in meditation for some time. Then Drayton spoke.

"I like those quarters, too. I'm going to have some of them myself," he said.

Bartlett did not understand, and Drayton undertook to explain.

"Well—see here." He took his feet down from the rail, in his earnestness, and straightened his cap. "It's like this. You and I have got one room each in this house, haven't we, same as the most of the other bachelors?" Such was the case. "And we're entitled to two rooms each, aren't we?" Bartlett agreed that they were. "And we've been keeping these ones because we've been too lazy and good natured to ask for more, haven't we? Well we won't be lazy and good natured any more. If the Collines move into the Lawrences' set, I'll vacate my room—turn it over to you—and I'll apply for the upstairs floor of the Lawrences house. Oh! I'm entitled to it, all right," he chuckled. "I know my rights as a citizen of these United States and as a first-lieutenant of cavalry. The Collines, the whole sweet seven of 'em, may have the lower floor. It's all they can claim under law. That's four rooms, including the kitchen. I dare say they won't mind living like that any way. They're pigs, too?"

"Pigs, too?" asked Bartlett.

Drayton went on unfolding his plan. "Once I have that top floor, you watch the interest in life I'll provide for them. I'll make their days pleasant and their nights—particularly their nights—beautiful. I'll have supper up their every evening, and do songs and dances until reveille, if I have to hypothesize to pay my commissary bill, and if my health breaks down. You watch!" He stood up and began to button his blouse. "So you are warned. If the Collines move in, such is my devotion to them that I'll move in, too. And I'll put in my formal application for those two rooms. No other two in the post will suit, either, you understand."

And it all came about exactly as he said. There was a heira of Lawrences and an ingress of Collines, and great was the latter's wrath when they found Drayton taking possession of the upper floor. They protested to everybody in general, and to the commandant and the quartermaster in particular. And the commandant and the quartermaster said they were sorry, but that Drayton was certainly within his rights. He had applied for the quarters in virtue of the general turning-out that D troop was causing in the post, and he was entitled to occupy them. There was nothing more to be said.

"I can't pretend to be sorry for them, exactly," Mrs. Lawrence confided to Drayton, when he advised her not to try to settle in her new quarters very elaborately; "I'm only human, after all, and my house did look so sweet, and my garden— But I'm sorry for you. I think those children are the very imps of evil."

Drayton nodded. "There are others," he said.

It was emigmatic, but Mrs. Lawrence looked doubtful and ready to be hurt. "You don't mean mine?" she said.

"No, my dear lady," Bartlett reassured her, "he doesn't mean yours. He thinks yours are all that tender infancy should be. I don't know what he does mean, however. And probably he doesn't know himself."

"Don't it?" queried Drayton, enigmatically still. "Don't I just?"

"Perhaps," said Bartlett, "you mean Jimmy O'Brien. I saw you hobnobbing with him today. Would it be Jimmy now?"

Drayton would not commit himself. But it was Jimmy and one other, nevertheless. Drayton had come upon him when he was playing duck-on-a-rock all by himself, near the sutler's store. The duck was a beer bottle, and Jimmy was pitching stones at it, with indifferent aim. The father of Jimmy was first-sergeant of Drayton's troop, and so the lieutenant felt they had enough in common to warrant a conversation.

It began by a suggestion as to a better way to throw a stone, and it ended with a bargain struck. "Then," said Drayton, "if I promise to pay you two bits for every centipede, four bits for every tarantula, ten cents for every lizard, a nickel for every toad and a cent for every big spider, you will catch all you can and bottle them for me?"

Jimmy nodded solemnly.

"And you won't say anything about it to any one?" A quarter was pressed into a chapped and grimy hand.

The very next morning before guard-mounting, he clambered up the stairway to Drayton's rooms. Drayton was only just dressing. He had kept late hours. Bartlett had helped him, and until 2 o'clock they had alternated pacing heavily to and fro with dropping weighty bodies on the floor.

The Collines were kept awake. "It's a question of endurance, because we are two," said Drayton; "but I expect we can hold out."

He inspected Jimmy's first catch.

There was a centipede, two lizards and three toads. Jimmy's pockets bulged with bottles. There were also five large and unpleasant spiders.

"Good boy," said Drayton, and paid as per schedule.

