



CHAPTER XII.

Only the other day leading the calm and peaceful life of the convent, pacing its sweet walks with Lucie, pressed by the sister, the days had glided by with so easy and gentle a flow. There had been thoughts of Paul, Lucie, happy and fluttering thoughts, such as will disturb a maiden's breast when she has almost at her side a dearest companion and friend, ready to make suggestions and sing the praises of a brother who is a perfect hero in her eyes. Then, too, there was the unsatisfied longing to see the loving mother, whose letters came so regularly across the sea, full of eager inquiry respecting her child's health and happiness, full of delight, too, at the progress made. And then a thunder-bolt had come the change, even exceeding even with bewildering rapidity, till Aube found herself half-stricken by her position at the house which stood upon the ruins of the cottage where she was born.

Again and again she had asked herself if it was a dream, but the reality was there before her, and she strove hard to hide the disgust she felt at her surroundings and the people by whom the place was besieged. During the first day or two her surprise was constant, and she awakened rapidly to the fact that while her mother's home was nothing more than a cabaret and store whose customers were almost without exception the blacks of the neighborhood, this mother, who idolized her, was treated by the people in their rough way as if she were their queen. A look was given her, sufficient, and she was obeyed on the instant, while in their most boisterous moments Nousie's presence silenced them at once.

Aube heard Madame Saintone call her mother Madame Dulac, but there was no Madame Dulac, and she knew that the name did not seem to be recognized, for the Madame had been softened into Madame, generally made into two syllables, and her old fantastic name of Venus—Venusie, as her husband had loved to call his beautiful wife—had, for years past, become Nousie, almost from the day when, recovering from the prostration consequent upon the assassination of her husband, who had in his dying moment avenged himself upon his enemy, she had found herself the owner of some land and a pile of ashes to mark the spot where her happy home had stood.

This was after a long illness passed in a rough shelter in the forest at the back, where Cherubine had dragged half-burnt boards, and cut leaves and bushes to help form a lean-to hut. Here the black girl had nursed her mother, the sick and delirious woman, and playing with and tending the pretty child she worshipped.

It was a long, slow recovery, Nousie's doctor being an old black woman, whose herb decoctions allayed the fever, so that she struggled back to life.

For months Cherubine tended her, and though the black people scattered here and there brought her fruit, and occasionally a chicken or a few eggs, it was her girl's nurse who was the mainstay of her existence, keeping her and the child by the sale of the fruit and the flowers she collected daily and carried into town.

It was Cherubine, too, who from these small beginnings had originated the business which had sprung up. It was the work of many years, but first one addition was made, then another, and of them suggestions from the keen, clever girl, till, face to face as she was with poverty, Nousie had at last roused her self for her child's sake to actual participation in the girl's work, the old pleasant life of a colonist's lady had rapidly dropped away, and rapt in her love for her child, whom she had quietly sent to France, she had toiled on and on till she had arrived at the pitch she occupied at Aube's return.

This was literally that of queen among the half-civilized people; and Aube's first inkling of the fact was the morning after her arrival when after—with heavy heart—trying to partake of the breakfast pressed upon her by Cherubine, and suffering keenly from the feelings she strove hard to keep down, she was quite startled by the buzz of voices outside the verandah window, and she shrank from the shaded window, trembling, and tried to occupy herself by looking about her room, which had evidently been prepared for her with loving care.

To her surprise she found endless tokens of refined taste, relics they were of Nousie's recollections of her past life. For she had found Cherubine into her counsel and regardless of the fact, had the rough ordinary furniture which had contented her during years of solid toil, replaced by the best Port au Prince could supply. There was a piano, too, perfectly new, with the slightly rusted key in the lock, and a pile of new music in a canteen by the side.

It struck Aube as being strangely incongruous to the surroundings of the place; but everything was so, even her presence there, and as she stood beside the instrument, her face at once, and she shrank from trying to gaze into the future—a future which was full of blank despair.

As she stood there the bustle and noise outside increased, a shrill woman's voice struck up a weird, strange song, whose peculiarity struck Aube at once, and made her turn her face towards the window just as the strain was repeated in chorus and was accompanied by the wailing chords of a native guitar and the thrumming of some kind of drum.

Then the one voice sang another strain, so weird and strange that Aube felt thrilled by the tones. It was not beautiful, but like the air of some old country ballads, possessed those elements which appeal to every nature and never fail.

