

## WHEN FAINT HEART WON.

By W. R. Ross.

Miss Susan Denham was an attractive girl, a decidedly attractive girl. Susan was the prettiest girl in the village, and her widowed mother was the possessor of several tidy bits of property, and Susan had been away at school and played the piano beautifully and could sing delightfully, and was charming in every way. Susan might have had many followers, but she wasn't a coquette, and had quite too good an opinion of Susan Denham to think of engaging herself to any of the village swains who sighed about her.

There was a young man, however, whom Susan believed she could fancy. Very likely this supposition was born of the somewhat singular fact that the young man in question resolutely kept his attention away from her. Robert Chalmers scarcely looked at her, and when they met on social occasions he appeared reserved and distant.

Well, time wore along and it was the summer of the year after Susan's return from that very select school in Barryville. And then one mild June day she had a caller. Her mother had gone to spend the afternoon at her Aunt Gorham's, and the maid was enjoying her day out.

It was Susan who answered the bell. When she opened the door a stout man of middle age confronted her. His face was kindly and his keen eyes had a pleasant twinkle.

"How do you do, Mr. Chalmers?" she said. "Will you come in?"

"Thank you, Miss Susan,"

"Mother has gone over to Aunt Gorham's," said Susan.

"I came to see you, Miss Susan."

He glanced about the room and shook his gray head approvingly.

"Nice room," he said. "Everything in apple order. That's what I like. They tell me you're a fine housekeeper, Miss Susan."

"It's mother who deserves the credit," she said. "That is, if there is any credit to be given."

"We've had a very good year," he said. "In our business."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"Robert has a third interest in the mill, you know."

"I didn't know."

"Oh? That's strange. Well, he has. And some time he'll have it all. I hardly know what I'd do if Robert should leave me."

"But of course, he won't," said the girl.

Robert's father half closed his eyes.

"I don't know," he said. "I don't know."

"But why should he leave you?"

"Don't you know?" he asked in a half whisper.

The girl recoiled a little.

"How should I know?"

"I had hoped," he said, "that Robert would marry and settle down here, and—take up the business when I have passed beyond."

"When he married I meant to give him the Fenimore cottage for a home. You know the place?"

"Yes. It is charming."

"It's my only son, Miss Susan. I'd be willing to do almost anything to see him happily settled."

"Robert really seems ungrateful," she said.

"He's a good boy," Robert's father hastily assured her, "and a straight-forward boy. He wouldn't go away unless he had some specially good reason for going."

"And haven't you any idea what that reason may be?"

"I have," said Robert's father slowly.

His next words were very impressive as well as unexpected.

"Susan Denham."

"Yes, Mr. Chalmers."

"What's the wrong between you and my Robert?"

Susan suddenly gasped.

"I don't understand you, Mr. Chalmers."

"How can you help understanding? Haven't I made it clear?"

"There's nothing between me and Robert, Mr. Chalmers."

"I take you to be an honest girl, Miss Susan," he said. "There is truth in your eyes. And yet I speak the truth, too, when I say that I am sure you could keep my Robert from going away."

"Didn't you refuse to marry him?"

"How could I?"

"Eh?"

"How could I refuse to marry him when he hasn't asked me?"

The father of Robert was quite overcome. He stared at her speechlessly.

"Never asked you!" he presently gasped. "Well, well. I never was more deceived in my life. Why, he told me that he loved you and that it was a hopeless passion. Is—is he afraid of you?"

"Think he must be."

"Could I—can I carry home any encouragement?" he eagerly asked.

"No, no," cried the girl. "Do you think I would marry any man who hadn't the courage to ask me?"

"Of course not," said Robert's father as he arose. "Well, my dear, I will forgive me for coming here on this fool errand, and I know your heart is too kind to make my humiliation a public matter."

The heart of the girl went out to the disappointed father.

"Chalmers," she said, "do you really could persuade Robert to stay at home here? I would be glad to hear of it."

him on an errand to John Kemmerly's. He'll have to pass here. At 3 o'clock, eh?"

He looked around eagerly.

Susan's mother went to the meeting of the church sewing society the next afternoon, and Susan sent the maid on an errand that would keep her away from the house for an hour at least.

