Eloise's Inheritance.

It was a bitter night in November, a promise of a cold, dreary winter to come, when two gentlemen, some thirty-eight or forty years old, sat over wine and cigars in a luxurious room in an uptown boarding house, in New York city. One, the youngest of the couple, had landed a few hours before from a European steamer, and had been telling traveller's tales to his companion, far into the night hours.

"Rich?" he said in answer to a question. "No, but little richer than when I left here. But I have gained experience and knowledge in my Paris life. There is nothing like French schools and hospitals for a doctor. Bert, I would not take thousands of dollars and miss the last four years."

"But you are glad to come home, Cyrus?"

"Home?" said Cyrus Worthington, with a short, bitter laugh. "This is my home, a room in a boarding house, and I chose this because you were here, my old friend and chum."

"But your relatives?"

"I do not know of one. Doctor Worthington took me from a charity school when I was six years old, because I had a curious variation of scarlet fever he wished to study at leisure. I was an odd child, smart and active, and before the fever was cured he became fond of me and adopted me. We must have been a strange pair, Bert—the old bachelor, wrapped up in his profession, and the elfish, half-starved foundling. But we were very happy. Until I went to Harvard, where we met, my benefactor educated me himself, and I devoured books. I had no one to love, and books filled the craving of my heart, so I studied everything before me, including the medical works in the library. You won't believe me, I suppose, if I tell you I could use a dissecting knife before I was twelve years old."

"I do not doubt it. We all considered you a prodigy of learning at Harvard. By the way, how did you ever come to leave the doctor for college?"

"He desired it, distrusting his own powers of tuition after I passed seventeen. When I came home, as you know, I became his partner and assistant until he died, leaving me thirty thousand dollars, and I fulfilled my lifelong desire and went to Paris."

"Was that all that drove you to Paris? No love dream, no fair companion on the steamer?"

"None. I am heart-whole at thirty-eight. Can you say as much?"

"Not I. My heart is as full of holes from Cupid's dart as a skimmer. My last love, though, is the sweetest maiden that ever won a heart with soft eyes and golden curls. You shall see her. In all your travels you have seen no fairer face than Eloise Hunter's."

Over Cyrus Worthington's face came a startled look that was almost terror.

"Eloise Hunter," he cried: then added, with a forced carelessness, "it is a pretty name. Who is she?"

"The daughter of my landlady. Did I not mention her name when I wrote you I had secured rooms for you here?"

"No."

"Well, that is her name. She is the widow of one Daniel Hunter, who died, leaving her without one dollar, having squandered her fortune as well as his own. Not a bad man, I judge, but one who was wildly reckless in using money. Well, he is dead, and his widow keeps this house!"

"And this daughter— how old is she?"

"Nineteen or twenty, I should judge. She is so little and fair she looks like a child. You are tired, Cy."

"Very tired."

"You are as pale as death. I will leave you to rest. Pleasant dreams."

Pale as death, and with his large, dark eyes full of startled light, Cyrus Worthington paced the floor after his friend retired.

"It is fate!" he muttered. "Destiny. What accident could throw that girl across my path three hours after landing in New York?

Eloise, only daughter of Daniel Hunter. It makes me dizzy to think. If after all, I am to grasp what I have coveted for years! Patience, patience!"

He paced the room for hours, till the gray dawn crept in at the window, when he threw himself upon the bed for a few hours' repose. A man of iron will, of steady nerve, he had been assailed by the strongest, fiercest temptation of his life, and he awakened only to renew the mental conflict.

A late breakfast was presided over by a pale woman about forty, his landlady, but there was no sign yet of Eloise. Feverishly desirous to see her, to form some estimate of her from his own observations, Cyrus Worthington lingered in the house all day.

He was a man who once having resolved upon any course of action, could not be turned aside by trivial or by weighty opposition, and he had resolved to marry Eloise Hunter, never having seen her face or heard her voice. So with this purpose in his heart, he threw all other considerations to the wind, and waited to make the first move in this game of life, for two.

