

THE STORY TELLER

THE GIFTS MEN HAVE

Are you but one of the many
Who have gifts that are little and few?
Or have you such strength as they need
Whose deeds are uplifting, who lead?
Have talents been lavished on you?

Are you but one of the many
Who, having been meagerly blessed,
May never have greatness or fame?
With only poor talents to claim
Are you honestly doing your best?

Or, having been splendidly gifted,
Are you letting the moments go by?
Are you lazily drifting along,
Content to be down in the throng,
When you might be a leader and high?

When we stand up, at last, to hear judgment,
I will pray for his chance who is small
But doing the best that he can,
For the meanness of things is the man
Who might soar and is willing to crawl.
—S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.

A Ride in the Swamp

BY S. RHETT ROMAN.

THE result is what counts, and the finality striven for by everyone is contentment, if not happiness. A sacrifice of personal ambition, in pursuit of some imperious call, which gives us eventually the content we crave for, is, therefore, the height of human wisdom.

This was my conclusion, reached while riding slowly along the plantation road which runs through the center of the cane-fields, while I was abstractedly watching the gangs of laborers at work.

When Jack died leaving Susan and her baby girl practically penniless, it was plain to me that I must give up my law practice and take hold of poor old Jack's tangled affairs, and, bringing order out of chaos, get back his jeopardized sugar place into a prosperous condition for those two.

Bellevue is a glorious country home, for behind the stately old colonial house stretch 8,000 acres of fine cane and pasture lands, cut off by a rim of thick forest and swamp, where splendid timber has been growing for centuries.

With reckless improvidence Jack had heavily mortgaged the old place against my advice.

So, as in our school and college days, Jack and I had been more like brothers than cousins, I felt I must come forward and save his widow and child from bankruptcy.

There was a fascination about Jack Travers which I for one could never resist.

He had a certain dash and daring and gay light-heartedness, and for all he was impulsively headstrong, yet I could not remember anyone falling to fall under his influence, be quite ready to condone his follies and declare his mistakes and blunders unkind cuts of fate.

Poor old Jack! Vera is very much like him, but if possible even handsomer.

Jack was certainly the handsomest man I ever saw.

It is now 15 years since I closed up my law office, packed away my books, and refused to run for the attorney generalship, although I knew I was practically elected.

But there was something else, I knew. It was that unless I devoted my entire attention and time and energy to the task of redeeming Bellevue, Jack's noble property would go under the auctioneer's hammer.

Results have proved I was right. Each grinding season has netted a handsome amount, I have long since cleared off the mortgage, and one year will see 1,000 acres planted in cane, besides diversified crops.

The sawmill I put up as a venture, in the heart of the swamp, is bringing in big returns, and when Vera will reach her majority in a few months' time she may lay claim to being a wealthy young woman in her own right. Then I will turn over my stewardship, and go back to my law books, grown rusty from disuse—like their weather-beaten and tattered master.

It means an arduous life to supervise, as I have done, an embarrassed estate, redeem it and make its broad fields justify and answer to the call made upon them, and to bring wealth out of ruin. But it has its rewards.

One grows to love the rich, black lands, the glorious growth of the long stretch of cane, the straight run of the plow through the furrows, the smell of the upturned earth, the sight of cattle in the pasture, and the song of the laborers going home when their day's work is done.

And when the last slanting rays of the sun have left the fields to dim shades of purple, green and gray, while gliding the crest of the forest, and the katydids and nesting birds give their last sweet calls, the hour is propitious for self-communing.

I drop the rein on my sorrel's neck and let him crop a tuft of grass along the edge of the ditch, as we go slowly along, and I count up the cost of my ambition sacrificed to Vera's happiness and find the debt is in my favor.

Poor Jack's baby girl crept into my heart that first night when I took her in my arms and sobbingly she went to sleep, her tangled nut-brown curls close to my cheek, while I explained to her mother that I would provide and care for Jack's widow and child with tireless devotion.

Vera, in those early years, was my constant companion. She would wait

and watch for me, claiming a ride before me on my saddle each time I came in from the fields. She would coax me to let old Fanchette come out with her in the pony-carriage to where the hands were at work, and her gay laughter and lovely face filled my heart with content.

