

The times are hard, and hunger and cold Threaten and growl at many a door; The wolf's long cry is fierce and bold, Borne on the sullen night wind's roar, But this is the hour for courage, Love, For daring the foe with nerve and skill, Meeting our care in the strength of prayer, And waiting and working with steady will.

We greet each other with cheery signs As we set our battle in brave array; Closer we draw the household lines, And gallantly meet each dawning day. Now and then, as the dark clouds rift, We catch a glimpse of the sun we light, And, heartened, together a song we lift— There's always blue in the upper sky.

The times are hard, but the children play, And we tuck them under the covert When we reach the end of each struggling day.

And the stars in heaven for lamps are set.

Then, Love, we look in each other's eyes And the kindling light of triumph comes. Oh! what does it matter that times are hard?

When I have you, Love, and you have me!

—[Elizabeth Chisholm, in Harper's Bazaar.]

"NOBLESSE OBLIGE."

On the night of the 3d of November, 189—, James Carlton brought from Paris two magnificent rubies that he had picked up at a sale, and which, considering their history, were dirt cheap at the price he paid for them.

They had belonged to the unfortunate Marie Antoinette, and had been sold by a mistake, of which the shrewd dealer had been quick to avail himself.

It was too late when he reached home to take them to the city, and he, therefore, in the presence of his son John Carlton, deposited them in a safe that stood in the corner of his bedroom.

Over the mantelpiece in this room hung two old horse-pistols, and taking them down the father loaded one, laughingly observing that at all events the report would alarm the neighborhood.

About two o'clock in the morning he was awakened by the sound of fire arms, followed by the slamming of a door. He reached out for the pistol that he had placed on the chair beside him, and found it gone. He heard someone rush across the hall and try the front door; then he heard footsteps on the stairs, and his son rushed into the room with one of the pistols in his hand.

The son's story was that he had a restless night, and that about two o'clock he heard some one moving about very quietly in his father's room, which room connected with his by a swing door. Pushing this door open he saw, by the light of the night-lamp, a man in the act of closing the safe, and before he had recovered from his surprise the fellow slipped quietly out of the room. Catching up the pistol that lay on the chair by his father's bedside, he followed down stairs, across the hall and towards the kitchen, the door of which stood open.

When he challenged the man whom he suspected of having stolen the rubies turned and presented a pistol, and young Carlton fired. It was a very clear, moonlight night, and he distinctly saw the thief stagger. The next instant the kitchen door slammed to, and when he reached it he found it locked. He then ran to the front door and found it also locked and the key gone. Hurrying up to his father's room, he discovered him sitting up in bed as already described. He threw up the bedroom window, which looked upon the street, and called "Police," and when an officer came he found the back door locked and effected an entrance by a window.

On examination it was discovered that the keys of the safe were in the safe door, that the rubies had disappeared, and with them a number of sovereigns.

When old Carlton went to bed that night, he remembered perfectly well that he had put his keys under his pillow. The most rigorous search failed to furnish any proof that the house had been burglariously entered. One of the pistols was missing, as also were the keys of the two doors.

When Carlton senior reported the loss of the jewels to his two partners, the younger of them unhesitatingly declared that John Carlton, the son, was the thief, and, refusing to accept the senior partner's offer to make good the loss, he took out a warrant at once.

Evidence was adduced to show that the young man was heavily in debt, and when it was further proved that he and his father were the only persons who knew the secret of the safe, he was at once committed for trial.

Dr. Castell sat in his snug study, smoking what ought to have been the pipe of peace, but the troubled look on his pale, handsome face betokened an unquiet mind. He was thinking of Alma Talbot, who just one month before had refused him, and that, too, for Jack Carlton, the man who, on the morrow, would most assuredly be branded as a thief. "What would she do?" was the question he asked himself, and as he sat there turning it over in his mind, the answer came to him, as surely as one noble nature can answer for another. She would be true to her promise through good report and evil report, and would wait faithfully for the man whom she believed innocent until he came back to her from prison. No! there could never be any hope for him, that the beautiful woman whom he loved with all his soul, would ever fill the place he had so often fondly assigned her.