Educated, as he had said himself, by a man whose soul was wrapped up in his profession, the scholar had absorbed much of the teacher's enthusiasm. But, while Doctor Worthington looked steadily at the nobler aims of his profession, the power to alleviate suffering, to aid mankind, Cyrus loved it for its more abstruse investigation, its scientific scope, its broad field of self-aggrandizement. To make a name in the medical and scientific world, by some new work of value, to be known as the great Doctor Worthington, was the end of all his study and research. But his ambition was second to his avarice. Not for money itself but for control of the luxuries money will procure, he longed for wealth: not merely comfort, that his own income secured, but riches, power to live in a palace with scores of servants, with luxury in every appointment, and money to spend freely in the pursuit of those scientific studies for which he had derived all his dreams of fame.

A man in perfect health, who had never injured an iron constitution by an excess of hard, keen intellect and strong will, he was a dangerous wooer for fair Eloise Hunter, a lily in her fair, sweet beauty, with a delicate constitution, timid to a fault, and modest as a violet.

He was in the drawing room in the afternoon, reading a novel, half hidden by the folds of a curtain, when he saw a lady coming across the soft carpet, who he felt sure must be Eloise Hunter. Small as a child of fourteen, exquisitely fair, with a wealth of golden curls that crept from a low, broad brow, a sweet, childlike mouth, and purely oval face, she was as lovely a vision of girlhood as ever a man's eyes rested upon.

Yet Cyrus Worthington, studying the face, unseen himself, thought only,—"How weak, timid, easily influenced!"

Not one thought of the wrong he was to do her dawning womanhood troubled him. Whatever scruples of conscience had troubled his night's vigils were all crushed under the iron heel of his will, and there was no thought now of turning back from this purpose. While his eyes still rested upon her face, Eloise opened the piano, and from the little taper fingers flowed the music that comes by divine gift, the outpouring of inspiration. It moved even Cyrus Worthington, no mean judge of the wondrous execution of the girl's fingers, or the power of her genius. From a heart full of sadness came wailing melodies, melting into dying cadences, full of tearful meaning; then slowly there gathered on the sweet lips an intense smile of wondrous radiance, and the minor passages were changed to tender, rippling airs, happy as an infant's smiles, till some glorious chords of grand harmony completed this true maiden's dream.

It was evidently holiday work, for with a sigh Eloise took a book of alarming-looking exercises from the music rack, and began to practice in real earnest.

Cyrus Worthington drew further back in the folds of the curtain, and resumed his novel. An hour flew by, and then Mrs. Hunter came in.

"Five o'clock, Eloise, and pitch dark. Are you practising properly in the dark?"

"I know these lessons by heart, mamma," the girl answered in a low, sweet voice, with a shade of weariness in the tone.

"Don't waste time, darling," the mother said anxiously; "you know I cannot pay for many lessons, and next year you must try to find scholars."

"I wish you would let me help you more," was the reply; "it seems wicked for me to be studying and practising while you have so much care and work."

"You will help me soon. But I want you to be independent, Eloise. I may die, and you could not run this great house, but you could teach. Go upstairs now; the gentlemen will be coming in soon to dinner."

"Did the boarder come last night?"

"Doctor Worthington? Yes, dear! Mr. Loring tells me he is a great physician, author of some medical books, and wonderfully skillful. He is well off, too!"

"Oh, mamma, if he could help that pain!"

"No, dear, no, we will not trouble him with our aches and pains. There, dear, run up stairs; I will send Maggie for you when I eat my dinner."

Then the parlor was empty, for Cyrus sauntered off to his own room when Mrs. Hunter and her daughter were gone.

He was not many days an inmate of Mrs. Hunter's house before he discovered that it was not that lady's policy to parade her daughter to her boarders. The girl lived like a nun, in her own room nearly all day, practising at an hour when the gentlemen were away, and the ladies lying down, or out.

Yet with his resolve in full force, Cyrus Worthington contrived to see Eloise very frequently. He would bend his great dark eyes upon her face, and hold her fascinated for hours by the eloquence with which he spoke of music, of poetry, of all the girl-soul worshipped. He drew from her the story of the pain her mother suffered around her heart, and delicately offered professional service, where his skill availed to bring relief, thus making one step by winning the gratitude of mother and child.

But while his own heart knew no more now than before the sweetness of love, he read in Eloise's eyes none of the emotion he hoped to kindle there. Heart-whole himself, he had not been without conquests in his selfish life. Women had owned the magnetic power in his great, dark eyes, his rich voice, the winning eloquence of his tongue. Belles whose conquests were of well known number had let him read the love he wakened in their eyes and flirts had owned themselves beaten at their own game.

