

THE STORY TELLER

WILLIAM AND MARY.

William gazed on Mary Jane:
Longed to tell her that her eyes
Shone like sunlit drops of rain
Falling from enchanted skies.
But poor William, scant of nerve,
Sought in vain these things to say;
Merely managed to observe:
"It is rather warm to-day."

Mary Jane will never suspect
What a wealth of sentiment
Flourishing, despite neglect,
In that trite remark was pent.
Vows as steadfast as the pole,
Though as tender as the May,
He is uttering from his soul.
When he says "It's warm to-day."

William tries and tries again;
Baffled in his eloquence;
Wears quite to Mary Jane
Of ridiculous suspense.
But each time, just as of yore,
All his wits grow dark and dim.
William feels that he's a bore;
Mary quite agrees with him.
—Washington Star.

His Lady of Dreams

By Susan Sayer Yarmouth.

SHE came suddenly into his sight,
Dispelling his brown study and interrupting his pipe. She stood beyond the table, beside the door, tall and slight, in a white gown that clung to her arms and shoulders and rounded waist, and swept about her feet in heavy folds. A cross swung from her neck by a long silver chain, and she wore a broad-brimmed hat with a gauzy white veil, so her face was in shadow. She leaned slightly toward Ashe as he clutched the arms of his big chair and sat forward in amazement.

"I am the Princess Constantia Gregorius," she said gently.
"Of—of Russia?" he asked stupidly, trying to fan away the haze of tobacco smoke.

"There are other lands," she said indifferently. "And not so far away." "Great Caesar!" he breathed, bewildered, and his pipe dropped from his astonished fingers. With the feeling that it was the only bond between him and rationality, he stooped to pick it up, and as he rose he struck his head sharply against the corner of the library table. Dizzy from the blow, he staggered to his feet and looked toward the door. She was gone, as mysteriously as she had come. He rushed blindly around the table and across the room, stumbling over easy chairs and footstools, and sending a revolving bookcase spinning round. The hall was brilliant after the smoky library, and it was also empty. No trailing gown had turned up the edges of the rug, nor could he hear any hurrying steps on the polished stairs. He blinked at the sun pouring red and purple through the painted window for a moment, and then turned back and sat down on the nearest chair. Good heavens! what a dream! Who was she? What was her motive in appearing and announcing herself in that royal way? And he hadn't seen her face! Well, if it was as pretty as her figure—oh, confound his head! and he was still feeling it gingerly too dazed to think of more than one thing at a time, when he heard his friends cheerful whistle in the hall.

"Well, old chap," said Thurston, coming in.
"Phew! but that pipe of yours is a fright! If we don't air this room before the water gets into it, your goose is cooked!"

"Why, what will she do?" cried the other, uncertainly.
"You'll never get another bid for Sunday," said the first, throwing open one of the windows. "Geel! I didn't realize how rank Cissie is getting. Retire her, Billy, and get another. But say, what's the matter old man? I left you composing a sonnet and going to sleep over it. What's wrong?"

Ashe looked down at his maligned pipe, and then up at his friend.
"Say, do you suppose she thought it was rank?" he asked.

"The matter?" said Thurston, puzzled. "She hasn't been here already, has she? If so, we'd better go back to-night. Did she wake you up?"

"No, I just dreamed it," said the owner of the pipe, and began to feel of his bump with a frown of pain. His friend looked at him for a moment curiously, and then aimed a heavy leather cushion from the nearest Morris chair at him.

"Wake up, you idiot!" he said. "This is no sleeping car." The idiot parried the cushion.

"Dick, has your sister a friend visiting her?" he inquired.
"No," said the other.
"Well, there was one here, any way," pursued Ashe.

"One what?" demanded Thurston.
"One princess," said the other. His host surveyed him in silence for a moment.

"Ashe, you're crazy!" he said at last. "Come out and take a walk."
Mr. Wilmerding Ashe was making for himself a rather neat reputation with readers of current magazines as a writer of clever little occasional verses. Among his friends at his club he was considered a good fellow, and they chose to assume that somewhere he kept hidden away the person who wrote his verses for him. His mother's friends approved of him because he paid his calls,

and he was chiefly famous with the young ladies of his rather general acquaintance, as a master of arts of Welsh rarebitry and badinage. But no one was prepared for the almost oriental beauty of his latest verses, which appeared in one of the best of the monthly periodicals under the name of "My Lady of the Realm of Dreams," and which would have done credit to a much more ambitious poet than Billy Ashe. Ashe himself thought rather well of them; he felt that in some way compensated for the nasty knock on the head that the lady had been the means of giving him, and that he had turned a most perplexing dream to very good account. It was better than taking it to the Society of Psychical Research, which he had thought of doing in the vividness of his first impression, but six months without any further developments, waking or sleeping, had dulled his keen conviction of its psychic value. Meanwhile a comfortable check from the magazine had seemed to take the thing out of the province of psychic research.