In the midst of his gloomy thoughts there came to him the sound of the night bell, and, going to the door, he found on the step an urchin scarcely tall enough to reach the bell. He was to see dad!

Who was dad?

"Mr. Bly, what lived in Green's Alley—and he was awful sick, and would the doctor be sharp?" And as presently the doctor came out, and followed his guide to the slums. Up a rickety stair he passed to find a man

tossing on a miserable bed, and beside him a woman, whose rags betokened her poverty.

The patient complained of intense pain, and by the light of a tiny candle the doctor came across traces of a wound just above the hip.

"How did you get this?"

The man's answer came readily enough.

He had been handling an old pistol, and it had gone off and wounded him, and, although he lost a deal of blood at first, the wound had healed and he was able to get about. Soon, however, he felt intense pain whenever he tried to move, and now was mortal enough.

The doctor's practised fingers soon found a swelling on the man's back, and putting together what he had heard and what he learnt from his manipulation, he came to the conclusion that under that swelling lay the charge that the pistol had contained.

He hurried home, and bringing back a pocket case and chloroform, explained to the wife that he could soon relieve her husband.

It was, however, a longer task than he had anticipated, and when at length his forces closed on the foreign body, he found it of such size that he had to enlarge the primary opening. Then when he had drawn it out, and laid it on the table, he found to his surprise that at the bottom of the wound lay another hard substance. This time he had little difficulty in the extraction. Taking up what he supposed to be the flattened bullet, he dipped them into some water, but when he took them out they were still red.

He dipped them again, and rubbing them well, brought them close to the candle. The blaze of light that flashed at him almost took away his senses. They were jewels, and, even to his inexperienced eye, very valuable. He almost reeled as the truth suddenly came to him! With trembling fingers he dressed the wound, and telling the woman he would call again, hurried home.

Long he sat and stared at the glittering stones.

They were rubies, and from the description given by the elder Carlton were the very jewels that had disappeared on the night of the 3d of November.

How had they come where he had found them?

Was Jack Carlton's story of the man in the room true?

Did he hold the clue that, if followed up, might prove his rival innocent?

Should he follow it up?

Then began the fiercest fight with his conscience that Frank had ever fought.

Let him hold his peace, and Carlton would be lost to society for years, perhaps. Then, as time went by, might not his devotion be rewarded? Would that proud girl unite herself to a man who had been publicly branded as a thief, and would she take to herself a dishonored name?

Little by little the tempter's whipers grew louder, until they swelled into tones that were likely to drown for ever the "still, small voice of conscience."

And so the struggle swayed on all through the long night, until at last nobility of soul triumphed, and in humble imitation of Him who had once been so sorely tempted and had so gloriously conquered, Frank cast Satan behind him! And the first rays of God's sun shone athwart the room and rested tenderly on his bent head, while from each of the jewels that lay on the table there flashed up an answering ray as if were of triumph!

The court-house was crowded. The jury had retired to consider their verdict, and none doubted what that verdict would be.

Hush! Here they come!

"Gentlemen of the jury," the clerk was beginning, when there was a sudden bustle at the door of the court. Their voices were heard and a man was seen pushing his way to the front. It was Castell. A rumor went round that unexpected evidence had turned up, and the rumor was turned into certainty when a few minutes later the doctor was seen standing in the witness-box. This was his evidence: First of all, he gave an account of how he had found the jewels, and two people in that court hung upon his words. Alma Talbot and James Carlton had never believed the prisoner guilty. Breathlessly they listened as the story went on. In a clear, steady voice that could be heard by the farthest listener in that eager crowd, the witness told how he had gone back to Green's Alley and found the man dying; how he had implored him to confess that he knew; and how, at last, he had obtained the confession in the presence of a reliable witness.

William Bly had entered the Carlton's house on the night of the 3d of November, and had made his way to the father's bedroom. He (Bly) was standing in the shadow of the bed curtains when suddenly the old man had risen and, with a bunch of keys in his hand, walked toward the safe.