"David, you are spoiling that child, I believe she cares more for you than me," Susan used to say.

Certainly Vera's love, which she gives as Jack did, with a lavish hand and a captivating whole-heartedness, a glorious warmth, unlike others, has been a compensation far beyond my deserts, or the giving up of those ambitious dreams of professional success which once filled my youth.

Of recent years Vera has drifted farther away from me, by the force of circumstances.

First, her governess came between us, with her childish studies; then I persuaded Susan to send her to a college in a big city, for the child's brilliant mind and strong nature made her far superior to her mother's or Miss Barton, her mediocre governess, with whom Vera was not on very good terms. I plainly saw it was best to place her under different and better influences.

Susan, poor soul, like all pretty, spoilt, weak women, is irascible, when she should be forbearing, and uncertain when she should be strong. She could no more control that splendid child Vera, either through love or authority, than a dove could manage a stormy, impetuous little eagle.

During Vera's holidays I always arranged for them to summer in the mountains or on the seashore, and I have insisted on their living abroad during the past two years, after Vera came home to us from college, for I wanted the child to acquire a broader knowledge of life before her plunge into the social whirl and the adulation certain to be hers by reason of her great beauty and fascination.

Of course, as manager of this place, I cannot absent myself; only when I have rendered an account of my stewardship will I be able to go away, and that will be for all time.

But I learned of Vera's popularity and brilliant capture of the world social last winter.

Yes, this is an ideal hour for the sifting and probing of one's inner thoughts and a plain realization of one's calm desires, while the calm solitude of these fields and forests, and the gentle whisperings of nature prompt to a silent acceptance of life as fate.

The field hands have all gone home and lights are beginning to glimmer in the rows of white-washed cabins near the levee.

The sorrel turns his head and whinnies, to remind me that dusk precedes night, and already the dew is bringing out the sweet scents of the vanilla grass and the fragile white lillies growing on the edge of the canal.

How beautiful this scene is, and how it will remain vivid in memory in all its lovely details when I shall have left it.

For go I must, and the reason is borne in on me with irresistible force this calm spring evening. I see myself as I am, worn and weather-beaten by 15 years of arduous work, with hair turning gray at the temples, a grave taciturn man having none of the graces of youth, with a broken career.

Only the task I set myself to accomplish has been done, the redemption of Jack's fortune, for Vera, his bonny, star-eyed daughter.

Why leave?

Because, being a man and a fool, I could not bear to live under the same roof with Vera, seeing her daily and loving her as I do, knowing the day will come when some one, having a better claim to her affections than the humdrum old guardian she has known from childhood, will take her irrevocably from me.

So, gathering the reins and going slowly along the path by the canal separating field from the forest, I look musingly at the scene before me so as to always bear it in memory.

"Cousin Duncan! Cousin Duncan! Tie Rufus to that tree and come on. I'm going in the swamp to the sawmill."

Vera sat in a prairie in the canal and was gliding up to the bank.

"You can't go this evening; it's ridiculously late," I objected, looking down at her.

"I can get there in half an hour; I must go. I want to tell Ben Jones his boy has the fever and he must come home, jump down and come on. Do!"

Vera, looking up and poised lightly, holding her long paddle, was irresistible.

"Are you aware that it gets as black as Erebus in the swamp as soon as night falls?" I asked, throwing Rufus' bridle over a short limb and stepping carefully down the bank.

"Indeed I am. That's why I came after you. I wouldn't dare venture in there by myself."

Vera swept with long strokes down the canal, and, turning into the swamp, we were soon under the shadow of moss-covered cypress and water oaks.

I took the paddle from her and we sped along, for night was coming fast and the collateral canals through the swamp are confusing.

Vera's gaiety was infectious, and the delight was keen and deep to be gliding through the narrow cuts and the still dark water in the unbroken solitude of the vast silent forest.

We suddenly emerged into a sort of circular clearing. I looked at my watch. It was one hour since our entrance in the swamp, and looking around, the place seemed strangely unfamiliar.

In the hazy light an opening ahead seemed to indicate that it was the cut leading to the sawmill.