Ashe was a modest man, but not too much to find a little lionizing quite to his taste, and he went to afternoon teas and cotillions with a feeling that to-morrow would be someone else's day, and he must gather his roses while he might. So he entered Mrs. Foster's long drawing-room prepared to smile as he listened to his verses misquoted by fair flatterers; he retained that serene attitude of mind while he shook hands with Mrs. Foster, and not one minute longer. For beyond Mrs. Foster, and standing just outside the ring of light from a tall lamp, was the lady of his dreams, with her white gown that clung to her shoulders and rounded waist, and flared with heavy folds at her feet. This time she wore a fan on the long silver chain around her neck, and she had no hat nor veil, so Ashe could see that she was regarding him with the frank interest from a pair of most attractive brown eyes. He flushed with surprise, and his remarks to Mrs. Foster died on his lips. She was not a dream, then, his princess! A sudden recollection of the check from the "Hundred Years" made him warm, and as a corollary came the realization of his narrow escape from the Society of Psychical Research—good heavens!

Meanwhile Mrs. Foster was saying graciously, "So good of you to come, Mr. Ashe, and not forget your old friends, now you are such a celebrity. And to reward you, I am going to introduce you to a very dear young friend of mine, Miss Gregory, who admires your poems so much." And Ashe found himself before his princess, while Mrs. Foster went on fluently, "Constance, my dear, this is Mr. Ashe," and turned to greet another guest. All remnants of his self-possession vanished at the sound of the names, and interrupting Miss Gregory's polite expressions of delight at making his acquaintance, Ashe asked abruptly:

"Are you a princess?"
She opened her brown eyes wider and looked at him in surprise.

"Do—do you believe in telepathy and astral bodies?" he went on after a moment's pause. "Or are you only a dream?"

"Dear me!" said the girl. "Mrs. Foster said you were so nice, and not startling—that no one would know that you were a poet or anything else awe-inspiring, and here you have called me three alarming names in as many minutes. Is this poetic license, Mr. Ashe?"

"Did you really mind Cissy Loftus?" he asked anxiously. "You see she's my favorite pipe, but she's rather old, and I'm afraid she's a little too strong to be pleasant to strangers. But I didn't expect you, you know, when you came in so suddenly."

The girl's face was gravely puzzled, but her eyes looked amused. "I'm afraid Mrs. Foster has a mistaken idea of you," she said with a shake of her head.

"Where do you live?" inquired Ashe. "When you are not in dreams, you know—when you are not in Thurston's library."

"Well," said Miss Gregory, "I'm relieved. I am glad to find that I can at last take an intelligent interest in the conversation. The Thurston's library— isn't it a fascinating place?"

"You weren't in it long enough to find out," objected Ashe. "And do you think it was quite kind of you to make me bump my head?"

"Long enough! I've spent hours in Thurston's library," said the girl in mock indignation. "And I never made you bump your head."

"Well, perhaps not consciously," admitted Ashe, "but it was under your spell." Miss Gregory looked at him with a smile beginning to show at the corners of her mouth.

"You are certainly casting a spell over me," she said. "Really, Mr. Ashe, I don't know what you mean—I'm sure I never had anything to do with your bumping your head, but I'm not sure that it wouldn't do it good."

"Cruel!" said Ashe. "Well, since you won't admit it, let's begin again. I am very glad to meet you, Miss Gregory. Mrs. Foster is too good to me. Do you know your face is very familiar—haven't I met you before?"

"Mrs. Foster has been kind to me, too," returned Miss Gregory prettily. "No, Mr. Ashe, I'm sure that I should not have forgotten it if I had met before. My home is not in New York, and I'm not here very much. But I have heard of you often, from Mrs. Foster, and the Thurston's in Morristown, and, of course, I have read your verses."

"How time must clamor at your doors to be killed!" said Ashe.

"Ah, now you are unkind to your

little brain-children!" reproached the girl.