The chorus was rising again, accompanied now by the stamping of feet and the regular beat of hands, when the door was flung open, and Cherubine rushed in, to literally fling herself at Aube's feet, seize her hands and hold them to her cheeks, before kissing them with wild, hysterical delight, her eyes flashing, her teeth glittering, and her bosom heaving with delight.

"Oh, you beautiful, you beautiful!" she whispered hoarsely. "Kiss poor Cherub once more, like you did when a tiny little girl."

Aube bent down and pressed her ruddy lips on the broad, black brow, with the result that as she knelt there Cherubine flung her arms about the girl's waist and burst into a fit of hysterical sobbing. She checked it directly and showed her teeth.

"It's because she's so glad. Everybody glad Madame Nousie's beautiful babe come back. Hark! how they sing and shout!" "It's because I have come!" whispered Aube, who felt startled.

"Yes, and the flowers and the fruit." Cherubine was checked at that moment by the coming of Nousie, looking proud, flushed and excited.

Her heavy, inert ways seemed to have departed as she pressed her child to her breast, and took her hand, to hold it in both of hers for a few moments before kissing it tenderly.

"My dearest," she whispered; and Aube felt that in their eyes sixteen years of the past were as nothing—that she was still the idolized child.

"Th' letter," she whispered to herself, and she looked gently at her mother, through the medium of his words, and leaned forward and kissed her.

"My beautiful one," she whispered fondly as she pressed her child to her breast. Then drawing herself up proudly—"They are all collecting from miles away. The news has gone round that you have come back, and they are asking to see you."

"Don't be afraid, little one," said Nousie, fondly. "It is to see my darling. Aube, dearest, they are my people. Come."

Once more trembling, and as if in a dream, Aube resigned herself to her position, and, passing her arm round her, Nousie led her proudly from the room—the tall, slight figure, draped in white, beside the heavy-looking woman in her garish attire—out through the veranda to where the broad sunstone stood the crowd of blacks, at that moment in full chorus of the wild, weird song.

As the white figure was led out the chorus stopped as if at the beat of a conductor's wand; there was a pause of some moments, during which Nousie drew herself up, and proudly round, and once more her heavy features were illumined by animation, and she displayed something of the beauty of the young wife of old.

Then there burst forth a wild cry of delight, the crowd rushed forward, and through the midst of giddy excitement Aube saw that every one bore flowers of gorgeous colors and rough baskets of tropic fruit which they were pressing on her; but at that moment her gaze was riveted by the fierce dark eyes of a tall mulatto girl behind whom stood a herculean black with curiously knotted hair.

Aube did not flinch, but she was fascinated by the lurid eyes of the great black; and as she turned slightly aside it was to meet the half envious, half mocking gaze of the handsome mulatto girl, who, with a wreath of creamy, strongly-scented flowers.

"From Genie," she said aloud, "for Madame Nousie's girl."

There had been silence while the mulatto, who seemed in authority there, spoke. Then there was a shout of delight.

Aube's lips moved as she tried to express her thanks, and she took the wreath to raise it to her lips. But her hands stopped half way, and a slight shiver of cold passed through her, while her eyes remained fixed, fascinated now by those of the giver of the wreath.

CHAPTER XIII.

"You have not been to see her?" "No; I promised you I would not; but I am going to break my word if something is not done at once."

"Don't be foolish, boy. I told you to leave it to me. She has only been home a week."

"A week. Long enough for me to lose my chance, Etienne?" "There, you must confess that it is a chance, Etienne?"

"Indeed?" said Madame Saintone. "Do you hear this, 'Toinette'?" "Yes, I hear," said the girl, contemptuously. "You people have gone mad about the wretched girl."

"Wretched girl!" cried Saintone, angrily. "You talk like that, you who are favoring the advances of the greatest idiot in Port au Prince."

"There, there," said Madame Saintone, "no quarreling children; and you, Etienne, be at rest. I have waited so long because I thought it wisdom. To-day, for your sake, I am going to call at that wretched place. Poor child! She will have time to realize her surroundings, and be ready to jump at my offer."

"Your offer?" said Saintone. "Yes, my dear. I propose to bring her away from her miserable home at once." Saintone kissed her eagerly.

"Don't be too sure that I shall succeed. I never knew the rights of the matter, but there was a great quarrel between that poor girl's father and yours, Etienne, and Nousie has never treated me cordially."

"Oh, but that's a matter of years ago." "Yes, and she will of course be dazzled by the proposal that Aube should come and stay with us. There, as I have said before, leave it to me. If I cannot succeed you cannot."

"If that girl is to be brought here I shall certainly leave the house," said Antoine, etc., etc.

