

A PLAIN BIT O' TALK.

"My boy," said Uncle Hiram, as he gave to me advice. "The saw that doesn't wobble is the one that cuts the ice. That keeps a sinking deer where its first draw scratched the face. Instead of moving sideways for to find a thinner place! I've noticed cattle feeding in the pasture-lot and seen a cow that allers hunted for a brighter spot o' green. An' juicy grass a-growin', feedin' confident, dog-gone! That there was better pickin' jes a little farther on!"

"An' I've seen that cow keep huntin' through the summer, through the spring. A feelin' sure that jes ahead was better feed, I jing! A-lookin' this-an' that-way an' a rollin' of her eyes. So busy watchin' for it she'd forget t' fight the flies! An' while the ones grew sleek an' fat that took what come fer sure. After grass grown taller traisin' kept this one cow thin an' poor. Why, she'd leave a field o' clover two-feet high or blue-grass lawn Thinkin' there was better pickin' jes a little farther on."

"An' my boy, so mighty biggetey you needn't put on now. You ain't so smart but something you can learn from that ol' cow. Contented with your portion, satisfied jes where you're at, Will make not only cattle but a pocket-book grow fat! Keep on a-workin' humbly as a thankful creature should. Don't spend your time in huntin' the superlative of good. For there ain't no use your traisin' till you're weary, weak an' wan For to find the better pickin' jes a little farther on!"

-Roy Farrell Greene.

A TRAGEDY. By T. N. SCOTT.

I am one of those rare creatures who are given to early rising—I mean abnormally early rising—and especially does this trait in my character assert itself when I am holiday-making. I love to be up and out while there is still a crispness in the air and flower and leaf are bespangled with dew. Many are the strange sights and sensations that I have seen and experienced in these early morning hours, when all creation wakes with hum and song.

One little incident into which this "getting up with the lark" led me is worth the telling. It happened during a holiday I spent at Eastbourne several years ago. I was staying in a boarding house on the Parade. It was a large establishment, of good class, and would have been very comfortable if the custom of the place had not required one to dress for dinner—an absurd regulation at holiday times, when people generally are inclined to fling formality to the winds. But, after all, it was very jolly there.

Well, as every one knows, one of the features of Eastbourne is Beachy Head, and many mornings did I walk along the deserted red-brick sea-wall and scramble up just before reaching what was then the picturesque little village of Hollywell—now, I believe, merely a waterworks—and over the green slopes to the summit of the headland.

It happened that one beautiful August morning I was standing at a little distance from the coastguards' houses, looking out towards the haze-hidden sea, and thinking how still and peaceful it all was, when there seemed to come rolling up the hill the sounds of a clock striking in the town, and I turned, wondering that I should hear it.

The next instant I started violently and faced round, for a woman's shrill, penetrating voice, coming from a distance, had called: "Murder! Murder! Murder! Oh, he is going to kill me!"

Out to sea and over the hills inland the white mists lay, but straight before me I could see the lighthouse and the grassy undulations that stretched to it along the top of the cliffs.

For a moment, as I looked eagerly, frantically around, I could see no living thing except a solitary gull wheeling here and there and some indistinct figures on the Seaford road, but then my eyes fell on a sight that made my heart leap with fear and horror.

On one of the grassy knolls—the most distant but one, it seemed—were a man and a woman. They were both dressed in dark clothes and were far from distinct, although the white-washed walls of the lighthouse formed a background; but I could see that one was a woman, the other a man. They were now about a yard apart, and the woman's arms were raised in tragic gesture. Then I saw the man slowly raise his right hand. Something that he held in it glittered in the slanting sun-rays. The next instant he had stepped up to the woman and—how distinctly I seem to have seen it all!—had plunged what was evidently a weapon into her breast.

She sank instantly to the ground. Great Heavens! Had she been murdered before my eyes?