I said nothing, but guided my prouge in the narrow channel, went somewhat recklessly along, for night had fallen, and as predicted, the height of the sycamores and cypress,

and the dense growth of willows and water plants shut in the narrow water path we were following, excluding even the light of a crescent moon rising overhead.

"That must be the way. See how much broader the canal is. Turn down to your right, Cousin Duncan," urged Vera.

Striking a few matches and holding them aloft I saw that the way Vera suggested did look more open.

"We are lost, anyhow, so we might as well go at random," Vera declared, laughing gaily, and without the slightest appearance of anxiety.

I was struck dumb at realizing the catastrophe and its possible ulterior results.

"Nonsense, we'll just keep on paddling, and we will be sure to come out somewhere," I remarked, as our light prouge slid rapidly over the surface of the dark water.

"Not so sure at all," Vera answered, comely. "This swamp extends for 50 miles, Cousin Dun. We may keep on trying to find our way for a day or two. Fortunately I brought a few little things in a basket for old Mrs. Brown at the sawmill. The next clearing we come to we will stop and have supper."

"How beautiful this is. Just look at those fire flies and the little moon peeping at us through the trees. What a romantic adventure!"

"It is very much nicer, Cousin Duncan, to be wandering through this lonesome swamp with you than dancing a cotillon at Mrs. Perry Barkmore's with Ned Casterman. What do you think about it?"

What did I think? My heart was torn with a wild unreasonable delight, keen anxiety, and a perplexity beyond description.

For it was certainly true that this gloomy and limitless cypress covered a vast area of country, and God only knew how far we had penetrated its intricacies, or when we would emerge from it.

For all Vera's gay, sweet, confidential manner—meant to relieve my anxiety, and to cheer me—I knew the child must feel keenly our extraordinary plight.

Reaching a clearing after steadily going forward into the unknown, I steadied our frail craft by pushing it among some dense mosses and undergrowth.

Vera produced her basket, and I insisted on her eating supper, wrapping her in a light covering, which had been thrown over the seat, for the night had grown chilly.

And while we chatted my watch showed me it was midnight.

"Lie in the bottom and rest your head on the cushion, and go to sleep, Vera, child; we will certainly come to some loggers' hut, or we may cut across into the Valmont settlement."

Vera perhaps had as acute a perception of our appalling position as I had, but nothing in her sweet, confident manner indicated that she was distressed.

She followed my advice, declaring she was to blame for our charming adventure, and finally dropped off to sleep.

I paddled on through the narrow windings of the swamp, my heart filled with a strange and unreasoning joy, as great as my anxiety as to the outcome.

"Mamma won't worry," Vera said drowsily. "She will believe I have driven over to Aunt Clementine's to spend the night."

But I knew my failure to appear would cause search to be made, and I did not deceive myself that Vera's absence would remain unnoticed.

The first pale streaks of dawn were filtering through the trees when I discovered where we were. Just a few miles from the plantation canal, and from where we started.

Leaving the cut to the sawmill, I must have made a wide detour to come back to our starting point.

The sun was rising, when fastening the prouge, we walked up from the canal, reached the grounds and the house.

Later in the day, while pacing up and down the library, I sent for Vera. She came looking lovely, for being a little wan, and coming towards me she held out both hands smiling gravely up at me.

"Vera, child, there is but one thing to do. Wear this ring, and let me say to the world you are my affianced wife. Never fear, little one. It will bind you to nothing. In a year's time we will quarrel, and you will send me off, and I will go abroad."

I held her hands and looked down into her exquisite face, my soul in my eyes.

"Do you care for me enough—for that?" she whispered.

"More than for life, here and hereafter. There could be no heaven for me without you, Vera," I answered.

"Then keep me. I will wear your ring, and we will not quarrel. Do you not know—?"—N. O. Times-Democrat.

Couldn't Get Hold.

E. C. Knight, a well-known Philadelphia, gave a dinner recently at his villa in Newport in honor of Count Stram, of Paris. During the dinner's course the talk turned to debating, and Mr. Knight impersonated admirably a young farmer taking part in a debate. The young farmer's speech in the impersonation ran as follows:

"The subject to be excused is, 'whether ardent spirits does any good or not?' I confirm that it don't. Just think of our ancestors in future ages—so that I don't think whiskey nor ardent spirits don't do any good."