Yet this shy violet, this little recluse, liking him well, gave him no part in her heart.

One word from Bert Loring, one glance of his blue eyes, would call up flying blushes to the fair cheeks that all Cyrus Worthington's eloquence failed to bring there.

But Bert, though older than his friend, had been an unsuccessful man. A poet by the gift of God, he was almost a pauper by the non-appreciation of man. Just the tiniest patrimony kept him from actual want, but though he had a hall room at Mrs. Hunter's, his boots were often shabby, his clothes well worn, and his purse lamentably slender.

And Mrs. Hunter seeing Doctor Worthington in her best room, prompt in payment, faultless in costume, with a certainty of thirty thousand dollars, and a possibility of greater wealth, in the practice of his profession, encouraged his attentions to Eloise, frowning upon poor, loving Bert, who, in spite of his jests about his well-riddled heart, gave the young girl true, loyal love.

It was the old, old story, and Eloise, torn by her filial affection and her girl love, was growing pale and wan as the winter wore away. There was no coercion: Mrs. Hunter loved the only child of her heart too well for that; but loving her she could not give her to poverty and Bert Loring, and one day when Bert pleaded his cause she told him,—

"Doctor Worthington asked me this morning to give Eloise. I like you, Bert. You are dear to me as a son, but we must think of the child above all. You know how dreamy, sensitive, and helpless Eloise is. You know that hard work would be murder for her. She lives in her music, her books,"—

"And her love! She loves me," interrupted poor Bert, a boy yet in many tender phases of his nature.

"And you, loving her, would you see her toiling, slaving, starving, as a poor man's wife?"

"You put it harshly."

"I put it truly. While I can keep this house up you are welcome to a home here, but any day I may die. These heart spasms mean a certain death some day, Bert. Then where are you to take Eloise?"

"I will work for her."

"Work first, then, and woo her afterward. My poor Bert, you are too like her to marry her. Could I but give you wealth, you could live in a poet's paradise, you and Eloise, never growing old, two grown-up children. But we are all poor. Do not torture her, you who love her. Go away and let Doctor Worthington win her."

"She will never love him."

"Not if you are here."

"I will go then. You will let me tell her?"

"Why? It will only make her life harder, if she thinks you suffer. I will never force her to marry. But—if Doctor Worthington can win her, I tell you frankly, it will make me very happy."

So Bert—honest, loyal Bert—for his very love's sake, turned his face from his love and went to another city, where he was offered a position as assistant editor upon a magazine, that was to be a fortune in the future, but in the present was rather a log on the necks of the proprietors.

And Eloise, wondering at Bert's desertion, knew all the sunlight was gone from her life when he said farewell. There had been no secret in Bert's parting with his friend. Frankly he had told him his hope, love and despair, and pathetically implored him to cherish Eloise lovingly, if he could win her love.

Even while he spoke, Cyrus Worthington knew that this love would never come to answer his wooing, knew that one word of his could flood two lives with happiness, yet kept silence. In the days that followed, when he wooed the fair, pale girl, tenderly, devotedly, no pang of remorse wrung his heart, though he knew he trod carefully upon all loving flowers of hope in hers. He was a man who could have seen his own mother writhe in agony, if by her torture he could have wrung one new fact for science, and in the scheme of his life the heart-pangs of a girl counted for less than nothing.

And while he courted the unwilling love patiently and gently, Mrs. Hunter, with her failing health, her pale face and weary step, pleaded eloquently in her very silence. A home of rest for her mother was what Eloise had been promised in delicate words that could not be resented as a bribery.

"Your dear mother may live for years in a quiet house, but this constant care and toil is killing her!"

So, little by little, wearing out the young heart's constancy by steady perseverance, Cyrus Worthington won Eloise for his wife. She told him she did not love him, but knowing nothing of Bert's spoken love to her mother, she kept her maiden secret folded close in her own heart, and whispered nothing of her love for Bert. If on her wedding day her white, drawn face was corpse-like in its forced composure, what cared Cyrus Worthington for that? He had won his game.

Only one week after his wedding day, leaving Eloise with her mother, he wended his way to the office of a leading lawyer and asked for an interview.

"You were lawyers for Gervase Hunter?" he asked.

"We were."

"You are aware that he died in Paris last September?"

"Our business has not required correspondence since that time."

"I was his physician, and to me he committed the care of all his papers, his will among the number."