Until now I had stood horror-stricken, rooted to the spot; but as the woman dropped and the man also sank down—probably glotting over his victim—I suddenly awoke to the full consciousness of what I had seen.

I could hardly see the two now—they only made a blur in the rounded curve of the knoll; but, without the least thought of what I intended to do, I tore madly down the slope.

On I raced, gasping from my efforts to maintain my speed up the short but stiff ascents, for I am not an athlete, and a run of two miles or so over such ground was no light matter to me.

I had but one idea in my mind—to reach the spot where the woman lay, perhaps already dead, perhaps dying for want of aid.

And yet I remember distinctly thinking once how madly the larks were singing, how peaceful it all seemed, and what a blot vile man made upon the sweetness and serenity.

But I raced on, and each time I breathed a knill I strained my eyes eagerly for a sight of the two people in the terrible tragedy. And each

knife in his hand! There could be no doubt—I happened to look up. Well, there could be no doubt that this girl was not only alive, but quite uninjured.

There was but one course open to me—that of abject apology. So when I could speak rationally I began.

"I am afraid my actions are most incomprehensible to you, Miss—er—er—" She looked down at her shoes in studied silence, and so I went on. "But—er—well, the fact is, I thought I heard you call out—"

"Call out!" "Yes—indeed, I'm sure you did—at least, that some one did! 'Murder! Murder! Murder!' some one called, and—it was awfully stupid of me, of course, but I thought I saw that fellow strike you."

She laughed merrily. "It certainly was rather stupid. Why, that was Jack—my Jack!"—and again she looked down and flushed demurely. "I don't think he is likely to strike me—at any rate, not just yet, you know!"—this almost sotto voce. "But I wonder what you could have heard and seen! And you ran all the way from the Head to rescue me from a horrible death? It was very, very kind of you, and I thank you very, very much—quite as much as—as if you had not been mistaken, you know."

"Oh, it is too generous of you to say that! It is so good of you to forgive me for—er—for this intrusion upon you."

"Not at all! It really was very kind of you, you know—perhaps more than kind!"—and she raised her eyes, and for a moment our glances met.

I started. What was lurking in those blue depths? Was it amusement? Was it mischief?

But the next moment the girl lowered her eyelids, and the flush in her cheeks deepened a little. She did not turn away, but stood there poking the turf with her shoes. She made a most charming picture. I moved towards her.

"I say—no—now really did you call?"

She turned away, not at all haughtily, I thought, but so very evidently to intimate my dismissal that, after once more apologizing, I bowed and left her.

But all the way home and for several days afterwards I thought and thought and thought of this strange little incident, and especially of the mischievous gleam in those blue eyes, and I wondered if I had been tricked. Had she been lying there laughing under that tam-o'-shanter at my mad race?

Well, the explanation of it all came a few days later.

Staying in the same boarding house as myself was a pretty little girl with whom I had become rather chummy—a fellow is apt to do so at these times—and one day when I was with her she received a letter from a friend of hers who was staying in the town, saying that she was taking part in some amateur theatricals to be given in a public hall for the benefit of some local charity. She enclosed some tickets.

My companion, of course, explained it all to me, and—naturally enough perhaps—we went.

It was a rather poor show. The amateurs had made a singular selection, for the piece was an old-fashioned lurid melodrama crammed with incident. But my companion's friend, a Miss Nora Payton, according to the program, had a big part, and was really good in it.

Gradually the plot worked up, and in due time the third act was reached. Here we were evidently in for something supremely sensational, for the program gave the scene as:

"Night—On a Lonely Moor."

Up went the curtain and on came my companion's friend, flurried and frightened looking. A few ruminative sentences—not remarkable for their originality—were uttered, and then a man entered, young and heroic looking.

Voluble talking followed, at first passionately loving, then passionately angry. And then came this astonishing incident.

The girl threw up her hands tragically. The man stepped back and put his hand into the breast of his coat.

"Murder! Murder! Murder!" the girl shrieked. "Oh, he is going to kill me!"—and her shrill voice echoed back from the end of the room.