"You have been sufficiently over-kind to even up accounts in mentioning them at all," returned Ashe. "There, you see I can do the proper; now, for heaven's sake, Miss Gregory, tell me if I dreamed of you, or saw you, that day at Dick Thurston's?" The girl drew back.

"I don't understand you," she said, a little haughtily, and then she smiled at his crestfallen face.

"It can't be possible!" insisted Ashe. "The Princess Constantia Gregorius—and I was as good to know, Miss Gregory—didn't you realize that you are my 'Lady of Dreams'?"

"If" said Miss Gregory—"If your Lady of—oh, Mr. Ashe! Remember that I'm not a resident—not to the manor born, as it were. I'm just a country cousin from Binghamton. Do you think it's nice to make fun of me? Constantia Gregorius, indeed!" She laughed out, a merry little laugh.

"She comes from a land nor near nor far," said Ashe, guilty of the banality of quoting his own verses. Miss Gregory surveyed him with amusement.

"This is too fine a frenzy for me," she announced. "Aren't you hungry, Mr. Ashe? Shan't we go and have something to eat?" Ashe followed her mechanically.

"Don't you sometimes wear a cross on that chain," he asked.

"Sometimes," she answered, with lifted eyebrows.

"Weren't you in Morristown at the Thurston's last September?" he pursued.

"Yes, I was in Morristown, but only occasionally at the Thurston's," she returned.

"Then you did walk into the library one Sunday afternoon and tell me you were the Princess Constantia Gregorius," he said, positively.

"Mr. Ashe!" she said, reprovingly. "Have you a twin sister?" asked Ashe, desperately.

"I am all the daughters of my father's house," she said lightly, but her eyes were dancing as she gave him his chocolate.

"Don't you remember the painful taking off of Sapphira?" he inquired, sternly.

Miss Gregory counted on her fingers. "A princess, Constantia Gregorius, an astral body—let me see! a dream, and now a liar!" she said. "Oh, fie, Mr. Ashe!"

"I have \$50 that belongs to you," said Ashe, irrelevantly.

"I beg your pardon?" said the girl, blankly.

"By rights," asserted Ashe, with a nod. "Half of what I got for that poem, you know. I calculate that my thought and labor are good for half, but you furnished the idea, you see." Miss Gregory sat down on the nearest chair and laughed aloud. Ashe sipped his chocolate meditatively and watched her.

"For a poet," she said at last, "you are most unexpectedly practical."

"When I've offered to share my income with a comparative stranger—a chimerical, elusive dream-lady at that?" he asked, raising his eyebrows.

"I'm not sure about chimeras, but I think they were monsters of some kind," said the girl. "And your income is too small to be alluring, Mr. Ashe. If you don't wish any more of that chocolate, won't you have something cold? No, well, then come back to Mrs. Foster. I'm afraid you'll be borrowing money of me next, to say nothing of the way in which you are straining your poetic fancy to find flattering names for me." She took his cup and turned away. Before he could follow he was seized upon and carried off in triumph by some fair admirer, and a quick glance back showed him that a fortunate elderly gentleman had taken possession of her, so he resigned himself to the inevitable, and did not see her again until just as he was leaving. He had looked for her to say good-by, but in vain, and Mrs. Foster did not know where she had hidden herself, so he was starting off, disappointed, but resolved not to let the thing drop, when her voice stopped him with his hand on the door.

"Au revoir, Mr. Ashe," she said, leaning toward him from the lowest step of the stairway. "Au revoir."

"Thank you," he responded, heartily. "And very soon, most fair lady of the realm of my dreams."

"That is really a loving thing, Mr. Ashe," she said, "and I am very proud to think that you think that I had any part in it."

"But didn't you?" he demanded.

"Do I believe in telepathy?" she asked, mockingly. "Am I an astral body, or a bad dream?" He shook his high hat threateningly at her.

"The truth is not in you, Mademoiselle Sapphira," he announced. "Hear the lion growl!" she retorted, with a saucy nod, and turned to go upstairs. He took a step toward her.

"Miss Gregory!" he said, imploringly. "Seriously, now!" she looked at him over her shoulder with dancing eyes.

"Do you know, until to-day, I always supposed it was Dick Thurston that I woke up that afternoon," she said, confidentially, and ran lightly up-stairs.—N. Y. Evening Post.

Cause and Effect.
Mr. Quips—The last time I saw Mrs. Newbryde she said her husband was sick.

Mrs. Quips—Yes, the last time I saw her she was making some sort of a dainty dish for him.