"H'm, making you his heir?"

"No, sir, making his nephew's only child heiress to his wealth, nearly a million, I understand.

"Nearly double that sum. You will leave the papers?"

"Assuredly, and Mrs. Hunter's address. Miss Hunter became my wife one week ago. I leave you the address of my assistant in Paris, the lawyer who drew up the will, and the witness, that you may ascertain that all is correct."

And, unheeding the lawyer's keen, scrutinizing looks, Cyrus Worthington bowed himself out of the office.

"A bold game," the lawyer muttered; "he has played his cards well."

And while he spoke there was a noise in the street, a rush of many feet, a clattering fall.

"A scaffolding on the house next door has given way," a clerk cried with a white face, "and there are men killed. Nine or ten, they say."

Nine or ten bricklayers, masons, carpenters, and one gentleman who had been passing by, and in whose face the lawyer recognized the features of his late visitor.

Dead, with his scheme complete. Dead, with the road to his ambition, gold-strewn, open before him. Dead, with his hand upon the wealth he had planned to win. Dead!

They carried him home to his young wife, and tenderly broke the truth to her. Even in the first shock she felt her heart recoil when the lawyer told her of the errand completed two minutes before her husband's death. She had not loved him, but had she never known his baseness she could have mourned a kind friend lost.

It was two years before Bert came to share her home, to fill the paradise her mother had painted. But in their happiness they gave Cyrus Worthington's name the charity of silence. Never is it spoken by the wife he deceived or the friend he wronged.—Waverley Magazine.

MONT ST. MICHEL'S STORY.

How the Abbey Has Come to Be Not Like Other Abbeys.

Mont St. Michel has the romantic air. It suggests Dumas and Scott. Its history is a romance, but it was curious to learn that the first monks did not settle there because of a position I thought too obviously, even ostentatiously made for monks. When they came, Mont St. Michel was not an island "in the peril of the sea," but rose in the midst of a great forest, with a Roman road leading through it to the hill where the Romans had long before worshipped Jupiter and the Druids had long before that set up their mystic stones. It was after the Christian hermits had been there a couple of hundred years, and Aubert, bishop of Avranches—the white city you see with its towers glistening in afternoon sunlight, on the hills across the sands—was busy building the shrine to St. Michael, that one day (it was early in the eight century) there was a terrific trembling of the earth, and out at sea the tide rose, as never before in the memory of man. It swept in over woodland and village, and when it swept out again there was no forest; Mont St. Michael and Tombelaine near by were the only dry spots of land in a vast bay; the hills of the Contentin were far to the east, those of Brittany as far to the west. Northward was the open sea, never before seen by the monks from their hilltop. Southward the sands stretched toward Poutorson.

Had there been no earthquake and rising of the waters, the story of Mont St. Michel would be very like that of any other medieval abbey in France; the story of saintly monks and wonders, of shrines and pilgrimages of piety expressed in noble architecture, of love of art and learning of increasing wealth and power and abuse of it, of reform and revived ardor and fresh release, and finally the revolution. Only Mont St. Michel answered too well as a prison to be destroyed. And when jailers and prisoners had got done with it enough was left to be turned into a national monument in 1870.

But if the monks were like all other monks, their abbey was by no means like all other abbeys, either in its architecture or as a fortress. When the other abbeys increased in importance, and the monks in number, new courts and cloisters were added, more ground covered. But at Mont St. Michel, after burrowing down into the heart of the rock, there was nothing to do but to build upward and ever upward, to pile story upon story, until the abbey, springing higher and higher heavenward, became everywhere visible to the people on the mainland. —From Elizabeth Robins Pennell's "In the Peril of the Sea" in the Century.

Athletes and Consumption.

There must be no exercise as exercise for the consumption patient. If you are able and feel like it, amuse yourself, but don't take exercise to build your system up. I know, I, you have heard those stories about men given up to die, who began work in a gymnasium and by violent exercise entirely recovered their health. . . . When the lung tissue is attacked by tuberculosis it heals, if it heals at all, by this fibrous scar-material filling in the cavity. No new lung tissue is formed to replace what has been lost, and this scar material is useless for breathing. Suppose you had a deep cut in your hand and you kept working that hand violently, how long do you think it would take the cut to heal? When exercise is taken or you "expand the lungs," you have to work the lung tissue just as you work your hand, and if it is wounded there will be a much larger proportion of scar material useless for breathing when it does get well.—Everybody's Magazine.

