The Salvation of Billie.

By Marion Allen.

"It does seem an awful pity," Mary was saying; "and Jack and I feel that we shall be in a way responsible if Billie does anything rash in the matter. You see, they met at one of our house parties last winter while you were South, and the moment the widow laid eyes on him I knew what to expect. Indeed, I was not very surprised, for Billie is one of the handsomest men I ever met, but what I did not expect was that he should fall a victim to the charms of a woman old enough to be his mother.

"Yet this was just what happened, for the next few days they were inseparable, and even now, after at least six months, I am sure they correspond, for whenever I see him Billie can always tell me the latest news of the widow. As I was saying, we feel somewhat accountable for the whole affair, and Jack was saying this morning how he wished some nice girl—"

There was a step on the gravel path, and Mary rose to receive her visitor.

"Why, Billie Brown, where did you come from?"

So I was about to meet the subject of our conversation I glanced up, and at first felt rather disappointed; the young man advancing with Mary was not nearly so handsome as I had been led to believe When I learned that he was to spend a month at my hotel I was genuinely delighted.

Friendship, like flowers, grow rapidly in summer, and soon I, for one, began to feel that ours had been of much longer duration than the calendar would indicate.

On the last evening of his stay I found myself no nearer my goal than I had been at our introduction. It was warm, so warm indeed that we

Why don't you marry her?

were forced to leave the crowded dance hall of the hotel and betake ourselves to a certain bench on the lake's edge.

If I was rather abrupt in asking him if he had ever met his ideal, I am sure Billie did not notice it, for at least he seemed to hear me, and turned with a quick start of interest. At last he smiled with enthusiasm and spoke as a man does when the subject, which has for some time formed the center of his thoughts, is introduced.

Oh yes, he had met her, and not so very long ago, either, yet it seemed that he had known her always.

"Why don't you marry this exquisite creature?" I asked, standing up and pretending to be reading One could scarcely recognize the widow, "fair, fat and forty" of Mary's description in this personification of all things beautiful painted by Billie's glowing words.

Again I sat down. We were seated beneath a tree, and now, suspended from a branch above our heads, there dangled before my startled eyes the most enormous, the most hideous, the fuzziest black spider it has ever been their misfortune to behold.

"Billie!" I cried.

He started with surprise, as much, I think, at what I had said, as the terror in my voice. Then he saw the cause, and with one sweep of his hand sent the creature far out into the fast gathering darkness about us.

As I sat there, still speechless between fear and gratitude, I felt his arm about me as he held me close and said in a low tone, though with a trace of laughter which made my cheeks burn quite as much as did his words:

"Poor little girl. If I but had the right to shield you from even greater dangers."

The next morning I made Mary an early call. She met me at the door with glowing cheeks and a general air of excitement which accorded well with my own state of mind.

"Billie's engaged," were the words with which she greeted me.

"And they've been engaged six months. To think that they never told me a word about it!"

"Who?" I managed to gasp when I had partially recovered my breath.

"Why, Billie Palmer and the widow, of course," she replied. "Jack is as much surprised as I am. We had hoped all along some other girl, you perhaps, might step in and save the poor boy."

I don't think I answered at all. At least I have not the faintest recollection of what I said, for my mind was entirely occupied by a discovery I had suddenly made at her first words. For the first time the enormity of my mistake became apparent to me and I began to realize that Billie Brown was not Billie Palmer.

TELEPHONES IN THE WOODS.

Maine Loggers String Wires Through The Virgin Forest.

A traveller in the forests of northern Maine would be surprised to come across telephone wires strung from trunk to trunk, just out of their reach.

The manner in which the telephone is used to help the men who drive the logs along the west branch of the Penobscot is perhaps the greatest feature of the system. The dams have been built not only to hold water against a time of drought but also to let it down at judicious times.

At many places along the West Branch, where the water tumbles over ledges and between boulders, says the Bangor Commercial, it is the work of a river driver to get the logs over those rough places without jamming.

The eye of every man in the crew is on a glut of logs coming down stream and they watch it as it nears a boulder in midstream and if the logs scatter and pass down the river well and good. If they do not, but stop and pile up into a big jam, the river driver has his work cut out for him.