It was just 3 o'clock when Susan saw Robert's tall form coming up the street. Susan was gowned in one of her prettiest summer frocks, and the square porch with its red carpet and comfortable chairs and the vines that curtained it about seemed a charming setting for her.

As Robert was about to pass the house Susan placed herself on the top step, and the instant he turned his head to look at the place waved her hand to him. "Please come in," she called. His face flushed deeply as he confronted her, hat in hand.

"Miss Denham," he stammered.

Susan had clutched a porch pillar as if for support, and she spoke very slowly.

"Oh, it's Mr. Chalmers," she said. "I saw you passing, and I realized that I needed some one—I am ill, Mr. Chalmers."

"Shall I—do you want me to fetch a doctor? I can have him here in a moment."

"No, no, Mr. Chalmers," she faintly murmured. "Please don't leave me."

"No, no," he said, "but what can I do?"

"Sit here, Mr. Chalmers, where you can watch me. Probably you can tell by the expression of my face whether I am about to collapse or not. If I slip down in my chair you must raise me up so I can get the air."

She seemed so beautifully fragile, so ethereal, so lovely that the absorbed youth quite held his breath as he watched her.

"I'm afraid I am keeping you from some important engagement," she sleepily murmured.

"No, no, Miss Denham. My time is my own."

"Thank you, Mr. Chalmers. A little closer, please."

"Yes, Miss Denham."

"I think I am passing into the second stage of the attack. I feel so sleepy. Would you mind holding my hand, Mr. Chalmers? It will keep me from drifting away. Hold it firmly, Mr. Chalmers."

Her eyelids drooped, the long tresses lay on her fair cheeks. She scarcely seemed to breathe. And the tall young man sitting stiffly beside her, with that precocious white hand in his strong grasp gazed at her with fascinated eyes.

How beautiful she seemed, and what a blessed privilege he was enjoying! He suddenly flushed as he watched her. He took away his eyes just long enough to glance up and down the street. There was nobody in sight. Satisfied of this, he stooped and lightly touched one of the rounded cheeks with his lips.

Whereas Susan Denham's eyes instantly unclosed.

"Why, Mr. Chalmers?"

"I beg your pardon," he gasped. "You kissed me!"

"I couldn't help it."

"But that's not a good reason," said Susan Denham a little severely. "Is that the best you have to offer?"

The tall young man seemed to muster up his courage.

"I—I did it because I love you!" he blurted out.

Susan opened her eyes very wide.

"Robert Chalmers!" she cried. Then she rapidly added: "Sit right down here and tell me all about it."

A half hour later a sudden memory came to Robert Chalmers.

"But how about your heart?" he asked solicitously.

"My heart?" echoed Susan Denham. "Why, you are responsible for that now."

### EFFECT OF ETHER ON PLANTS.

Experiments at Cornell Show Some Startling Results.

At Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., extensive experiments in the etherization of plants have been under way for some time, conducted by C. L. Lewis and J. E. Howett, the former looking after the bulbs, and the latter being entrusted with the forcing of shrubs and herbaceous plants, under the direction of Professor John Craig, head of the horticultural department.

The objects of the work are to test the efficiency of ether on the forcing of such herbaceous perennials as aquilegias, golden glows and astilbe japonicas, bulbs of the narcissus, tulip, hyacinth, Easter lily and of various miscellaneous plants, to determine, if possible, the number of hours plants should be exposed to ether to obtain best results, to acquire an idea of the amount of ether required, to test the use of ether on forcing of rhubarb and asparagus, to see if common shrubs respond alike to the action of ether, to determine whether it is possible to ripen berries, and thus make salable for Christmas such plants as the aucubas, and, finally, to obtain an idea of the efficiency of the forcing of plants by ether from the commercial standpoint.

The shrubs are obtained in the fall shortly after cold weather has set in, and are placed in a room where the temperature is kept at near freezing as possible. When plants are required for use they are taken out a few hours before placing them in ether in order that they may become comparatively dry before etherization.

The etherizing apparatus consists of an airtight galvanized iron box, made especially for this purpose, 7 feet 3 inches by 2 feet 6 inches. It contains two trays, rendering it possible to have three tiers of bulbs or plants undergoing the experiment at once. The trays are composed of heavy wire mesh, in order that the ether may permeate every part of the box. In order to render the box absolutely airtight, the cover is so made that it fits down about five inches over the body of the box, resting on a flange or ridge which is overlaid with tuck felt. Precautions being taken to clamp the lid on firmly, the box is practically airtight.