"Indeed, you will not, madame," said her mother, calmly. "No," said Saintone, fiercely, "and I tell you this, for every unkind look or word you give Madame Dulac I'll keep account, and visit it heavily on that fool, Antoine."

Antoinette turned white, and a dark shadow came under her eyes, as she whispered through her closed teeth: "I'm not afraid of you, Etienne. You're only a coward. Visit it on Jules, and I'll kill your miserables. I can manage 'Toinette'."

"My dear children," said Madame Saintone, plaintively, "I cannot have you quarrel. 'Toinette,' such words as these are shocking." "Then let him hold his tongue, and not threaten me, mamma. I'm not going to bow down and worship Nousie's girl because she has money. Oh! it is too absurd!"

She left the room, and Madame Saintone turned to her son.

"Don't threaten her again, my dear," she said, "and do, pray, leave this business to me. I can manage 'Toinette'."

An hour later Madame Saintone was being driven to the house at the outskirts of the town, feeling a slight shrinking as she approached the place and saw the number of blacks idling about the veranda and sleeping in the sunshine.

"They will not dare to molest me," she said to herself, proudly; but all the same she could not help recalling the various troubles consequent upon the independent position taken up by the black race. To her surprise, however, instead of being received by the people in sullen silence and with furtive looks, there were smiles and salutations, and one woman went so far as to offer her a few flowers.

Madame Saintone received these graciously as she was stepping out of her carriage, listening the while with some surprise to the tones of a piano, a few chords upon which were being struck carelessly. But the next moment she was face to face with the difficulty of her task, Nousie having left her child to hurry out to meet what seemed to her a danger.

"Ah, Madame Dulac," said Madame Saintone, smiling, but without offering her hand, "I have called to see your charming daughter. I think I have been most patient in waiting all these days before renewing our delightful acquaintance."

"What do you want?" said Nousie, suspiciously. "Why have you come?" She spoke in a loud tone, and was evidently suffering from great excitement.

Madame Saintone smiled. "Oh, come," she said playfully, "you must not want to keep the poor child all to yourself, Madame Dulac. You forget what friends my daughter and Aube had become. I want you to let her go for a drive and then spend a few hours with us up at Beau Rivage. You will not say so?"

It was on Nousie's lips to say no, never trouble us again, but it was beginning to dawn upon her that she had brought her child to a very unsuitable home. She had been startled at the difference between the fair hair of the child and the mother had had this one thought—her child; and it had not occurred to her that this child would return to her an accomplished lady, whose every word and act would stand in strange contrast to her own. And now in this brief interview she had to battle with two ideas. Would she be standing in her child's light in checking all further intercourse? On the other hand, if she allowed Aube to accept the invitation, would she be doing that which sent an agonizing pang through her, widening the gulf between her and her child?

(To be continued.)

HE READ THE MESSAGE.

But the Drug Clerk's Translation Was Not Correct.

They were standing on the corner of Seventh and Vine streets not many nights ago. One of them had just received a telegram, says the Cincinnati Tribune, and he was making a great effort to read it. He tried it for several minutes and then handed it to his friend with an air of disgust.

The second individual gave it up after struggling with it a quarter of an hour. "I never saw anything to beat that," he remarked, as he handed the message back, "and I've seen some pretty bad writing in my time, too."

"Well, I can't read it, and I'd like to know what it says badly." "Let me see? Ah, I have it. Drug clerks can read most any kind of writing. Let us go and see."

They went to the nearest pharmacy and handed the message to the prescription clerk. Before an explanation could be made, he darted to the rear of the shop, and disappeared behind a screen.

After an absence of fifteen minutes, during which both men had grown very restless, the clerk appeared, and as he handed a bottle to one of the men, he said:

"Sixty cents, please." Rather stunned for a while, the man opened the package and read on the label:

"One teaspoonful, to be taken three times every hour." When an explanation was made, the clerk set up the soda water.

Two Pounds of Honey a Year.

A French naturalist with a mathematical turn of mind has been calculating the work done by a hive of bees. When the weather is favorable a "worker," according to his estimate, makes usually six to ten trips, visiting forty to eighty flowers, and collecting about one grain of nectar. Even when under extraordinarily good conditions he visits two hundred or four hundred flowers, the amount collected would not exceed five or six grains, and the collection of a pound would occupy several years.

