

JUST LAZY.

I'm the laziest man, I reckon, that a mortal ever seed.
Navy dollar! I wasn't built for greed.
For grinnin' an' fer grinnin' where the revenue is found;
I'm what you'd call a lazy 'un—jes' built fer lyin' round!

Contented? Mighty right I am. When spring winds whisper sweet,
In the meadows where the daisies make a carpet for your feet,
Where the nestin' birds are chirpin', where the brook in wavin' play,
Goes laughin' on, a-pushin' all the lilies out his way.

You'll find me almost any time, a-lyin' at my ease,
With the lull-song o' the locust and the drowsy drone o' bees
Above me an' aroun' me. I'm a poet in my way,
An' I'd rather hear the birds sing 'an to shoot 'em any day!

"Jes' laziness" they tell me, an' I reckon they are right;
But the world's so full of beauty, an' you can't see much at night!
But different folks have different minds, nor drink from the same cup—
When I'm talkin' to the lilies, they're a-plovin' of 'em up!

My field's a pasture for the cows, an' though it never pays,
It's a source of pleasure to me jes' ter see the creatures graze!
The tinklin'inkle o' the bells is such a pleasin' sound!
But I'm a lazy chap, you know, jes' built fer lyin' round!

—F. L. Stanton, in Washington Critic.



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CHAPTER III.—CONTINUED.

"Wonder if one of these self-same peculiarities is an interesting habit of listening at the doors?" he mused. "One would fancy so from the cautious way she lowers her voice. By Jove! I wish I were well out of this! What will come next, in the way of startling developments?"

"You know," Mrs. Maynard continued, in the same sweet, guarded tone, breaking in upon North's meditations, "how persistently he has opposed me all through this affair. He has a perfectly unreasonable horror of litigation, as well as a strong desire to thwart and annoy me, and he tried in every way to prevent me from urging my claim in the first place. Of course, I am not in the habit of allowing myself to be guided by Maj. Maynard's advice in matters of any personal interest or importance; still, harmony in the household is something that one is willing to purchase at almost any cost, and in this case, really, Mr. North, if it had not been for your professional advice, and your resolutely taking affairs into your own hands and assuming the whole legal responsibility for me, I have no doubt that I should have yielded to his prejudices and allowed my interests to be sacrificed, just to preserve the peace!"

She sighed faintly as she spoke, leaning back in her chair with her eyes downcast.

North's countenance wore a disturbed expression during the interval of silence that ensued.

"This looks alarmingly like the domestic skeleton!" he thought, almost shrugging his shoulders in his dismay. "With what charming naivete she alludes to her differences with the major! If I could have foreseen that I should have to play the role of sympathizing friend in a cast in which a tyrannical husband and a beautiful injured wife were the other leading characters, I should scarcely have had the temerity to come here at all. With what a matter-of-course air she refers to this delicate subject, as if she had frequently discussed it with me. I don't understand it. A lady might possibly make her spiritual adviser the confidant of such troubles, but does she also pour them into the sympathetic ear of her lawyer? If such be the general custom,



“AH, MRS. HUNTINGDON.”

then the fates preserve me from becoming that most unhappy of all luckless mortals, some fair lady's confidential legal adviser!"

At this point in his reflections the door-bell rang, and a gay murmur of ladies' voices was heard in the hall.

Mrs. Maynard started up with a little gesture of annoyance, and North, perceiving his opportunity, rose at once to take leave of her.

"I fear that I am encroaching on your time, Mrs. Maynard," he said. "I had no idea that I was staying so long." Alas for North's veracity! He had never before endured a period of time that seemed so interminable.

"It is really provoking, Mr. North," said Mrs. Maynard, "after you have taken the trouble to call at this hour, that we should have so little time to talk."

"Oh, it was no trouble at all, Mrs. Maynard," protested North with an air of light gallantry. "I esteem it a great honor and privilege to see you even for this brief time."

He imagined that this flippant speech would be accepted with the same light-

ness with which it was uttered. Instead of this he perceived that as he spoke a shadow of displeasure clouded Mrs. Maynard's face and something like disdain curved the proud lips. Only for an instant; she recovered herself quickly and rejoined with a gay little laugh:

"Ah, you wretched flatterer! How often have you made that pretty speech? Good-by! No, wait! I had almost forgotten; I have found that missing letter of which I told you once. You know you urged me yesterday to renew my search for it, as it might prove to be of some value as evidence. Don't stop to read it now, but examine it at your leisure and then tell me the result of your deliberations. Ah, Mrs. Huntingdon—pray excuse me, Mr. North—I am so delighted to see you! No, the library, dear; this way, please."