In placing such plants as aquilegias, golden glows and sprines in the box care must be taken to remove as much dirt as possible from the roots giving the other free access. Shrubs, ilices, etc., are placed in the box without being potted. When the preliminary work is completed, a small ball of felt containing the required amount of ether is introduced into the airtight box, and the lid clamped down as rapidly as possible.

When removed, after twenty-four thirty-six or forty-eight hours, as the case may be, the plants are aired before being placed in the forcing house. Other specimens of the same plant, known as check plants, are put at their side to enable the experimenter to make his comparisons.

The lilacs have given the best results, etherized lilacs coming into bloom from eight to ten days earlier than the untreated ones. With Japanese quince and deutzia the results are not so marked. Under the head of herbarium plants, golden glows or aquilegias gave little or no results, while, on the other hand, sprines as a bulboid showed the action of ether in a most remarkable manner, the etherized plant coming into full bloom from ten days to three weeks before the untreated. Rhubarb treated in a like manner was ready to cut five days before the untreated rhubarb, and yielded a much larger proportion of edible stalks. In the case of asparagus, a remarkable phenomenon was observed. The plant grew riotously, becoming tall and spindly, and was absolutely unfit for use. The statey Easter lily shows indications of blooming from one to three weeks before the untreated plants.

The use of ether on plants marks a revolution in horticulture. The specimens subjected not only grow with increased rapidity, but the flower seems to attain a fuller bloom and maturity.

### CHILDREN ON THE STAGE

Large Numbers Employed in Spectacular Shows. HAVE SPECIAL AGENCY Phase of the Popular Taste That Has Been Manifesting Itself in the Last Few Years—Not Many of the Children Afterward Become Professional Actors.

"Ben-Hur," some ten years ago, with dry children, and "The Sorrows of Satan," with fifty or sixty, were about the first plays to employ children in large numbers, says the New York Sun.

With the steady increase has come an agency devoted to the booking of children alone. It is run by a woman; a kind faced, motherly woman, who has children of her own and looks after her charges carefully.

Very few of them are children of actors and actresses who are playing, although a few belong to players who for one reason or another have left the stage. Most of them are the children of very poor people who really need the money.

Among the 100 children for a Shakespeare play are five from one family, in which the father is dead. Their salaries combined will keep the family in comfort, and the work is not hard. It is very seldom that a play keeps the children on until the last act. They are usually at home and in bed before the play is over, and there is practically no labor in the performance.

These extra children never travel when a big production of this kind goes on the road—the agent goes ahead and gathers extra children in each city. Her method is to go to the principals of schools, tell them what she wants and invite them to send to her any strong, healthy children who are able to take part in the performance outside of school hours without injury, and who need the money. She always gets five or six times as many as she needs, and at the first rehearsal sifts them out. In New York she sometimes goes to amateur entertainments, school exercises and the like, looking for good material.

A hundred extra children in a bunch is about as pretty a sight as can be imagined, for they are always chosen for their grace and beauty. They never seem to get their heads turned, nor to develop stage fever. In fact, they take the rehearsals as the English are said to take their pleasures. The necessary discipline is naturally inculcated to children, and they must keep still, both as to tongue and feet.

Children are far more easy to train than adult extras. They are more pliable, far less self-conscious. The manager's only object is to get them simply to be themselves on the stage when they are sure to make a hit. Very few of these extra children remain upon the stage.

Extra children receive \$5 a week. When they are capable of taking parts they get \$25 or \$35 a week or more. Children in parts have increased as much as in the chorus in recent years, and those charming infants in "Peter Pan" and Mrs. Wiggs of the "Cabbage Patch," "The Prince Chap" and other productions are fresh in the public mind.

Five of the children in the "Cabbage Patch" were from one family and all had been extras. The mother of one of the "Cabbage Patch" children was employed to travel with the production for the purpose of caring for the children. The youngsters finished the season healthy and happy, and without a day's illness.

The five children in "Peter Pan" and none of them been extras. All started with parts. The two little girls in "The Prince Chap" were coached for their parts by the children's booking agent.