The man raised his hand above his head and plunged a stiletto into the breast of the girl, who dropped instantly at his feet.

It was exactly the scene that I had witnessed from Beachy Head!

"Thank goodness, my companion found this part of the play so absorbing that she had no attention to give me, for I flushed to the very roots of my hair! I put up my glasses and looked searchingly at the man, who was now sinking off the stage. Was it 'Jack'?" It was impossible to say. The girl now lying dead on the stage I could not see.

What happened after this point in the play I haven't the least idea, and never had. The only things I remember are the uproarious applause that greeted the conclusion, a pair of laughing, mischievous blue eyes looking at me over the footlights, and my companion saying:

"I must stay and speak to Nora and congratulate her! Isn't she clever?"

I was not loth to remain, and so in due course I was introduced to "Miss Payton" and her fiancé—"Mr. Lugard—the horrid murderer!"

Miss Payton gave no sign of recognition, and the two girls chatted on.

"You did that murder scene just splendid, Nora!"

"Did I? Well, so we ought to have done, for Jack and I have rehearsed it no end. Do you know, we actually got up at five—five!—one morning when Jack had to go to Seaford on business, and rehearsed it on the cliffs, right down by the lighthouse. And I shrieked 'Murder!' so loudly that I really believe the coastguard on Beachy Head could have heard me!"

Once again the mischievous gleam was in the blue eyes as they met mine.

I laughed—rather uneasily. Jack Lugard laughed also.

"You have a penetrating voice, Miss Payton," I said. "I hope you will allow me to congratulate you on your performance. I think I can honestly say that I have never before met a lady in private life with such marked histrionic ability!"—Waverley.

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

A faintly luminous mist in the bulb and on the fingers has been noted by Professor Sommers on rubbing electric light bulbs that have been not long in use. No satisfactory explanation has been given.

It was Halley's comet which appeared in 1066 at the time of the invasion of William the Conqueror and again in 1456 when Constantinople was besieged by the Turks, and the crescent-shaped tail was a mighty omen.

The flame of an ordinary match has a much higher temperature than is generally known, and will melt cast iron or steel filings. Try it by striking a match and sprinkle the filings through the flame. Sputtering sparks like gunpowder will be the result of the melting metal.—Popular Mechanics.

Rumor has it that another long step forward has been made in the art of armor plate manufacture. It is stated that the new plate, which is fabricated from a steel alloy, combines great toughness with extreme hardness of face, and that in a recent test a six-inch plate stopped a nine-inch capped explosive shell. We doubt it; but if it was done, the new armor must be even more superior to Krupp armor than Krupp armor is to that made under the old Harvey patents.

It is not, perhaps, generally known that in the so-called arc lamp the light comes from the incandescent carbons, the electric arc itself being practically non-luminous. One of the chief aims of inventors has been to make the arc luminous instead of the carbons. In the Steinmetz magnetite lamp this is effected by making the pencil for the negative electrode of a combination of magnetite iron ore with titanium oxide and other chemicals. Virtually all the light from a Steinmetz lamp comes from the arc, for the electrodes are not heated to a temperature high enough to render them incandescent. The life of the lamp is thus prolonged.

The introduction of tungsten lamps is doing much to advance the use of electricity on farms. It is possible for the farmer with a small plant, driven either by a gasoline engine or by damming a small stream, to obtain sufficient current to light his house and barn with this economical type of incandescent lamp. The use of electricity on the farm, by the way, is growing, and, as pointed out by the Electrical World, farmers will in time come to consider electricity a necessity. Then it will be found profitable to establish central generating stations for farming districts to take the place of the small individual plants now being installed.

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT



THE LOCOMOTO.

The locomoto is the thing that pulls the railway-cars. It passes through the meadow, behind the pasture bars. You can't exactly see it, 'cause there's such a lot of trees. But listen, and you'll hear it, most any time you please.