A hive contains twenty thousand to fifty thousand bees, of which only half are occupied in preparing honey, the rest caring for the young and their quarters. In a good day sixteen thousand to twenty thousand bees can, in six to ten trips, visit three hundred thousand to one million flowers. For this it would be necessary that the locality should be favorable for honey-making, and that the nectar-secreting plants should grow near the hive. A hive of thirty thousand bees can then, under good conditions, make about two pounds of honey a year.

A Small Earth.

Four leading French scientists—Villard, Cotard, Seyrig and Tissandier—have succeeded in making a wonderful model of the earth. It is a huge sphere, forty-two feet in diameter and has painted on its outside all details of the earth's geography. At Paris, where the pigmy world is being exhibited, an iron and glass dome has been erected over the globe. The building is eight-sided, and is well provided with elevators and stairways, which make it an easy task for the visitor to examine "all parts of the world." The globe weighs eight tons, but is so nicely balanced that it can easily be rotated by a small hand-wheel. The entire surface area is five hundred and twenty-five feet, which is sufficient to exhibit all the mountains, rivers, islands and cities, even to the principal thoroughfares of the latter.

Crazed by a Fall.

Ray Burton, the 15-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. John Burton, of Spencer, O., last week shouldered a gun and started for the woods to hunt. He was found wandering about the streets at 6 o'clock in the evening, but could give no information as to who he was or where he lived, his mental faculties being entirely gone. A careful investigation of the woods showed where he had climbed a tree to a height of thirty-five feet, from which he fell to the ground, striking on his right temple. The gun had been discharged and was broken to pieces. The lad is still mentally unbalanced and may not recover.

It is a mistake to speak of accepting the inevitable. People don't accept it; they simply get it.

FOR THE FAIR SEX.

ROUND WAISTS NOT FASHIONED.

The round waist and fancy bodice has but a small place in the styles now offered for elegant dresses, but fashions don't change completely all at once, and the dainty waists women have been wearing are not to be absolutely discarded. They cannot but look pretty, at any rate, for the house for many a long day yet. Designers for costumes made from warm stuffs know this, and many of the woolen house dresses are cut and a "rind" in close resemblance to fancy waist styles.

FAN BAGS.

The newest fan-bags are dainty little affairs. One of these in particular was made in the usual long and narrow shape, but pointed at the bottom. It was a pale blue satin, and both back and front was painted a dainty floral design, sprinkled here and there with minute sequins and gems. The bag was outlined with fine silk cord, which served also for handles. It was lightly quilted and perfumed and lined with a soft shade of green. It must be an exquisite fan, indeed, to be worthy of such a satchel.

BEAR FUR.

New York fashion writers announce that "bear fur" is in favor again. There is something fine in the sound of "bear fur," it would never do to say "bear skin" when on the shoulders of the fair half of the Four Hundred. And it would never do to speak of "goat skin" after the white cashmere gown has been skinned out of his skin for a lady's cloak. Say "goat fur," please, and "sheep fur," if it is necessary and dyed in the wool, as ticks have died. "Bear fur" is the proper thing.

A MARRIED WOMAN'S SIGNATURE.

Most of the readers of "Silas Lapham" will remember poor Mrs. Lapham's dilemma over the way to sign her name to a note and how she extracted herself by saying, "Mrs. S. Lapham," which she thought non-committal. All better informed than herself know that there is no mistake in etiquette much more scorned than this very blunder. Yet all must feel that it is an absurd ruling which makes a married woman give no hint of her husband's name, and her own usual title even in letters of pure business. This is the English idea, which has been imported to America. In France a woman makes a distinction between her social and her business correspondence. With the former she signs herself, for instance, "Mary Smith," and with the latter "Mrs. John Smith." And common sense would seem to be on the side of the French woman.

RULES FOR STOUT WOMEN.

Firstly. Wear soft, clinging materials; leave heavy stuffs and fluffy stuffs to the slim. Secondly. Don't line your skirts; crinoline is for the willows. Thirdly. Don't put balloons on your arms; full drooping sleeves expose you to less ridicule and are as fashionable. Fourthly. Don't tighten the waist; it makes you look stouter. Moreover, it will give you tremendous hips and a big bust, and these this winter are out of fashion. Fifthly. Don't wear a velvet bodice; it increases the apparent size. Sixth. Try satin; it lessens the size. Seventhly. Wear dark colors. Eighthly, and lastly—for long sermons have gone on. Try always for up and down lines; eschew cross effects.

DUE TO BIG SLEEVES.