At this moment Bly noticed the pistol on the chair, and, stooping over, secured it and hid again behind the curtains. Then James Carlton took up the night lamp, and when its light fell upon his face, Bly recognized that he was walking in his sleep. Unlocking the safe Carlton took some from it, and stood apparently in thought. Suddenly he walked to the mantelpiece, took up the other pistol, and going to the dressing-table went through some movements as though he were loading it. Then, without returning to the safe, he came to the bedside, laid the pistol he was carrying where the other had been, and got into bed. Bly waited a few minutes, went to the safe, took the safe, and hurried from the room.

He had taken the precaution to secure the keys of both doors. When he was challenged he presented the pistol, but before he could fire, he heard a report, and felt himself hit. He was able to get out and lock the door, and so escaped.

What really happened whilst James Carlton was handling the pistol can never be exactly known, but it is certain that he then put the rubies into the pistol, and when John Carlton

fired, he saw them into the body of William Bly.

It was useless for the ushers to call "Silence!" when the verdict of "Not guilty" was given, and, perhaps, only one man in all that crowd went home with a heavy heart.

Frank Castell will remember Alma's kiss on the morning of her marriage, until time shall no longer be aught to him. —[Tit Bits.]

A STRANGE PEOPLE.

The Queer Race Known as the Ainu in Japan.

The word Ainu is a generic term, and signifies "hairy men"—a name applied to these curious people by themselves, says the St. James Budget. The Japanese estimate the number of the Ainu at 16,000, but Mr. Landor, after deducting the half-castes, reckons that they do not exceed half that number. Pleasure and rest were the two chief objects, we are told, which induced Mr. Landor to visit these isles, but it appears to have been his fate to meet with neither. He landed at Hakodate, and after one day's rest set forth to survey the island and interview the inhabitants. He traveled some 4,200 miles, of which, 3,800 were traversed on horseback on a rough pack saddle, and, like the hero of Scott's ballad, "he rode all unarmed and he rode all alone."

"I sat down in the tea-house on the soft mats, and my Bento—Japanese lunch—was served to me on a tiny table. This was water soup; there was suet, there was a bowl of rice and raw fish. The fish—a small fun—was in a diminutive dish, and its back was covered by a leaf; the head projected over the side of the plate. On the leaf were placed several neatly cut pieces of raw flesh, which had apparently been removed from the back of the underlyng animal.

"As I had long been accustomed to Japanese food of this kind, I ate to my heart's content, when, to my horror, the fun, which had been staring at me with its round eyes, relieved of the weight that had passed from its back to my digestive organs, leaped up, leaf and all from the dish, and fell on the mat. All the vital parts had been carefully left in the fish, and the wretched creature was still alive.

"Horrible!" I cried, violently pushing away the table and walking out disgusted, to the great surprise of the people present, who expected me to revel in the deliciousness of the dish." They were rubies, and from the description given by the elder Carlton were the very jewels that had disappeared on the night of the 3d of November.

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Both lips are surrounded by it; but not all women are thus marked. Some have no more than a semi-circular tattoo on the upper lip; others have an additional semi-circle under the lower lip, and many get tired of the painful process when the tattoo is hardly large enough to surround their lips. The father of the girl is generally the operator, but occasionally it is the mother who "decorates" the lips and arms of her female offspring. Besides this tattooed mustache, a horizontal line joins the eyebrows, and another line, parallel to it, runs across the forehead. The tattoo could not be of a coarser kind. A rough geometrical drawing adorns the arms and hands of women, the pattern of one arm being often different from that of the other.

Washing Soft Coal Smoke.

First, the smoke is drawn from the stack by a powerful fan, and it is then forced through a revolving cylinder into a tank filled with water. Perforated beaters are fixed to the back of the cylinder and these drop into the water and scrub or wash the smoke, which is put back into the chimney in the form of a perfectly pure vapor. The sooty carbon, which is washed from the smoke, is brought out at the bottom of the tank all bubbling and boiling over, to all appearance a black foaming froth. The arrangement of the apparatus allows an inspection of the washing process, and of the vapor, which, after the cleansing has been performed in the tank below, is perfectly white and odorless, and thrown through the chimney into the air as steam.