And Mrs. Maynard had vanished, leaving North standing at the drawing-room door with the letter that she had given him still in his hand. He was looking at it with almost as much dismay as if it had been a package of dynamite. Finally, in a mechanical way, as if he were acting more from the pressure of circumstances than from any clear purpose in his own mind, he put the envelope into his pocket and made his escape somewhat precipitately from the house.

CHAPTER IV.

Brutus—Oh that a man might know
The end of this day's business ere it
come,
But it sufficeth that the day will end,
And then the end is known.

—Julius Caesar.

Absorbed in his mental review of this call on Mrs. Maynard, Allan North, instead of retracing his steps over the route by which he had come, turned aimlessly into an intersecting business street, and by the time he awakened to this fact he was a long distance from Delaplaine street or any other locality with which he was in the slightest degree familiar.

"Well, where am I?" he asked himself, as he paused irresolutely on a corner and looked about him in every direction. "I have not the slightest idea how I am to find my hotel. I never was more completely lost in my life. It was very stupid in me to wander away from Delaplaine street; but if my confused recollection of the past few moments is at all correct, I have been turning corners with a reckless persistency that deprives me of all hope of ever finding my way back to that aristocratic thoroughfare. As I cannot stand here all night, I really see no alternative but to keep moving."

He started on slowly, and his mind wandered back to his interrupted train of meditations.

"She quite interests me," he mused, perhaps for the fiftieth time, while his brows contracted with a puzzled frown. "Maynard—Mrs. Maynard; why is it that the name seems so familiar to me? It has been half suggesting something to me ever since I read her note. It appears that she has become entangled in a lawsuit. I wonder what is nature of the difficulty? It furthermore appears that the major (Query: Who is the major?) is inclined to make trouble, and the lady and her lawyer are consequently obliged to circumvent the old fellow. Rather interesting situation for the lawyer! She's quite young, and very beautiful. I wonder if she is likewise in love with me? It looks tremendously like it. Pshaw! Of course I mean with the other fellow. By the way, I ought to be hunting up Dennis O'Reilly. As a matter of fact, that is what I am here for. I wonder if his name is in the directory? Just like a blundering idiot to forget to give his address! Now, suppose I step into this drug store—there's an accommodating-looking man in the door—and glance over their directory. And then if it should so chance that the man doesn't know me, though that is almost too much to expect, I can venture to inquire the way to the Clement house, without exposing myself to disagreeable insinuations and ridicule."

Accordingly he stepped up to the drug store and lifting his hat to the man who was lounging on the steps, he ventured the observation that "it was a fine day."

"Very fine," assented the man addressed, with amiable brevity, as he gave North a glance that plainly said: "I've seen you before, but who in the world are you, anyway?" Then moving a little aside to enable North to enter the store, he relapsed into his own silent meditations as he idly watched the passers-by.

Lounging amid the colored lights in the great front window was a discontented looking youth whose utter idleness and general appearance of ennui appealed to North's sympathy at once. The depressed and languishing state of business was painfully apparent in the solitude and leisure that pervaded the place.

North smiled affably at the youth as he turned to the counter. What magical influence there is in a smile! Hope, expectation, renewed faith in his fellowmen, even a faint interest in life became apparent in that sad youth's countenance, only to be succeeded by a melancholy far surpassing his original gloom, when North inquired for a directory.

Indicating by a silent gesture the dingy old volume that was chained to the counter in full view, the youth returned with a sad reproachful air to his post of observation in the window and vouchsafed no further notice of the man whose interest soared no higher than the pages of the local directory.

Turning the leaves rapidly until he came to the right initial, North commenced to scan the pages carefully in the hope of discovering the name and local habitation of Dennis O'Reilly. He found the family well represented. There was Jem and Bridget and Patrick and Ann and Terrence and John; but nowhere Dennis. Over and over again he read the names, but to no purpose; for, lacking the ingenuity of the Irishman who unlawfully appropriated an army blanket and then proved property to his own satisfaction, at least, by the fact that his initials were on it—U for Patrick and S for O'Reilly—he could not make Jem or Bridget or any of the

other names read Dennis, and he finally gave up the attempt in despair.