For things inanimate big sleeves have swayed men and women in an astonishing degree. They have turned more many a man's plans upside down, made garments decidedly costlier, and, as if not content with that, their demands for departure from the old order of things has entered the photographers' studio until he has been obliged to forewear all styles before followed. No longer is there sufficient room across the card to photograph the sitter, but it must be turned lengthwise to provide room to "take" the sleeves without reducing the size of the face.

The original photograph of a score or so years ago, mounted on a card about the size of an ordinary playing card, certainly belongs to the shades of the past.

"Many people think it is a fad of the photographer and well known up-and-down artist," "to furnish pictures in this shape, but it is more than that; the big sleeves have made it a necessity. But people like oddity, and even if they do think it a fad on our part they give us credit for being clever, so I am satisfied."

RARE OLD COINS FOR BUTTONS.

It will doubtless rejoice more than one woman's heart to learn that she will not have to give up her blazer" suit, as that the parade will not ways cling to the comfortable coat and skirt and long worn. It is to be worn all winter with a handsome blouse waist. The skirt and coat will be made of very heavy cheviot or other cloth, both perfectly plain and devoid of trimming. That is, if one may expect buttons. But, really, the buttons that burden under garments and outside garments, wraps, dresses and skirts are a trimming in themselves.

Some of the mother-of-pearl are beautifully shaded and most artistically carved and polished, and then there are buttons of carved bone and horn, and immense gold and silver ones, gilded and chased and cunningly hammered in most enticing designs. The very latest craze in buttons is to make them of rare old coins! Did you ever hear tell of such a thing? Imagine the agony of a coin collector on meeting with one of these curio-bedecked women; when on inspection he finds that she has deliberately and with malice premeditated that the date line on the price-plate defaced! But it is mighty little the average woman will care for that if she can just get the coins.

If she can't get the real, she will substitute worn imitations, and wear as buttons as soon have the most of the horrid old ones, anyhow. Medallions and aluminum buttons are also much admired. Of course, you know that buttons were the pride and joy of the coquette of 1774, hence it is that the antique designs worn by gallants of that day, preserved in the French museum, have been reproduced, though rather costly for the common eye. Malachite mined in Siberia, cat's eyes from Ceylon, tiger's eyes from India, and satiny moonstones are among the costlier materials from which buttons will be manufactured.

On his return to Cordova from a visit to Mar del Plata, where he had beheld the sea for the first time, Pedro brought with him a bottle containing about an inch of salt from the shore and two inches of salt water, to enable his parents, who had never seen the ocean, to form some idea of what it was like. We are informed that his parents were greatly impressed.

A Sample of the Sea.

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The Religion of Japan.

By the census of 1894 there were 117,718 Buddhist temples, 52,511 priests, 44,123 monks and 8,996 students in the theological schools of Japan. There were 75,877 shinto priests, 136,652 temples, 168 national temples or cathedrals and 1,158 male and 228 female students.

Steamships Steered by a Finger.

Marvelous progress has been made in marine architecture and equipment within the past few years. There was a time when the wheelhouse of a big ocean steamer contained eight stalwart men, who, in rough weather, would find it almost a herculean task to manage the wheel. Nowadays the light touch of an infant's hand upon the wheel is of sufficient power to turn a vessel completely round. Huge boats are now steered by a steam apparatus, which is as quick and effective as the touch upon an ordinary electric button.

Queen Victoria and 'he Umbrella.

The stories about the Queen's visits to poor people are legion. Here is one more given in the current "London Home." When on one of her rambles in the country, the Queen was caught in a shower and she entered an old woman's cottage, the inmate of which did not recognize her sovereign. "Will you lend me an umbrella?" asked the royal lady. The woman looked at her visitor in a suspicious manner, and replied, "I have two umbrellas, one is good and one verra old. Ye may take the old one. I guess I will never see it again," and she offered the Queen a tattered article, which was quickly accepted! The woman was sufficiently punished for her grumpiness, however, when she discovered who the visitor had been.

Bowery Pistols.

Pistols are almost as plentiful on the Bowery as shoes in a shoe factory. The secondhand dealers, the pawnbrokers' salesmen and the hardware men almost literally festoon some of their windows with them. They make fringes and tassels of them and pile them in heaps. They sell them for from half a dollar upward. A pistol seems to be the first thing that boys buy when they get a little money, and the first thing they and the east side sports part with when they are hard up, and the Bowery is where they nearly all seem to buy and sell them.

Opening an Account.

Clever Little Story of One Man's Financial Career.