It is an interesting fact that the black extract is admirably adapted for use in the composition of paint and priming ink, while the ammoniated water remaining after the washing, possesses the properties of a powerful disinfectant.

—[Philadelphia Ledger.]

He Added a Postscript.

The following genuine "bull" story is related by a down town merchant: An out of town customer to whom some goods had been shipped, discovered, as he thought, a mistake in the bill overcharging him to a considerable amount. He wrote to the merchant in the city without delay, and the letter was duly received. It dwelt at length on carelessness in general and particularly in the case of this bill, waxing indignant over the foolish mistake and demanding a correct bill at once. At the foot of the bill was the hastily written postscript to this effect, "Since writing the above I have re-examined your bill and find it correct after all." —[New York Tribune.]

DOWN TO THE HEELS.

THE LENGTH OF GOWNS FOR BABIES AND BUDS.

Six-Year-Olds, However, Wear Their Skirts Distinctly Short—Many Designs of Latest Pattern for Little Maidens of Tender Years.

Gowns for Little Girls.

New York correspondence:

BABIES and buds may wear distinctively different gowns, but about the sixth year little Miss Maiden comes into a new style of dress. Away go long gowns, not until then is she a shy debutante. Frills and frivolities in dainty following of mamma's own masquerade her wear now, and the skirt is will be distinctly short—as short, indeed, as the prettiness of the limbs allows. From a quaint, serious little Gretchen creature, the girl at 5 or 6 suddenly becomes a light-footed butterfly or a fluffy-skirted fairy. Just now, to look over the children's outfits for maids of about this age, one would fancy that little Miss Maiden did nothing in the world but go to dancing and parties. This is probably because the short dress lends themselves so deliciously to party effects, and this leads many a mother to keep her daughter in such skirts after most women—especially those who haven't daughters—would insist upon their ankles being hidden. An example of this sort is pictured in the initial—style of crepon trimmed liberally with lace insertion and ribbon, and by the maker described as "for a young lady of 12."

For young ladies of from 6 to 10—for if a chit of a dozen years is a young lady, why is not a child of 6—muslin, gauze, tulle and chiffon over silk slips seems to be the general thing. Skirt and bodice are all one, the silken slip being usually low-necked and short-

"**WITH SKIRT FASHIONABLY BANDED.**"
sleeves, with a skirt that flares with the regulation nine gores as often as it is made full in the more simple round skirt style. The muslin affair that goes over this is a muslin skirt; it comes right to the throat and down to the wrists usually, and on it is expended a deal of the most exquisite needlework. Real lace of the simpler patterns is used in narrow widths and in insertion, baby ribbon runs through hand-buttressed circles in the dainty frills, revers, bertras, and flounces spread over the puffs at the sleeves, bits of bows are everywhere and nothing seems too daintily elaborate.

Gowns of very rich goods are also made; satins, for instance, that will stand alone, in very delicate shades, cream, pink and blue. These are made more simply, a couple of tiny frills of silk muslin about the edge of the skirt, and a sufficiently fluffy bertha effect of muslin about the shoulders being all that is required. A somewhat less expensive model comes in China silk and is the mother's second offering here. This skirt has two rows of gores about its foot, above them are five rows of guipure insertion. Insertion is seen, too, in the sleeves and their epaulets, and the yoke of shirred silk is outlined by a ruffle of rich lace. Wash silk is used, self-trimmed, and, to tell the truth, makes almost as pretty as fluffy as a ballet-dancer's are worn.

Outside all there is a little cloak, quite like mamma's opera cloak, that is fur lined and made with lots of capes. In the third picture there is to be seen a little girl's coat made of pale gray cloth trimmed with bands of krimmer.

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Fashionable Fads.

Braids in all shades of trimmings. Surplus waists of glace taffeta. Heavy white satin with a sort of ground-glass effect.

Frillings, flutings, flounces, festoons, fuchs and other "f's."

Infants' caps of lawn embroidered with insertion effects.

Point d'esprit lace for fancy work, tricotting, jabots, etc.

Algerian or heron's plumes, lacquered Russias in green.

Beetroot velvet or broadcloth in combination with pale pink.