Then it is that the man at telephone gets busy. Three long whirls of the crank of his little box calls the dam, and he tells the man who answers to close the gate and stop the logs from coming down until the jam is broken out. These orders given, he sets to work to break up the jam.

Usually a stick of dynamite placed with accuracy will start the logs and clear the channel, and if one stick is not enough there is always plenty more. The channel clear, the man telephones the order to the crew at the dam to let them come.

Before the telephone came into use these messages were conveyed up the river by relays of men. The men were stationed at frequent intervals along the bank and the message was shouted from man to man.

The telephone lines are being extended every year and it will not be long before telephones are almost as common in the woods as they are in the city. Considering the country through which the men doing the work have to traverse the lines are put up in remarkably quick time, for a small crew of men will put up many miles of wire in a week.

Recently the telephone has been called into use to aid the fire wardens in discovering and extinguishing fires in the northern forests. A station has been established on the summit of Squaw Mountain, about six miles west of Greenville.

A man stationed at this point can see the country for miles around, and with the aid of powerful field glasses and range finders can discover and locate a fire anywhere within a radius of sixty miles.

Effect of Surroundings.

There is a general tendency to look to the surroundings of the individual for an explanation of the phenomena affecting him. Writers are too often prejudiced in this way and fail to observe their own tendency to ignore facts which do not fit in with their theories. They can always find good reasons for eliminating these facts

The principal of regarding geographical surroundings as having a great influence on the development of individual specimens is evidently attractive, and has, therefore, been followed. A Southern savant, Durand de Gros, has bequeathed us a series of observations made in 1868 in regard to the inhabitants of the Aveyron This department has two entirely different geological characteristics. The soil of the Causses district is chalky, but all the rest is crystallite Gros' figures lead to the conclusion that the chalk soil dwellers are generally tall and have well developed osseous systems, while the inhabitants of the granite region have smaller bones and are of inferior stature.

The writer in question did not confine his observations to human beings but extended them to bulls in the two districts.

Wanted Place of Authority.

It is an unwritten law on shipboard and especially on men of war that the quarter deck is for the exclusive use of officers, and all good seamen remember it, in spite of their ambitions.

It once happened that an ancient mariner, a "five striper," while on shore leave captured a mule. Not without difficulty he mounted the animal and perched himself as near the tail as possible. The mule objected in every way known to a mule and in ways several and unexpected.

"Jack, sit more amidships," called out an engineer officer, who happened past. "You'll ride easier."

"Captain," grinned the old salt, "this is the first craft I ever commanded, and it's a pity if I can't stay on the quarter deck."

Watering Plants.

No plant should be given nourishment if it shows plain signs of still retaining sufficient for immediate wants. "Driblets" are not beneficial; the ideal way to water a plant is to immerse the whole pot in a pail of water from a quarter to half an hour.

The Butler—The house is on fire, madam. Here are the hand grenades.

Mrs. Pacekill — You should have brought them on a tray, William.

After the Entertainment.

"She has a magnificent flat," said one, "but it is badly arranged. The parlor is too far from the dining room."

"The wallpaper is beautiful," remarked another, "but the pictures are abominable. It is a pity to ruin beautiful walls."

"She has a lot of elegantly bound books," said still another, "but I'll be willing to wager a five that none of the leaves are cut."

"In other words," said the man who looks on, "she has been awfully good to us. She has taken pains to entertain us. Let us roast her."

"How's your bank account, Frank?" "Oh, it's no account," laughed Frank "cause I haven't got one."

"Good Samaritans bring men to the inn, but the best Samaritans bring men to Christ."

WHEN ROYALTY TRAVELS.

Fast Trains Not Always in Favor When Railroads Were Experiments.

The Dowager Empress of Russia, when travelling in England asked that the speed of the train by which she travelled might be moderated, was but following the example of other royalties. Queen Alexandria, has enjoyed one or two railway runs at record speed, says the London Evening Standard, but travelling for the illustrious is differently ordered in Russia, where undermined and bombstrewn tracks have before now been passed over by the Empress.