Mrs. Collins and the mother-in-law's nerves were not calmed, any way, by the wakeful night. It was the harder for them when they found three large toads in their rooms that day. To have a toad hop at you from a dark corner is not nice. It is still less to step on one and crush it. It gives a peculiar sensation. Mrs. Collins found it so. There was a lizard in the milk bottle, and another on the back of a chair, whence it climbed into a mother-in-law's hair. Big spiders infested the place.

Toward noon Drayton came downstairs carrying on the end of a pin, and examining it critically, a centipede. "Large, isn't it?" he asked, with some pride; "I killed it myself at the top of the stairs. They always come in families of three. The other two will be along pretty soon, I suppose."

The mother-in-law shuddered. "You and Mr. Bartlett made a great deal of noise last night, Mr. Drayton," she reproached.

Drayton looked concerned. These government quarters were so thin-floored, he explained.

"Did he always stay up until 2 o'clock?"

He admitted being of a restless disposition and given to insomnia.

"All right," he reported to Mrs. Lawrence, shortly after. "You just rest on your oars. We'll have you back in those quarters before the kids have had time to do much damage to the place. I should say that a fortnight, at the very outside, should see Mrs. Collins suing for another set—any other old set. Bartlett will let her have them. He's an exceptionally obliging Q. M., as Q. Ms. go. That's his reputation."

It did not run as smoothly as Drayton might have wished. The women of the Collins family did not surrender without giving fight. They attacked Drayton himself first, but were met with an urbanity which parried every thrust. It was the thinness of the walls and floors, and that was manifestly the government's fault. As for his insomnia, the blame of that lay with the doctor, he should think. He did not like staying broad awake until nearly dawn any better than they did. Of course, however, he would try to control his restlessness. The attempt met with failure, though, and the women appealed to the commandant. The commandant was urbane, too, but the insomnia of his officers was evidently not a matter to be reached officially.

It was plain that the insomnia aroused the suspicions of the Collines. But the insects did not. They had never—not even in Texas—seen a house so overrun with reptiles. There were lizards in every crevice. There were frogs and toads in dark nooks. They hopped into your lap when you were least expecting it. They were always getting under your feet and squashing. Spiders spun webs and dropped from the ceiling and the walls. And as for more venomous things! A day hardly passed that Drayton did not kill a tarantula or a centipede somewhere around. They seemed to emerge only when he was near. The wrath toward him was tempered with unwilling gratitude to a saviour. There had also been a garter snake on the front porch. And one terrible day they had come upon Drayton, sabre in hand, standing in the front hallway beside the decapitated body of a rattlesnake. They neglected, in the excitement, to notice that the body was not wriggling.

Jimmy had that morning produced a newspaper package. "Here's a dead rattler," he had said. "I didn't know as you could use him. But I found him, and you can have him for a dime."

And the rattler had proved the best investment of all, as well as the last straw. Captain Collins had carried him on a stick into the road. Then he had gone to the commandant and Bartlett. He was heavy-eyed for want of sleep. The whole family was that way; and Drayton was, too. In all humanity he asked the favor of being allowed to change his quarters. Any other quarters would do, provided there were fewer insects. He was not particular at all. He asked so little, in fact, that Bartlett took pity on him. He renewed his offer of paint.

"Now," he said to Mrs. Lawrence, "you can come back to your own. They'll move out tomorrow. I've just been inspecting the premises, and there hasn't been much harm done. They are still the best quarters in the post. The kids have knocked a few holes in the walls and the woodwork's a little scratched. But I'll give you some paint, too."

Paint was Bartlett's idea of the panacea for all earthly ills. He had hot much else in the world, being a second-lieutenant; but he had paint, and he was liberal with that.

The Collines moved next day. Drayton waited until the last load of furniture was gone, and the three women were taking their final look around. Then he came down the stairs, holding out, at the length of his arms, two centipedes on the point of two large pins. He exhibited them.

"These quarters are too much for me," he said, "I'd rather have a corner of a house-top alone, than a wide upper floor with crawling things. I'm going to go back to my own room."

A fierce light of suspicion broke in on Mrs. Collins' mind then. "I believe, Mr. Drayton, that the whole thing was a put-up job."

"Do you? Do you really?" asked Drayton, smilingly, deprecatingly.

"But consider, my dear lady, consider the centipedes."—San Francisco Argonaut.

FARM TOPICS

False Economy.