"When I go into a bank I get rattled. The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me; everything rattles me. The moment I cross the threshold of a bank I am a hesitating jay. If I attempt to transact business there I become an irresponsible idiot. I knew this beforehand, but my salary had been raised \$50 a month, and I felt that the bank was the only place for it. So I shuffled in and looked timidly around me at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account must needs consult the manager. I went up to a wicket marked 'Accountant.' The accountant was a tall, cold devil. The very sight of him rattled me. My voice was apoplectic.

"Can I see the manager?" I said, and added, solemnly, "alone." "I don't know why I said 'alone,'" "Certainly," said the accountant, and fetched him. The manager was a grave, calm man. I held my \$50 clutched in a crumpled ball in my pocket.

"Are you the manager?" I said. God knows I didn't doubt it. "Yes," he said. "Can I see you," I asked, "alone?" "I don't want to say 'alone' again, but without it the thing seemed self-evident. The manager looked at me in some alarm. He felt that I had an awful secret to reveal.

"Come in here," he said, and led the way to a private room. He turned the key in the lock. "We are safe from interruption here," he said. "Sit down." We both sat down and looked at one another. I found no voice to speak. "You are one of Pinkerton's men, I presume," he said. He had gathered from my mysterious manner that I was a detective. I knew what he was thinking, and it made me worse. "No, not from Pinkerton's," I said, seemingly to imply that I came from a rival agency. "To tell the truth, I went on, as if I had been prompted to lie about it. 'I'm not a detective at all. I've come to open an account. I intend to keep all my money in the bank.'" The man then looked relieved, but still serious; he concluded now that I was a son of a Baron Rothschild, or a young Gould.

"A large account, I suppose," he said.

"Fairly large," I whispered. "I propose to deposit fifty-six dollars now and fifty dollars a month regularly." The manager got up and opened the door. He called to the accountant.

"Mr. Montgomery," he said, unkindly loud, "this gentleman is opening an account; he will deposit \$50. Good morning." I rose. A big door stood open at the side of the room.

"Good morning," I said, and stepped into the safe.

"Come out," said the manager coldly, and showed me the other way. I went up to the accountant's wicket and poked the ball of money at him with a quick, conclusive movement, as if I were doing a conjuring trick. My face was ghastly pale.

"Here," I said, "deposit it." The tone of the words seemed to mean "let us do this painful thing while the fit is on us." He took the money and gave it to another clerk. He made me write the sum on a slip of paper and sign my name in the book. No longer knew what I was doing. The bank swam before my eyes.

"Is it deposited?" I asked in a hollow, vibrating voice.

"It is," said the accountant.

"Then I want to draw a check."

My idea was to draw out \$50 of it for present use. Some one gave me a check book through a wicket, and some one else began telling me how to write it out. The people in the bank had the impression that I was an invalid millionaire. I wrote something on the check and thrust it in at the clerk.

"What! Are you drawing it all out again?" he asked, in surprise. Then I realized that I had written fifty-six instead of six. I was too far gone to reason now. I had a feeling that it was impossible to explain the thing. All the clerks had stopped writing to look at me. Reckless with misery, I made a plunge.

"Yes, the whole thing."

"You withdraw your money from the bank?"

"Every cent of it."

"Are you not going to deposit any more?" asked the clerk, astonished.

"Never." An idiotic hope struck me that they might think something of the check and that I had changed my mind. I made a wretched attempt to look like a man with a fearfully quick temper. The clerk prepared to pay the money.

"How will you have it?"

"What?"

"Oh," I caught his meaning and answered, without even trying to think, "in fifties." He gave me a fifty-dollar bill.

"And the six?" he asked dryly.

"In sixes," I said. He gave it to me and I rushed out. As the big doors swung behind me I caught the echo of a roar of laughter that went up to the ceiling of the bank. Since then I bank no more. I keep my money in cash in my trousers pocket and my savings in silver dollars in a sock.

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Opening an Account.

Clever Little Story of One Man's Financial Career.

"When I go into a bank I get rattled. The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me; everything rattles me. The moment I cross the threshold of a bank I am a hesitating jay. If I attempt to transact business there I become an irresponsible idiot. I knew this beforehand, but my salary had been raised \$50 a month, and I felt that the bank was the only place for it. So I shuffled in and looked timidly around me at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account must needs consult the manager. I went up to a wicket marked 'Accountant.' The accountant was a tall, cold devil. The very sight of him rattled me. My voice was apoplectic.

"Can I see the manager?" I said, and added, solemnly, "alone." "I don't know why I said 'alone,'" "Certainly," said the accountant, and fetched him. The manager was a grave, calm man. I held my \$50 clutched in a cr