"Ah! then I must have seen her shortly after you did."—Philadelphia Press.

HUMOROUS.

Uncle George—"Harry, I suppose you keep a cash account?" Harry—"No Uncle George, I haven't got so far as that; but I keep an expense account."—Boston Transcript.

Bull-Headed Philosophy.—First Broker—"What do you do when you happen to be short on a certain stock?" Second Broker—"Oh, I grin—and bear it."—Chicago Daily News.

Blobbs.—"Do you consider it good luck to pick up a pin?" Slobbs—"Well, I guess it's better luck to pick up one than to sit down on it."—Philadelphia Record.

Tess.—"He said if I didn't accept him his blood would be on my head." Jess—"And so you related?" Tess—"Yes, my hair is so light, you know, it would look awful."—Philadelphia Press.

Not Exactly a Compliment.—Hewitt—"Ignorance is bliss." Jewett—"You'd better get your life insured." Hewitt—"What for?" Jewett—"You're liable to die of joy."—N. Y. Times.

Overreached Himself.—"Yes, Merchant's scheme was to display his goods in his window with a lot of mirrors back of them, so that all the women passing would be sure to stop and look in." "Pretty foxy idea, eh?" "Yes, but it failed. None of the women looked at anything but the mirrors."—Catholic Standard.

Took Him at His Word.—He thought it an effective way to propose. "I'd be your caddy for life," he said. "Very well," she replied. "Take my fan, stand to one side and watch for points while I play this game out. But remember that interruptions will spoil one's very best plays." Then she began a desperate flirtation with his hated rival.—Chicago Post.

WARM BLOODED ENGLISHMEN.
Live in Cold Rooms and Get Warm from the Heat of Their Bodies.

It is perhaps because the English are much out-of-doors that they care little about having their houses properly warmed. The author of "An American at Oxford" says that when he first dined with the dons of his college, the company assembled about a huge coal fire.

On a rough calculation the coal it consumed, if used in an American steam-heater, would have roasted out the entire college. As it was, its only effect seemed to be to draw an icy blast across the ankles from medieval doors and windows. The draft swept the fire bodily up the chimney and left us shivering.

One of the dons explained that an open fire has two supreme advantages; it is the most cheerful thing in life and it insures thorough ventilation. I agreed with him heartily as I warmed one ankle in my palm, but mentioned that in an American winter heat is as necessary as cheerfulness and ventilation.

"But if one wears thick woollens," replied the don, "the cold and draughts are quite endurable. When you get too cold reading, put on your great coat."

"Then what do you do when you go out-of-doors?"

"I take off my great coat. It is much warmer there, especially if you walk briskly."

Some days later, when I went to dine with my tutor, my hostess apologized for the chill of the drawing-room.

"It will presently be much warmer," said she. "I have always noticed that when you have sat in a room for a while it gets warm from the heat of your bodies."

She proved to be right. But when we went into the dining-room we found it like a barn. She smiled with repeated assurances. Again she proved right; but we had hardly tempered the frost when we had to shift again to the drawing-room. That, too, required to be acclimated.

Birds in Winter.
To see all our birds in their winter homes we should have to travel from the middle states down to the Argentine Republic. We could see a great many, though, by making a midwinter trip to the gulf states. In Florida, for instance, we should find enormous flocks of robins whirling through the trees and alighting here and there to feed upon the berries of the china-tree and holly. Many birds we should find only along the coast, and many others we should have to search for in the silent cypress swamps of Louisiana and Mississippi. The herons love the solitude of these swamps, where in the numerous springs and streams they find the fish and frogs on which they feed.—Woman's Home Companion.

The Dear Innocent.
"Wasn't it funny, mamma?" said the debutante, "at the Smarts' dinner the other night all the electric lights went out, and the women didn't want the butler to put them up again?" "How do you know the women didn't, my child?" "Because they were all crying 'Don't' and 'Stop.' And the men didn't say a word!"—Pearson's Weekly.

Cause of the Trouble.
Homer—Great guns! There's Next-door and his wife quarreling again. That's the fourth time this week.

Mrs. Homer—Yes, Mrs. Next-door told me the other day that they couldn't agree as to what each should do to make the other happy.—Chicago Daily News.

The King's Trade.
King Edward of England once learned the printer's trade. Alfred Boerckel, a librarian at Mayence, has compiled a list of 30 members of European royal families who learned to print.—N. Y. World.

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