WHY SOLDIERS DESERT.

UNITED STATES REGULARS IN GARRISON A SENTIMENTAL LOT.

Music May Start an Epidemic of Deserting Among Them—Deadly Work of a Zither in the Philippines —Love and Grief Other Causes of Desertions.

An old sergeant of the regular army now stationed at a New York harbor post, who fought the Sioux under Crook and Custer, helped to chase the 'Pache Kid and did his trick in the Philippines at the beginning of the row down there, recently delivered himself of some of his own observations on the desertion question. He has soldiered in more than 50 posts and has known battalions of deserters.

"There are plenty of reasons besides those given by the boss soldiers in their reports behind desertions from the army," said the old sergeant. "I am not speaking of present conditions, but of desertions in normal years.

"In the first place, desertions become epidemic in certain posts, and when one of these deserting epidemics gets to going nothing can stop it short of switching the whole outfit to another post. Some years ago one of these deserting epidemics began at Fort Sheridan, near Chicago, and inside of less than three months nothing but the skeleton of the command was left. They quit in squads and sets of fours, good men as well as roughs and no-accounts.

"That epidemic was started by a layout of bad and unpopular officers. One domineering or unjust officer in a post can cause more desertions than bad rations or crucifying fatigue duty. I once knew a little runt of a shavetail just out from West Point to cause 32 men from one cavalry troop, stationed in Arizona, to jump the outfit two months after he'd joined.

"The deserting epidemics are started by causes that would seem mighty trivial to outsiders who do not know what an emotional, not to say absolutely sentimental, lot soldiers in garrisons are. The minds of soldiers in garrison are easily played and preyed upon, and when a few of them happen to go up in the air at the same time the thing becomes infectious, like getting religion at a campmeeting. For example, there are always more desertions from the army around the holiday season than at any other time.

"There used to be a very widespread, but hopelessly erroneous, idea among American army officers that the presence of a band in a post contributed to the contentment of the men and made the wabbly ones less liable to desert. That idea's been punctured. It is well known now that the military band, instead of keeping men from deserting, actually causes many of them to desert.

"The music gets at the hearts of the impressionable fellows and it tells a plenty of them that they are making hashes of their lives by sticking to the uniforms of the buck army private. Next time you get a chance just watch the what's-the-use expression on the faces of the soldiers listening to an evening band concert, and you'll get a better understanding of what I mean.

"Soldiers in barracks are, in fact, queerly affected by music, particularly music of the moving and tender sort. For instance, we had a trig outfit of moderately contented and fairly healthy men in the little Luzon settlement in the Philippines where we were quartered, until a fellow with a zither joined the company.

"He was a windjammer—trumpeter, that is to say—from French Canada; and when he transferred to our fit out he brought his zither, a big concert-grand instrument from Austria, along with him. The things that that French-Canadian boy could do to and with that big zither were certainly sinful, not to say devilish, and even us old relics of the bucking-and-gagging days had to either duck out of the sound of the kid's music or find ourselves gulping and choking a lot.

"He'd spread the thing out on his bunk o' nights between supper and tattoo and he'd no sooner make the first swipe at the strings and work in the tremolo stuff than the boys 'ud knock off gassing and begin to look serious and thoughtful. Every once in a while while that zither music was going on you'd see some fellow a burly ruffian as like as not slinking out so's not to make a show of himself before the outfit.

"Less than two weeks after that boy with the zither began those nightly performances we had 12 men in the hospital, down with nothing else in the world but nostalgia, which means homesickness. And if you ever picked up the notion that Nostalgia as it is called, is merely a harmless and boobyish disease, I'll mention that two of those 12 men died of it. The boy with the zither put it away then and never played on it again until we were on our way home on the transport—and then it didn't matter; the boys were coming home.

"The well educated men who drift into the American army cause desertion a lot. Nine out of ten of these well educated men are failures in civil life, in spite of their good education, and nine cases out of ten they are perfectly useless as soldiers. Almost without exception they are grouchy, grumpy kickers and knockers.

"When they find themselves in the army with little show of getting out again without deserting, the majority of them choose that alternative. Those that stick through their enlistments develop into barrack room chaw bacons, and make the other chaps discontented, and then the desertions begin.

