

The Native Charm

As Westcott realized the import of the letter his mind reeled dizzily in a rush of conflicting emotions and then overmastering all else came the mighty sense of power.

Lying dormant and unexpressed within himself had long been the desire to become a potent factor in the great world beyond the limited scope of Merrittown, and now, by the will of David Thare, the opportunity lay within his hands.

It was with only a slight pain that he faced the parting with his mother and the faint regret at the thought of Ruth was tinged with resignation.

At first his letters were long and frequent. They breathed of tenderness and teemed with the exhilaration of his new life.

After the first glad, welcoming thought, the mother glanced with a sudden fear about the dingy old home. How insufficient and intolerable it would seem to him now.

Ruth glanced wistfully at the white muslin dress it was the prettiest one she had and yet it seemed so inadequate. The memory of those first eloquent letters flashed upon her of the marvellous gowns which he had described.

When Westcott jumped from the train at Merrittown his step was eager and impatient. He drew great breaths of the keen fresh air and his eyes lingered about the familiar streets.

"I have been longing for the sight of the old rooms, just the feel of the home and the touch of the dear old things. It was that and something else—which brought me back. I want it all just as it was, the old, stuff pictures, the wax flowers in the little glass case and everything, mother."

She uttered a glad little cry and ran breathlessly to the attic. He followed with eager strides, and together they worked and rummaged until it was all just as it had been.

At length with quickly beating heart he went to Ruth. She would be waiting for him, he knew. He measured her limitless love by all else in this pure, wholesome old town of his.

They talked for a moment in a low-voiced restraint, then suddenly he turned from her and bent his head. "It was my Ruth I wanted to see," he burst out. "My little playmate. There was nothing out there, dear, to hold me. I had all that money could buy and found it dross. I have come back to the gold. But I needed that year, little one: it stilled the unrest."

Then he faced her yearningly. "But where—where's the old blue gingham dress!"—ADELE LOUISE KIMBALL.

PARADISE FOR SUPFRAGISTS

Corner of the Sahara Where Feminism is in Full Swing.

A French explorer just returned from Africa has addressed an open letter to Mlle. Laine and to the women doctor Mme. Pelletier, the great advocates of women's rights.

The Tuaregs, says the explorer, are crafty, cruel and treacherous, but they are ardent apostles of feminism. The Tuareg women are indeed privileged beings.

They are allowed to have an admirer who saddles their camels and runs errands for them. According to the custom, the attitude of this admirer must remain strictly platonic.

According to the laws of the country the Tuareg woman need not follow her husband unless she wants to do so nor is she compelled to serve her house. She is educated, for she can read and this accomplishment, not shared by the other sex, gives her a privileged position in so far as she acts as judge or arbitrator in all difficult cases.

The Antiquity of Man.

In his lecture in Washington, Professor Penck said that it has been known for quite a long time that in western Europe man existed during the glacial epoch. We now know that the great ice age consisted of different glacial times separated by interglacial times.

So much has been said lately about the apparent upsetting of long-established scientific axioms that particular interest attaches to a recent confirmation of a principle that has long been tacitly assumed as correct.

The Oriental religions taught that a star had its special spirit, termed "gen" or "vital principle." This doctrine passes into the religions of the Greeks and Jews, and even into that of the Christian world.

Methods have recently been invented for rolling out sheets of aluminum even finer than those of the ordinary tin-foil. The specific weight of aluminum is about one-eighth that of tin, and its price at present is only half that of the other metal.

Ancient Egyptians to save their eyes decorated their eyelids with beautiful black velvety antimony paint, which protected from glare and Egyptian sore eyes.

The first time a man eats at a boarding house he is a "chesterfield" in manners, but before he has taken three meals there he is playing a grab game like the rest of them.

The nobleness of life depends on its consistency—clearness of purpose and ceaseless energy. All doubt and repenting, and blotching and retouching, and wondering what it will be best to do next, are vice as well as misery.—John Ruskin.

THE DRUMMER'S STORY

The short December afternoon had closed in the little Colorado village among the mountains, and this was Christmas Eve.

The boarders at the Fountain, a small hotel, and the only one the town afforded, had finished the evening meal—a meal similar to that which was to be found at all small villages in the West.

The inmates of the hotel comprised the landlord and his business wife, two hired girls, some 15 or a dozen miners, and five or six drummers, brought of the grip, who were forced by the inclemency of the weather to take refuge at the Fountain.

The snow had been falling steadily all day, and was still falling, the drifts in some places being several feet deep.

The men were seated around the table, some playing cards and others telling stories. "Come, Tom," said one of the drummers, "it's your turn or a story; give us something good—something true this time."

Tom was a dark, handsome fellow, with black hair and deep blue eyes—eyes that were full of magnetic power. He pushed back his chair, crossed one leg over his knee and, with his hands thrust deep into his pockets, began:

"I once knew a fellow at school, who for instance, I will call Fred—bright, quick-witted, generous to a fault, but very unshrewd. His pranks some times brought him to disgrace at school, but as Fred was a general favorite he finished the term all right and was graduated with honors."

He entered college with bright hopes and high aspirations, and while there made some brilliant successes, but alas! there was to be a fat, fat fellow of an entirely different stamp.