It has been demonstrated by practical men that it pays to feed grain liberally, and an animal that will not pay for such feeding is not profitable. Notwithstanding this, many farmers feed little or no grain, with the result that their stock is at a standstill through the winter. It has been my experience that the quicker young stock is brought to maturity the greater the profit. A thrifty yearling will bring a higher price than a small two-year-old and is of much more profit.

A Simple Device For Calves.

The sketch shows how I prevent my calves from crawling through a wire fence. Take a strong hard wood stick one and a half inches by five or six feet, according to size of calf. About fifteen to eighteen inches from one



A WAY TO KEEP CALVES AT HOME.

stick tie securely to side of calf's neck with a small rope, so that it will not slip off. The shorter end of stick should extend beyond the calf's head; the longest end drag on the ground. When the calf attempts to crawl between or under wire of fence the upper end of stick will be sure to catch hold of wire, and with the longest end of stick resting upon the ground it will be impossible for the calf to get through the fence. This device has the advantage of not interfering the least when the calf is grazing in the pasture or lying down to rest.—Lewis Olsen, in Farm and Home.

Dehorn Cattle Before Fly Time.

It is unnecessary and cruel to dehorn cattle during fly time. On general principles, the animals suffer more during warm weather than during cold, unless required to stay where they are exposed to storms during the winter months. The very best time to dehorn cattle is in early spring or late fall, say April or November. I do not find it necessary to apply any kind of dressing to the wound. Simply allow a blood clot to form, when healing will take place quickly.

I prefer using a clipper which cuts from all four sides at once. This will never crush the horn. Cut off the horn very close to the head, removing about one-quarter inch of the skin all around the base. If this is not done, the horn will grow again. On young animals it is necessary to cut even closer. In order to do a satisfactory job the operator must have had experience. He should stand in front of the animal while another person sets the clippers on the horn so carefully as to cut it off at the proper place. Remove the horn with a single stroke of the clippers. Care should be taken not to cut too close to the ear. In my first experience I cut too close and had to stop the flow of blood by applying a caustic.

I do not know of a single case of dehorning that ever proved fatal. The blood comes out in fine sprays, and it will stop in two or three hours. If it should continue, however, apply common saleratus. I have found it advisable never to stop the flow of blood unless life was in danger.—L. O. Folio, in Orange Judd Farmer.

Make Ready For Harvest.

To feel that we are ready for the harvesting of our grains and the laying time is such a great satisfaction, to say nothing of the wise saving of time, that it becomes a question that bothers me each year and I ask myself, as I see so many mowers standing near the blacksmith's shop and so many farmers rushing around at the eleventh hour after their dealer to order duplicate parts for their binders which, perhaps, were broken or badly cracked the year before, I ask myself "why this delay?" This occurs so frequently as to be an almost universal practice; and each season the farmer frets and worries lest his harvest will be ruined or at least he wastes a day loafing around waiting—when each hour may mean so much in the scale of profit and loss in his financial column. It pays for a man to own all the machinery possible if he is thrifty enough to give it care, and it surely doesn't pay his neighbor to be so.

One article that we have found to be almost invaluable which is not in general use here is the canvas for covering open stacks. A shower is so liable to catch us at this time and if it looks "threatening" the farmer may "turn in" at night and rest peacefully as it is but the work of a few minutes to stretch the canvas over the stack. Where the grain or hay is put at once under cover its use is still important, for loaded wagons may be placed side by side and then protected. We bought a large one about nine years ago, at a cost, I think of \$11, and I can vouch for their worth and wear. Ours would still be doing duty if it were not (let every one take warning and say little about owning one) for the borrowers. We loaned ours for the saving of our neighbor's crop, which we are glad to do; that was a legitimate use, but after awhile the demand was so frequent that it was soon past using for a stack cover. I would urge every farmer to get ready before hand and lend only when good judgment sanctions.—Alberta Mullin Kepper, in The Epitomist.

THE REALM OF FASHION.

New York City.—Pale colors in soft wool crepes and albatross are exceedingly fashionable for little girls, and make most satisfactory frocks. The



GIRL'S COSTUME.

very pretty May Manton model shown of the latter material in pastel pink, with chemisette and undersleeves of white India silk, trimming of a simple cream applique, belt and bows of black velvet ribbon, but the design will be found adapted to various fabrics, lawn, batiste and the like, as well as simple childish silks.

The foundation for the waist is a fitted lining that closes at the centre front. On it are arranged the full front

and five-eighth yard of velvet for sailor collar and stock.