"The reappearance in the post of a former member of the outfit, decked out in happy mufti rags and exhibiting other evidences of prosperity, always has the effect of creating such envious discontent that desertions result from that slight and foolish cause.

"I belonged to a troop once that was stationed at the Presidio of San Francisco. One of our men, a bright fellow with a pleasing way about him, and a skilful and inveterate gambler, caught on as a man faro dealer in a big San Francisco gambling house at the windup of his second enlistment. It was not long before he had an interest in the business himself, and he made money fast.

"All togged out in expensive clothes and wearing diamonds, he used to drive out to the Presidio behind a fast and stylish pacer, in a trig and tidy trap with yaller running gear. Well, after a few months, the commanding officer of the Presidio had to request that ex-swaddie, as a special favor, to cease his visits at the post. Desertions by the dozen were traced to those visits.

"The bunch would look their exmate over and get ambitious all of a sudden. If he had made such a rattling good job of it in civil life, why couldn't they, too—or, at any rate, make some sort of a stab at it? They went out of Presidio gate, not to come back any more, in sets of fours, just because they had seen the visible prosperity of a man who had formerly bunked under the same roof with them.

"The death of a cherished officer, or even of a very popular enlisted man, is often liable to start an epidemic of desertions. In the far northwest, at a dinky little two-troop post, there died a first lieutenant who was enormously prized by the enlisted men. This officer died of too much drink. He was a fine man and a splendid soldier—never was a better soldier man anywhere—but the drink had him, and it took him. The men, though, didn't think any the less of him for that, although they all felt pretty sorry for him, for the drink was a thing that had got beyond him.

"Often, when he was officer of the day, and I was humping my guard post in the middle of the night, I've taken that officer to his quarters—led him quiet-like by the arm, and him not saying a word, but just submitting like a young 'un. He'd be prowling around the post in the dark, dazed, and not able to take care of himself.

"But he was a fine man—a grand athlete, too, until the drink sapped him—and one time he put it on to us bucks of the barracks, and fought our battles in the teeth of the old man—and always won, too. He wouldn't stand for anybody imposing on us, and——Well, as near as men can go to loving a man, I guess us fellows loved that good man and square officer.

"Pretty gimpy layout, we were, son, when we scraped out a hole in the hardfrozen ground for that one, and tossed him into it, and fired the volley over him, and listened to the blubbering wind of a windjammer sounding taps. The desertions began the next day.

"They missed him. They said that the post was not only lonesome, but uncanny without him. When, a month later, the fit-out was shifted to the southwest, we were not much more than one troop, instead of two—and the cashing in of an officer with the heart and the gizzard of a sure enough man was the cause of it.

"And, talking of the transferring of outfits, that, too, has got to be taken into consideration as a cause, and, in the aggregate, a big cause for desertions. Men who enlist in a certain part of the country for service in that same section don't like to make a long shift to a different part with another climate. More desertions result from the shifting about of regiments than ever appear in the figures.

"Soldiers that get mixed up with women outside the post gates are particularly liable to desert when their outfits are ordered away. The soldier rarely has the funds to pay the woman's way to the new station, and he doesn't feel like leaving her, and so there's only one thing left, and that is to duck."—New York Sun.

A Plain Question.

While stumping the state during the last gubernatorial campaign Gov. Frazier of Tennessee entered the office of a village hotel, where he discovered a corpulent German seated at a table writing. Suddenly the Teuton paused in his task, frowned, scratched his head, chewed the end of his pen and looked so disconcerted that Mr. Frazier good-naturedly asked:

"My friend, can I be of any service to you?"

"Yah," was the prompt and relieving reply: "Blease tell me vedder you puts an' 'e' behindt 'before'?"

It was several seconds before the affable candidate grasped the man's meaning and gave the desired information.—Baltimore Sun.

Gave the Bride His Umbrella.

Congressman Perkins was in the office of a friend, a Justice of the Peace, when a couple came in to be married, says the Christian Register. After the ceremony the Justice accepted a modest fee and handed the bride an umbrella as a present.

Mr. Perkins looked on gravely and asked:

"Do you always do that, Charles?"

"Do what? Marry them? Oh, yes."

"No. I mean bestow a present on the bride."

"A present? Why, wasn't that her umbrella?" gasped the Justice.

"No; it was mine," replied the Congressman sadly.

The swiftest sailing ship in the world is the American full-rigged steel ship Erskine M. Phelps.