When it's going to Boston, but everybody knows. Not when it's coming back again, 'cause then the whistle blows. And I'm sure that I can tell you who it is talking to. When it whizzes round our corner, and calls, "Hul-loo, Lulu!"

It wakes me in the morning and it's just as if it said: "That I'm a little lazybones for lying here on daddy's knee. It calls again at dinner-time, as if it understands. That I must leave my garden, and go in and wash my hands! And when I've finished supper, and am up on daddy's knee. And he's telling about Indians, as creepy as can be. It makes me jump like anything, though all the time I know. That in the most exciting part it's going to holler so!

At first it used to frighten me, but now we're reglar chums. It tells me—never you mind what!—most every time it comes. Since I went down to the station with daddy in the cart. And saw it standing puffing there, all ready for the start. I went and stood beside it, and I said, "How do you do?" I am the little Lulu that you're always calling to! The locomoto gave a jump, and started with a rush. But first a little puff of steam came out and whispered, "Hush!"

You see I'd like to tell you what it's always saying now. But you wouldn't understand it, and I couldn't, anyhow! It's secrets, very interesting, a new one every day. But I really couldn't tell you, when it whispered, "Hush!" that way! But when I hear it coming, at dinner-time, I run. And climb up on the paddock bars, as bold as any one. I wave my hand like anything, and shout, "How do you do?" And the locomoto whizzes by, and calls, "Hul-loo, Lulu!"

-Guy Wetmore Carryl.

STORY OF THE RAILROAD.

The world was thousands of years old. The great Atlantic Ocean had been crossed and the United States had become an established nation, but still kept to the old ways of travel. They believed that any plan to carry them from place to place faster than the old stage coach was a dream to be laughed at. When it was discovered that steam could be used to move machinery and that a steamboat could work its own way through the water most people began to think that no greater wonder could be accomplished. About seventy years ago a coal digger in the Northumbrian mines of England invented a locomotive. Stephenson claimed that his engine could take the place of horses in drawing coaches along tracks.

As he was a man who had very little book learning he could not give bright answers to those who asked foolish questions about his wonderful scheme. He knew, though that his ideas could be carried out. Finally he went to the House of Commons of England with a proposition to build a railroad between Manchester and Liverpool. How the members of Parliament, who supposed themselves very wise, laughed at his plan of whisking people through the air in such an undignified and careless manner. For their part they were content to jog along the rest of their lives in the clumsy old stage coaches such as their fathers had used.

Had it not been for the merchants of Liverpool, who saw that the building of the railroad would add to their trade and thus add to their wealth, Stephenson's plan would have failed for the time. These men subscribed the money necessary for the project. In December, 1825, the road was begun. As Stephenson had none of the modern appliances for blasting rocks, boring tunnels, building bridges nor sinking piles in marshy places the work of laying the generally level track took four years. To-day inventions are welcomed by the whole world. The laboring man and the millionaire are alike interested in such wonders as the airship. In those days it was very different. In those days they were satisfied with their comforts, while the poor thought every invention where machinery could perform the work of people was an invention to rob them of their employment and make them poorer. When the first trip on the railroad was made the nobility of England were the passengers.

All along the way the working people placed their threatening mottoes. In fact, a riot was feared, but the strong arm of the law preserved peace and quietness. Those who rode were delighted at being carried though the air so rapidly. They said that it seemed as if they were flying. The journey through the hills and over streams on a level road was such a wonder to them that they said the impossible had come to pass.

In our country the first railroad of any importance was opened at Charleston, S. C., in 1831. On account of an accident the popularity of this road came near meeting with disaster. The fireman was a negro who became greatly annoyed at the hissing steam as it escaped from the

safety valve. In the absence of the engineer he fastened down the valve and then to make doubly sure that the noise would cease sat on the top. You can easily guess what an explosion followed. The result of this action caused people to fear riding in the new railway cars until a "barrier car" filled with bales of cotton was put between the locomotive and the first passenger coach. The public had also to be assured that no one but the engineer would be allowed to touch the safety valve. In some of the first trains the locomotive started at the signal from the conductor, who blew musical notes from a tin horn.—Washington Star.