Chain Buttons.

The following method is employed to keep the pouched fulness of a blouse front from spreading unbecomingly from side to side. Where the folds are drawn down to their narrowest the cloth or silk is held together at the middle by a couple of gilt buttons linked by a few inches of gilt chain. The disposition of the pouched front below the waist gives trouble to some dressmakers and amateurs, as it should not protrude too much. The fulness should be carefully diminished below the waist, as you do not want to carry a bump of lace or satin as the finish of the pouched front.

Flower Designs in Jewels.

The most charming things are to be seen in flower designs in jewels. One pin, which is particularly attractive, is in violets, two of the blossoms, one white and one blue, the blue in sapphires, the white in diamonds and the stem in emeralds. The little diontra, bleeding hearts, one of the pretty drooping branches of the flowers very much reduced in size, is a charming little pin in enamel.

Some Stylish Coats.

Very coarse white serge coats are stylish; so are coats of a finer serge, and cream alpaca coats sometimes have yokes of lace or net. A stylish cream alpaca coat is trimmed with band and revers of black taffeta. Frenchwomen are wearing stylish little rose-colored coats with a semi-tailor-made effect, in three-quarter length.

Kimona Dressing Sacque.

Ease and relaxation are well understood by all the Oriental races, and nerve-driven American women are



A FAVORITE FANCY WAIST.

and the waist, which is tucked and joined to a square yoke and finished with a novel and becoming collar. The sleeves include snug portions beneath which the soft full cuffs make a charming effect. The skirt is slightly circular, with a flounce at the lower edge, and is tucked to form a hip yoke, but is laid in inverted pleats at the back. Both it and the waist are peculiarly adapted to girlish figures and fall in soft folds below the tucks.

To cut this costume for a girl eight years of age six and an eighth yards of material twenty-one inches wide, four and a half yards thirty-two inches wide, or three and three-quarter yards forty-four inches wide, will be required, with one yard twenty-one inches wide for chemisette and undersleeves, four and a half yards of insertion and one-quarter yard of all-over lace for collar as illustrated.

Woman's Fancy Waist.

The waist with the open front is a favorite, and promises to remain such. The excellent May Manton model illustrated in the large engraving is suited both to the odd bodice and the entire costume and to almost the entire range of dress materials, crepe de Chine, albatross and similar light-weight stuffs. As shown, it is of foulard, showing white figures on a soft gray ground, and is trimmed with panne velvet, cream lace and tiny jeweled buttons, the full front and undersleeves being of white chiffon.

The foundation is a fitted lining that closes at the centre front. On it are arranged the plain back and the full fronts. The full, soft front is attached to the lining at the right side, being included in both shoulder and neck seams, and is hooked over onto the left side. The fronts proper are finished with a big ornamental collar and close invisibly at the centre. The sleeves are novel and a feature. The upper portion is plain and fits smoothly, but the lower edge is slashed to form straps, that are velvet-trimmed, and between which the undersleeves are seen in soft, full puffs, while the extreme edge is finished with a band of lace. At the neck is a stock of the velvet with a band of lace en applique.

To cut this waist for a woman of medium size four yards of material twenty-one inches or twenty-four inches wide, or two and five-eighth yards forty-four inches wide, with one and a half yards of mousseline or chiffon for full front and undersleeves,



KIMONA DRESSING SACQUE.

wisely adopting their negligee garments, among which no one is more popular than the short Kimona. While by no means an exact replica of those worn by the Japanese, it includes all the essential features and makes an ideal dressing sacque. The May Manton model illustrated is admirable in every way and is well adapted to many materials. The original is made from Japanese cotton crepe with a band of plain colored Japanese silk, but flowered muslins and dimities are pretty for warm days. French and Scotch flannel and flannelettes are excellent for cooler weather, and still handsome; sacques can be made of figured Oriental or foulard silks. The yoke is perfectly smooth and extends over the shoulders at the front. The skirt portion is simply gathered and sealed to its lower edge, while a band extends round the entire garment, making a finish. The sleeves are loose and flowing, with slight fulness at the shoulders.

To cut this Kimona for a woman of medium size four yards of material twenty-one inches wide, three yards

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twenty-seven inches wide, or two and three-quarter yards thirty-two inches wide, will be required, with one and three-quarter yards in any width for bands.

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