It is a curious thing that a child actor always does well. There are no sticks among them. But the charming children of the stage are seldom heard of afterward. The exquisite naturalness which makes them delightful all disappears as they leave the realm of childhood, and they have to learn all over again how to be a grown up actor.

### CHINA RIDES BY DAY.

Colored Glass Saves Celestial Heads in Railroad Cars.

Before the opening of the railway to Paoting-fu coal and other freight on the south of Peking was brought in on mules and camels and in ox carts and wheelbarrows. Even now wheelbarrow coolies come with a load a distance of 450 li, or about 150 miles, says Engineering News.

The Belgian line is about 768 miles long and the section of it from Peking to Paoting-fu—both of which are in Chili province—is about 159 kilometers. It is constructed between these two points, both as a roadbed and openings, for a double-track line, although but one track has been laid. It is of standard gauge—4 feet 8½ inches—which the Chinese authorities have wisely required in all concessions for railways in all parts of the empire, with the exception of the French in the south toward Indo-China.

Through the flat country of the north, across which strong winds blow, willows have been planted for protection against drifting sand and dust. There are growing well. To Paoting-fu and for 100 miles south of it the roadbed now seems compact and smooth riding. A speed of forty miles per hour is sometimes made between stations—the average, however, is probably not more than twenty-two miles an hour, as longer stops are necessary at stations than in America. The Chinese carry huge bundles of baggage and delays are frequent.

With the exception of the terminal and divisional points, at which large quarters have been erected, the stations along the whole line are of brick with tile roof, apparently well constructed, and with plenty of room for the present needs. In addition to separate rooms or sections divided by fences, or the three classes of passengers carried, there are a small baggage or freight room, an office and living quarters (usually one room) for the French-speaking Chinese ticket agent.

All the rolling stock is light and of the ordinary Continental European design, with the exception of the third class passenger cars. This is true of all the rolling stock at present used in China, except that used on the (formerly) American Canton-Hankow railway in the south—the passenger and freight cars there being of American design. On the Belgian road the freight cars, or "wagons," are of 8, 10 to 12 metric tons capacity, with four wheels and the couplers and chains used on the Continent of Europe. The road has, however, a few cars of about twenty tons capacity.

The third class passenger cars have long wooden seats on each side, with another long one sometimes placed in the middle of the car. The inside is celled, and the racks are placed above the seats—most of the baggage is, however, placed between the feet and legs of the owners, as the possibility of loss causes each Chinese to want his belongings constantly within sight. Other third class cars have no seats or racks, passengers either lying or squatting on the floor, possibly a more pleasant position for the Chinese coolie, as one sees them apparently perfectly comfortable squatting for hours on their heels.

Before the completion of the road the gondolas were frequently used for the third class passengers, causing much criticism from Europeans as to the foreigners' treatment of the Chinese, but of course, only from those who were not used to the exigencies of construction.

The railway also has private cars, which may be chartered for about \$60, gold, for the trip from Peking to Hongkong. The limited number of these cars, however, requires several days' notice to insure an engagement. These cars accommodate from four to eight persons, with apartments for Chinese servants, as well as toilets and conveniences for cooking, dining and sleeping.

The train from Peking is composed, usually, of eleven coaches, of which two are first, three second and five third class, and a private car.

It may be of interest to note that the glass in the windows of nearly all coaches is colored. When clear glass was used, the Chinese were not accustomed to it and broke many panes and cut many heads in striving to look out.

The locomotives are of the European type. Those for the long run have been provided with pilot, as in America. At present no passenger trains are run at night on any of the railways in China. On the Imperial Chinese Railway North, "goods" or freight trains are sometimes run after dark, but not all through the night. Later, the Belgian company will make an effort to run passenger trains at night, and reduce the time of passage between Peking and Hankow to a little less than forty hours.

### ONE IN EVERY 1,200 BLIND.

Curious Facts in the Inquiry Conducted by the Census Office.

About one person in every 1,200 was blind and one in every 850 persons was deaf in the United States in 1900, according to a special census report on the blind and deaf in the United States, says the Philadelphia Press.

The inquiry was conducted under the direction of Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, who determined the scope of the investigation and wrote the text of the report on the deaf.