THE LITTLE TREE.

In the middle of the wood stood a great pine tree, with a baby pine at its foot. The mother pine was so tall that she could look over the heads of all the other trees, but the little one was not larger than the ferns and yellow violets that grew around it.

"Stand up straight, my dear," said the old tree.

"Yes, mammy," said the baby pine, "you always say that."

"Of course," said the mother pine. "How I should feel if you grew up with a crook in your stem! I knew a little tree once that was not careful to stand straight, and so all its life it bent to one side. One night there came a great wind, and the crooked tree went down with a dreadful crash; and it carried with it an owl's nest that was built in its top, and broke all the eggs. Just think of that! Now, if you will do as I say, you will grow up a tall, straight pine, and the jolly little sunbeams will call on you first in the morning and stay with you longest at night."

"I will try my best, mamma," said the good little tree, and it drew itself up. Now it happened to be Arbor Day, and the children were hunting for a tree to transplant.

"Oh, look here!" called Violet. "Here is a dear little pine, and it is just as straight as an arrow!"

"So it is!" said the other children. "This is just the one for us." Then they dug up the tiny tree and planted it beside the school-house with due honors.—From the Christian Register.

HARD TO PLEASE: A FABLE.

A heron stood one day by the river's edge, as still and silent as though made of stone. With his coiled neck and piercing, bright eye he waited for the unwary fish to come within reach of his beak, which was a perfect fish-spear. The prospects of a bounteous day were unusually promising. Soon he espied a perch playing around him within easy reach. The heron became choicely at once and said to himself: "It does not suit my pleasure to begin my meal now; the perch can wait until it suits me to snap him up." The perch finally swam away, and after a while plump carp slid around the heron's feet, who stiffened a bit more proudly and scarcely took notice of this large, delicious morsel. "I am not ready, and the carp must await my good and leisure time like the perch," decided the heron.

Then a bright, fat, speckled trout showed his shiny sides around the heron, finally laying at rest at the heron's feet. "You must await my pleasure like the others," declared the heron, and he spurned the trout, with his foot kicking him out of the water with a great splash.

At last the heron decided that he was now hungry and it would please him to begin his banquet at once, but never a fish came near him that day, not even a minnow, and all he could find was a small, slimy snail.

Those hard to please miss many good things.—Philadelphia Record.

The Reason Men Have Clubs.

If, as is most probable, you are not, the wretched man, for the sake of peace, must—well, prevaricate; and if you really are, for pity's sake let him keep the knowledge of such a calamity to himself. The meekest of men object to being catechised, asked where he has been, and where he is going. Is it any wonder that men invented clubs, to have at once a refuge and a subterfuge?

If you have so treated a man that he realizes you are interested in his concerns, and knows that the absence of questioning on your part arises not from indifference, but from trust, he will tell you all his affairs; but, compared with a man who finds his wife inquisitive, an oyster is communicative!

An annoying and ridiculous question to ask a busy man on his return from his day's work is, "Have you missed me, darling?" Of course he has not. He has been working for you instead.—Home Chat.

A Bear Story.

"Have you ever heard the story of 'Algy and the Bear?'" asked a boy of his father. "It's very short: 'Algy met a bear. The bear was bulgy. The bulge was Algy.'"

—London News.

Cheer Up. A CORRESPONDENT in Adrian lightens our burden somewhat by contributing the following: Cheer up! What if the day's cold And you're feeling old And blue. And disgusted, too. We all do! Take a brace. Look trouble in the face And smile Awhile. Nothing's gained by looking Keep mum, glum— Put your woes on the shelf, Keep your troubles to yourself And—CHEER UP! -Detroit Free Press.