As he was turning back listlessly, the name "Maynard" caught his eye. There it was—"Maj. Charles Maynard, No. 33 Delaplaine street."

"Her husband," reflected North, with a vague feeling of having satisfactorily settled one point. "I suspected so from the way she referred to him. A crotchety old fellow who has to be humored. I wonder if he makes her very unhappy? And if—" The thread of his reflections was suddenly broken. His glance had wandered from the open book to a newspaper on the counter, and this, among other professional cards displayed in the advertising columns, had arrested his attention:

"North & Wescott, Attorneys and Counselors at Law. Offices 3 and 5 Market Square."

"North & Wescott"—a partner, by Jove!—was the first comment that flashed through his mind; "3 and 5 Market square; if I ever can find the place, I think I must call at my office and see how things look there. North—North—h'm! Not in the directory," he added after a hasty search for the name. "But then, it's an old edition, and probably doesn't contain the names of one-half the present population. And now, about this O'Reilly; it's perfectly evident that he isn't here either. How shall I go to work to find him? Perhaps this boy can tell me something about him. At least I can inquire."

And closing the book, North began jocosely:

"Young man, what sort of a directory do you call this, anyway?"

The youth just turned his head toward North on being thus suddenly and familiarly addressed.

"Good enough," was his laconic response, given with an intonation that strongly suggested the additional words: "For you!"

"Oh," rejoined North, "I am perfectly willing to concede that it is good enough so far as it goes; but inasmuch as it fails to give the precise information that I am seeking, it is worth



A GENTLEMAN RICHLY DRESSED.

nothing at all to me. I am in search of Dennis O'Reilly, who professes to be a resident of this city. Can you give me any information concerning him?"

"Dennis O'Reilly?" said the boy with a blank look, as he thrust his elbows on the shelf directly behind him and slowly turned himself around until he was facing North. "Dennis O'Reilly?" he repeated in the strongly disparaging tone by which people frequently attempt to justify the ignorance that they are compelled to confess. "Never heard of him before!"

"Ah, not a very prominent citizen, then? I fear I shall have great difficulty in finding him. Who would be likely to know something about him? Can you suggest anyone at all?"

The boy shook his head as if giving up at the outset, but nevertheless reflecting seriously for a moment. Glancing idly into the street, he saw a gentleman standing on the opposite corner. Instantly the youth's countenance lightened up with that peculiar illumination which is the unmistakable indication of a new idea.

"There's Mr. Wyner, over there on the corner," he said, with a nod toward the gentleman. "Ask him. He's a warden politician, and he knows all such people. He's better'n a dr'ct'y, Mr. Wyner is. If anyone can tell you, he can."

Such an opportunity was not to be lost. With thanks for the suggestion North left the store and hurried across the street.

A gentleman, richly dressed in black broadcloth with a glossy silk hat and a dazzling gold watch chain, was leaning against the corner lamp post, gazing about him with an air of supreme satisfaction. It required only a practiced glance to discover the cause of this complacency.

"A warden politician! He looks like it," thought North; then lifting his hat he addressed the gentleman:

"Mr. Wyner, I believe?"

"Blessed if tain't!" was the graceful response, as Mr. Wyner turned his smiling gaze upon North without changing his attitude in the least. "Jack Wyner, Esq., workin' man's friend; here's er ticket for you, gentleman. Pratt for may'r, Brown for treasurer, Wyner, Jack Wyner—hoorsay! that's me—for city 'torney! What's matter with Wyner?"

"Ah, indeed!" rejoined North, with an air of interest. "City attorney? So you aspire to that office? Do you think you'll get it?"

"Get it? D'y'e mean to say I won't get it? Come on, now, and back it up if you dare!" cried Mr. Wyner, suddenly assuming a pugnacious attitude; then as this brief paroxysm of resentment passed off and his overpowering good humor returned, he subsided into his former attitude of repose and inquired stupidly but amiably: "Get what?"

North did not wish to pursue the subject, so he merely responded in an equally stupid and amiable way: "Ah! yes, very true, Mr. Wyner," which the latter, in his sadly beffogged state of mind, looked upon as not only a very elegant, comprehensive and satisfactory, but likewise a genial and friendly style of rejoinder, and peace was immediately reestablished.

"It is useless to ask him any questions," thought North, despairingly. "If Dennis O'Reilly were his own brother he would scarcely know it in his present condition, so I might as well pass on. It is a fortunate thing that he doesn't know me!"