GALL'S THE THING.

In this life's unceasing battle with its racket and its rattle, with its gab and tittle-tattle,
Love and hate,
When its winning and reverses, when its blessings and its curses, when its fat and empty purses
Alternate
When at chances you are nabbing, into every scheme are dabbing and at every root are grabbing
Lest you fail,
Though you've the power to face the racket underneath your business jacket, you must have a force to back it:—
Which is gall.
—Denver Post.

JUST FOR FUN

"What platform does that political speaker favor?" "The lecture platform, chiefly."—Washington Star.

Bacon—"He went to the fancy dress ball in a costume made of old letters." Egbert—"Sort of a suit of mail, eh?"—Yonkers Statesman.

Redhorse Dan—"Kin ye handle a gun, stranger?" Percy Boulevarder—"I don't have to. I own an auto."—Baltimore American.

Ward—"Say, you ain't going to vote for Bender, are you? He's crooked, you know." Street—"Yes, but he is on the straight ticket."—Boston Transcript.

Wife—"I hope you talked plainly to him." Husband—"I did intend, I told him he was a fool, a perfect fool!" Wife (approvingly)—"Dear John! How exactly like you!"—Punch.

"When you say that a thing is 'well enough as it is' what do you mean, father?" "That you think it ought to be improved at once but that you're too lazy to fix it."—Brooklyn Life.

"Why is she so strenuous to maintain the proprietory of a woman marrying a man 20 years older than herself?" "Because she's almost suppose she had done so." "That's just what she wishes you to suppose."—Puck.

"Well, my friend Jones has been elected," said the officeseeker. "I want to send him some flowers. What would you suggest?" "Forget-me-nots would be just the thing for you," replied the wise friend.—Philadelphia Ledger.

McQueery—"Hasher's comic opera had its premiere performance last night, eh! You were there, of course." Crittick—"Oh yes." McQueery—"Was any of the music new?" Crittick—"Yes, at one time."—Philadelphia Press.

Mrs. Crisscross—"How do you find Henry, doctor?" Doctor—"He needs rousing; I think a mild shock would help him." Mrs. Crisscross—"That's easy; I'll tell him I ordered three new dresses this morning."—Chicago Daily News.

"The mills of the gods grind slowly," quoted the long-faced man in the black coat. "Why don't they put in some modern machinery?" asked the man from Minneapolis. "Up our way they turn out 500,000 barrels a day."—Cincinnati Tribune.

"Look here!" exclaimed the irate housekeeper. "Don't you know gas comes out of the furnace you sold me?" "Well, what do you expect to come out of a cheap furnace?" demanded the stove dealer. "Electric lights?"—Chicago Daily News.

"So you have taken your son into the bank to work his way up from the bottom? How is he doing?" "Oh, fairly well. He reported for duty twice last week and hung around for nearly an hour each time, in spite of the fact that there was another big golf tournament going on."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Historian—"Boy, is this the field upon which the great battle was fought?" Native boy—"No, zur; that be it at the top of that hill." Historian—"Dear, dear! That hill must be quite a mile away! (Playfully) Why ever didn't they fight it in this field?" Boy—"I suppose because this here yield belongs to Varmer Jonson. He never will lend it for anything, not even for t' village sports!"—Punch.

Too Costly to Give Away.

Among the first class passengers on a home-bound transatlantic steamship was a young woman whose extreme economy had not permitted any lavish expenditures during the foreign tour. It was, consequently, with commendable pride that she referred repeatedly to the material for two silk dresses, purchased at a bargain, which she was bringing home to her mother and sister. Even the suggestion of one sympathetic listener that she would probably have to pay duty produced merely a temporary restraint in the complacency with which she viewed her proposed generosity.

At last, when the steamship approached New York and the custom house officer received the somewhat plain young woman at the cabin table, her fellow passengers were curious.

Being asked the usual questions about dutiable property, she replied stoutly and defiantly that she had the material for two silk dresses.

"Are they for yourself?" the inspector demanded.

"No," she declared, "they are not. I am bringing them home for presents."

"Then, since they're not for your own use, I shall be compelled to charge you duty," and he announced the required amount.

Later she was heard to say, in a vindictive manner, "That has made those dresses cost me so much that I simply can't afford to give them away now. I'm just going to keep them for myself."—Youth's Companion.