The total number of blind in the United States in 1900 was 64,763, of whom 35,645 were totally blind and 29,118 partially blind. These figures, however, the report says, can be only considered as the minimum, as an unknown proportion of the blind were not located by the enumerators. Of the total blind 37,054 were males and 27,709 females.

Blindness is chiefly a defect of adult life, almost 65 per cent of the blind becoming so after twenty years of age. About one-tenth of the total number of blind were born so. The number of blind per 1,000 of population was greater among the negroes than among the whites, and greater among the foreign born whites than among the natives whites.

Deafness, on the whole, the report says, is more common in the northern part of the United States than in the southern, and there are more deaf males than females. The total number of deaf in the United States is given as 59,287, of whom 37,426 were totally deaf and 21,861 partially deaf. From the latter class, however, are eliminated those merely "hard of hearing."

The census report of 1900 gave the number of persons as deaf as 121,178, and the opinion is expressed that the returns for 1890 are undoubtedly excessive, while those for 1900 are deficient. Of the totally deaf 52.5 per cent were males.

Of the totally deaf 91 per cent were so from childhood (under twenty years of age) and 36 per cent from a birth. Of the 89,287 persons returned as deaf, 55,501 were able to speak well, 9,417 imperfectly, and the remainder not at all.

### Desert Conditions Disappearing.

The worthless area of the Sahara desert is proving smaller than has been believed. Professor E. F. Gautier, the first explorer since 1826 to cross from Algeria to the Niger, has lately found in the Adral plateau, 300 miles from Kao on the Niger, a wide belt of steppe having from six to twelve inches of rain a year, and covered with ponds and grass. Evidences of a large Stone Age population abound, including weapons, grinding-stones, rock-drawings and graves. It appears that the region must have gradually dried up, but that the desert conditions are now disappearing and the rain-belt is again extending more and more to the north.

### Glasses For Sensitive Eyes.

Motals has been prescribing for 15 years in cases of ultra-sensitiveness to light glasses of a yellowish tint, slightly orange, with a brownish tint on reflection. They increase the per-eyes. The yellow tint evidently prevents the passage of the chemical rays to some extent. These yellow glasses, he states, will be found far superior to smoked or blue glasses, while they do not impair the vision. When they are taken off even the most brilliant sunlight seems dead and lifeless in comparison.—Journal of Homeopathy.

### Spelling of "Asparagus."

No word illustrates the changeable fashions of the English language more curiously than "asparagus." No one could call it "sparagus" nowadays, says a London exchange, unless he did not mind being thought an ignoramus or a tiresomely funny man. Yet all through the eighteenth century that was quite the regular way of referring to the delicacy, even in elegant society. A dictionary of 1791 says that "sparagus" is now so general that 'asparagus' has an air of stiffness and pedantry. "Sperage" had been the usual English form of the sixteenth century, but in the seventeenth century brought back the original Greek and Latin spelling "asparagus." Pepsy varies between "sparagus," "asparagus," and "sparagus." No doubt the eighteenth century's relapse was the last, and the "a" is back for good now.

### Trains That Never Change.

The modern traveling man who carries always the latest time schedules in his coat pocket and grumbles because the Pathfinder is published only once a month may find it difficult to believe that certain fundamental trains have been going in and out of Boston at the same hour on the same service and making the same stops for three-score years. In fact, Massachusetts folks rather resent a change in time-tables. The story is told of one Massachusetts rural town in the old days that when it was proposed to put on more trains to Boston the inhabitants objected because they said it would be a task to remember the times of so many trains.

Back in the days of the Mexican war our grandfathers came into Boston from down East to find out what Taylor was doing on the Nueces river and to get a line on the prices of West India goods, and their sons came up in '61 to answer old Abe's call, at the same hour on the same old train that still carries their children and grandchildren to and from the allurement of the metropolis of New England.—Boston Herald.

### Ants are extraordinarily fond of liver, and may be exterminated by laying raw liver near their haunts. The liver, when covered with the insects, should be thrown into boiling water.

### Elephant's Weight.

The normal weight of an elephant when full grown, is 7,000 pounds. The smallest seen in modern times was "Lilli," a Sumatran elephant, which was only a yard high, and weighed 172 pounds.

### Optum is without doubt the most valuable known drug; mercury and quinine come next in value.