With this self-congratulation he had turned away when he was electrified by hearing his name pronounced by Mr. Wyner in tones loud enough to attract general attention.

"North! I say, North, hold on! Lemme speak to you—ticular bish-nush!"

North paused irresolutely and looked back at Wyner; then, deciding to pay no attention to the man, he turned away again and started down the street at a slightly accelerated pace.

Instantly Mr. Wyner, without stirring from his careless, lounging attitude, raised his voice higher and called more vociferously:

"I say! Hooray there, North, d'ye hear? Lemme speak to you just minute—ticular bish-nush, North, d'ye hear?"

North heard, and so did everyone else. Gentlemen in the surrounding business places lounged up to the doors and windows and looked smilingly out; passengers by turned their heads curiously to see what was going on; small boys walked backward very nearly off the curbs in their anxiety to witness the finale; and, to add to North's discomfiture, everyone whose eye he met as he retraced his steps nodded in a familiar friendly way.

Wyner watched his return with a smile of stupid satisfaction.

"Now, Wyner," said North, as he stepped up close to his tormentor, "let me warn you not to waste any words. If you have anything to say to me say it at once, in the shortest possible time. Do you hear?"

"North, are you my friend?" inquired Mr. Wyner, in reproachful tones, as he regarded North with blinking eyes.

North's first impulse was to respond with a slightly italicized negative, but fearing that such a course would only exasperate Wyner and make matters worse he conciliated instead.

"Now, see here, Wyner," he said, "I'm perfectly willing to use all my influence to elect you city attorney, and doesn't that prove that I'm your friend?"

As he spoke a shout of laughter arose from every side. He could not imagine what it was that gave such point to his remarks, but he saw that it was at once perceived and appreciated.

Wyner apparently did not heed the laughter; he noticed only North, to whom he immediately addressed the imperious inquiry:

"Why did you run, then, if you're friend er mine?"

"I'm not running!" returned North, amazed.

"You are," said Mr. Wyner, with the ready and fearless spirit of contradiction that a heated political campaign usually develops. "What have they got you on their ducie ticket for, if you ain't runnin'? I tell you, North, your party's a played-out set of thieves an' scoundrels, an' you're 'nother, an' you'll never be 'lect'd city 'torney while ev' worl' stands! D'y'e hear?"

And, starting up energetically, Mr. Wyner emphasized these statements with some violent gestures, bringing his clenched fists into an altogether disagreeable proximity to North's face.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE SULTAN'S BODYGUARD.

Half of them Black, the Other Half White, and All Ruffians.

For greater safety the sultan is always protected by both Nubians (blacks) and Albanians (whites), for these two regiments execute each other, and in their divisions the padishah feels secure, says the New York Herald. The "black guards" are his favorites, for they are so exceedingly fierce when they have cutting down work to do, and they are also less rapacious than the Albanians, whose claws are always being extended for backsheesh. Taking them all round, however, the two corps of pretorians, black and white, form a gang of unmitigated scoundrels. They are superstitious ruffians, magnificently dressed, overfed, overpaid and enjoying practical immunity for every offense they may commit except that of being negligent on duty. They are the terror of the whole quarter surrounding the palace, and the sultan himself is so afraid of them that he is constantly trying to bribe them into loyalty by gifts of money.

While the half-starved Turkish soldiers in Macedonia, Armenia and Anatolia often remain for weeks without pay, the Nubians and Albanians are capriciously regaled with "tips," which sometimes amount to £45 a man. The two corps have only to quarrel and the sultan immediately sets himself to smooth matters by pouring down a golden shower into their miscreant paws. On the other hand, if a soldier of one corps misbehaves by showing himself insubordinate or by going to sleep on guard a dozen soldiers of the other corps are called in to operate upon him. Then there is a private strangling or a private bastinadoing, as the case may be. But in either event the work is executed with dispatch and gusto.

A Broken Thread.

There is a good story of George William Curtis, which seems never to have been published. He was lecturing on a Buffalo stage once, when suddenly a heavy rope somehow broke loose from its moorings in the flies above and dropped with a tremendous thud to the floor behind the speaker. Mr. Curtis looked around in mild surprise to see what had happened, then, turning to the alarmed audience again, said, with a twinkle in his eye: "Ah, that must have been the thread of my discourse." Somebody on a front seat caught the joke first and broke out in a roar of laughter from the whole house. It was a good many minutes