Bob Turner was a lazy good-for-nothing fellow, who wanted to see the world at the expense of someone else. He told Fred that if they had a few hundred dollars their fortunes would be assured.

They then went to New York, where their money was speedily disposed of, and Bob, seeing that Fred was now penniless, heavily deserted him.

Fred at first did not know what to do, as he was without money or friends. He could not go back to his home with such a disgrace attached to him, so the next thing was to look for employment.

After a long and tedious pursuit, he succeeded in obtaining a position in a small office, for which he was poorly paid. He remained there about six months and then obtained a more lucrative position as traveling salesman for a leading New York firm.

One of his trips took him to Ohio, to the city of Cleveland, where he met a beautiful girl.

Alice Hastings was a girl of society and used to being admired. She showed a marked preference for Fred, from the first and soon became as much attached to him as he was to her. They were engaged about six months and then there was a quiet wedding at Alice's home.

While stopping at one of the principal hotels in Chicago Alice met a stranger whose polished manners and flattering tongue, together with his handsome face, soon won her affections. She walked with him, danced with him and drove with him, despite her husband's objections.

His kind heart forgave her many things, thinking she would soon forget the stranger.

One night, after a hard day's toil of travel and dust and noise of trains, Fred returned to his hotel room weary and weary. He called the waiter to his room with a heavy heart.

After five years' work Australia's great transcontinental rabbit-proof fence has been completed. Its length is 2,036 miles, and the cost of its erection has been nearly \$1,250,000.

THIEVES TO CATCH THIEVES

Many Former Bandits Now in Mounted Police.

The rurales or mounted police have pretty nearly put a stop to brigandage. Several years ago the Government reorganized the wisdom of the old adage "Get a thief to catch a thief" and offered pardon and protection to all brigands who would enter as rurales.

Most of them took advantage of the offer, writes Dillon Wallace in Quilnes, and with these men on the side of law and order brigands soon became infrequent, and the rurales developed into a wonderfully efficient mounted force to hunt down bandits.

The rurales of Mexico compare favorably in bravery and reckless daring with that wonderful organization the Northwest Mounted Police of Canada and are by far the best armed force in Mexico. Their calling gives them opportunity for wild adventure, and has satisfied the craving for a life of danger, which led many of them, to be brigands in the first instance.

Christmas Temptations. "I don't know how it is," sighed Mrs. Westcott to her husband, "I start out to do my Christmas shopping full of generous impulses, and lose them by the way."

"Last year I bought the waist for dearer all right, but when I got it home it was so pretty and just the color I love. As long as she didn't know about it, I reasoned, there was no harm done."

"Well, I kept the waist for myself, although I never told you, James; and as I couldn't afford to buy her anything expensive after spending so much on the waist, I found a pretty stock collar, and sent that."

"I really didn't enjoy wearing the waist as much as I thought I should, and a few days after Christmas I just confessed the truth, and told her she could have it."

"The joke of it was," concluded Mrs. Westcott, "that she had done the same thing, only instead of sending me a stock collar, she had sent a handkerchief."

Some women were discussing over their afternoon tea the statement that a man in his nerve a hero to his wife than to his valet. There seemed to be no opposition to the idea that a man's servant did not appreciate him, but all stoutly maintained that their husbands were heroes—in one way or another.

"My husband is very heroic," said Mrs. Slack. "For instance, he will give up his visit to the club to play checkers with my old mother, and she is his mother-in-law, you know."

"I think I can beat that," remarked Mrs. Gray. "When my milliner's quarterly bill comes in my husband smiles as he writes a check, and never thinks of looking at the figure."

"I can give you a better example than either of those!" exclaimed Mrs. White. "When the morning paper comes at breakfast-time, my husband always offers me the first reading of it."

An informal vote awarded the last speaker's husband the medal for heroism.

The Temperate Zone. Prof. R. de C. Ward, a meteorologist, points out that while the term temperate zone very well describes the climate within the band of the earth's surface which it includes in the northern hemisphere, it is often misleading when applied to the corresponding band in the northern hemisphere.

The most extreme climatic conditions prevail within its limits, in the southern hemisphere the climate is more equable because of the relatively vast extent of the ocean surfaces there. Even in the northern hemisphere fully half the area of the temperate zone is covered by water, and it is only over the continental portions that great extremes of heat and cold occur.

Tantalum of Great Value. Tantalum, regarded as a rare metal, is becoming cheaper, and is being tried for razors and surgical instruments. It seems to be superior to fine steel. A thread of tantalum, almost too fine to be seen by the naked eye, supports great weight, also makes fine filament for incandescent lamps and is more economical than carbon.

Colored by Radio-Activity. Radio-active substances cause the appearance of colors in glass and porcelain submitted to their influence. This fact, taken in connection with the knowledge that in places near the nitrate-mines of the province of Aconagua, Chile, white glass becomes colored, has led to the discovery, in those districts, of spots in the soil which manifest a strong radio-activity.

A Texas Chattel Mortgage. A peculiar chattel mortgage was filed with the county clerk of Gonzales county recently, wherein nine turkey hens, one gobbler, and all their increase, are mentioned as collateral.

Mexican Corozo Tree. The corozo tree abounds throughout the Mexican state of Tabasco, and is most abundant in the virgin forests, as it requires shade and humidity to develop favorably.

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