It took years to persuade Queen Victoria to travel by rail, and the Prince Consort, who gave her a lead, would step up to the driver of his train at the end of the journey and say. "Not so fast next time, if you please."

It was regarded as a great triumph for the railways when the Queen did at last overcome her fears and patronize the new method of locomotion. That, however, did not soothe the fears of France, whose Council of Ministers, when Louis Philippe proposed in the following year to go by special train as far as Rouen, persuaded him that such a mode of travelling was not safe. He went by coach.

If prejudice against rapid travel has lingered in some royal minds, it cannot be said that the inclination of those by whom royalty has been advised has much outrun them. Wellington hung back even when the Prince Consort and Queen Victoria had ventured. Probably he never would have travelled by rail had he not been called upon to take train with the Queen to Southampton.

Having made the plunge, he was completely converted for soon afterward the papers contained the announcement that he had actually passed to and from Folkestone in one day by the Dover line.

He bore his trial with more fortitude than Lady Holland. When she at last consented to try the awful experiment she insisted that Brunel should sit with her and hold her hand during the whole of the journey. Peel had not much more faith in the steam engine. There might be something in the idea of a railway, he admitted; it would make an excellent track for horses, no doubt; but it would be highly dangerous for locomotives.

CHEESE FROWNED ON IN JAPAN.

Even Japanese Rats Won't Eat It—But a Lobster is a Nice Birthday Gift.

A Japanese who is not of the high collar or ultra European cult would no more think of eating a ripe Camembert cheese than an American would think of giving a boiled lobster to a friend for a birthday or New Year's gift. Yet the people who call cheese "rotten milk" find decorative and symbolic attributes in the humble crustacean that has become a word of reproach in the Western world.

Because there are no cows in Japan except those kept near the foreign settlements to supply European and Americans, there was no cheese in Japan until that delicacy came in with the white resident. The Japanese, being introduced to cheese for the first time with the advent of the French restaurant in Yokohama and the foreign style Imperial Hotel in Tokio, appraised it with elemental directness. It smelled bad and was unfit food.

"We eat daikon, which smells somewhat strongly," a Japanese student of the Imperial University once said, "but the smell is natural; it is part of the daikon Your foreign cheese smells of decay, it is not cheese until it has decayed I don't think it is proper to eat decaped things."

So inbred seems the Japanese antipathy to cheese that the rats in chrysanthemum land will not touch it. Foreign housewives in Yokohama say that when they open a tin of Denmark cheese they have no need to cover it again, for the rats will run right over the can and tackle the bag of rice next on the pantry shelf

The rats, it would seem, have never tasted cheese and do not care to try.

The lobster, on the other hand, is a popular emblem of long life with the Japanese. To give one to a friend on his birthday or at New Year's means that the donor wishes that he may live so long that he may become doubled over like the lobster.

Sometimes a boiled lobster is hung up with the pine boughs that are used to decorate the houses on New Year's Day, but more often it is a more abiding lobster made of cotton and scarlet cloth that has the place of honor over the door lintel.

Homeless Manhattan.

A melancholy fact is that in New York, relatively to the size of the population, fewer people own homes than in any other city of the world. There dwell on the island of Manhattan 391,687 families only 16,316 of which hold title to the houses they occupy. Ninety-four out of every hundred families pay rent.

One result of these circumstances as Rene Bache points out in Pearson's Magazine, is that the population of the American metropolis shifts in a more kaleidoscopic fashion than any other known.

"Why, Bobby Jones! I never heard such wicked language."

"Well, Ma, Cauce: uses it."

"Then you must quit playing with him at once."

Cleared the Place of Rats.

The ingenuity of a South Norfolk, Conn., workman in tying a small bell around the neck of a rat and then liberating it has completely freed the company's factory of an army of these pests.

The noise of the tinkling bell frightened them away.

Siamese Object to Walking.

The Siamese, above all nations in the world, hate to walk; no such mode of progression is tolerated by a Siamese if he or she can by any means ride.

A Venatian gondolier will walk sometimes; even a Hollander will ride on his rough cart; but a Bangkok man — not if he can help it. His family boat for him.

The average girl's idea of reckless dissipation is a soda fountain beverage that costs more than a dime.—Atchinson Globe.