Long pause.

"Well, the question to be excused is whether ardent spirits does any good or not—so that I conclude it don't."

Long pause.

"I can't get hold on the darned thing."—N. Y. Herald.

SIR JOHN FISHER.



The new high lord of the British navy, of whom the English people expect much in the way of increasing naval efficiency.

FEATS OF BLIND ACROBATS

Athletic Expertness Which Is Astonishing in London College Gymnasts.

Many of the gymnastic exhibitions given in recent years by students of colleges and universities of the world, creditable as they have been, are considerably overshadowed in the superior work done by the blind students connected with the Royal College and Academy for the Blind at Upper Norwood, England, as was clearly demonstrated recently in the wonderful public exhibition given by students of this academy at the Crystal Palace, this city, says a London report.

The athletic expertness that is being attained by these blind students is certainly marvelous and astounding, all of which is attributable to the regular practice work pursued in the gymnasium.

It is an admitted fact that the twentieth century finds physical training an important factor in the educational schemes for the seeing. Gymnastics and drill enter, in a lesser or greater degree, in the curriculum of the schools and colleges of all nations.

If physical training is considered so necessary nowadays for the development of the seeing, it is contended by those well advanced in the training of the blind that it is equally, if not far more important, for the sightless, in order that they may not be handicapped with feebleness, awkwardness and helplessness, in addition to their sightlessness.

The physical development of the blind is absolutely essential, if they are to show vigorous growth, morally, mentally or physically.

To bring about this happy and necessary condition of things among the blind, the latter now have recourse to regular training in the gymnasium of this very unique Royal college in London, where the course includes various kinds of mass and apparatus work. In addition, cycling, rowing, swimming and roller skating are also systematically taught.

Blind boys and girls of this institute, many children of very poor parents, exercise alike in extension, iron-bar and dumb-bell movements, together with a combination exercise upon the parallel bars, horizontal bar and vaulting horse, and execute the movements as perfectly as the sighted classes.

The various machines used in the gymnasium of the college are admirably calculated to develop even the most feeble of the blind students, so that the pupil can proceed to the more advanced apparatus, such as parallel bar, horizontal bar, vaulting horse, and take part also in such outdoor exercises as cycling, boating, running, swimming, etc.

The instructors at the Royal College for the Blind sufficiently vary the class exercises in the gymnasium as to bring all parts of the body into healthful activity so as to open the pores of the skin, force impurities to the surface, expand the lungs, cause deep breathing to stimulate the heart action, change frequently the position of the viscera, thereby stimulating the flow of blood to all parts of the body.

Fortune from Trees.

Orsa, in Sweden, has in the course of a generation sold £1,150,000 worth of trees, and by means of judicious replanting has provided for a similar income every 30 or 40 years. In consequence of the development of this commercial wealth there are no taxes. Railways and telephones are free, and so are the schoolhouses, teaching, and many other things.

Gentle Hint.

Lady (a widow)—Do you know my daughter is quite smitten with you, Herr Muller?

Gent (feeling flattered)—Really, now? "A fact. She was saying to-day: 'I should like that gentleman for my papa.'"—Smith's.

Use the Trees.

The trees of Finland are the money bags of the people. A peasant even makes his shoes from birch bark, and catches his roof with shavings. He virtually lives on wood.

TRAINING OF GAMECOCKS.

As It Is Conducted in the Country Clubhouse of a Wealthy Philadelphian.

A young millionaire of Philadelphia has been for five years profoundly interested in fighting cocks. At his country place he has a clubhouse devoted to the training of cocks, and down in the clubhouse basement is the cockpit, a handsome amphitheater.

The average person is unaware, says an eastern exchange, that the training of a fighting cock is as careful and elaborate as the training of a fighting man.

The millionaire stood the other morning in a spacious and sunlit room of the clubhouse. One wall was lined with handsome cages, each containing a cock, and here and there were curious apparatus—a springboard, a mattress, scales, shears, and so on.

The trainer took a cock out of a cage. He weighed it and entered its weight in a book. Then, holding it on the springboard with one hand, he worked the board vigorously with the other. Thus the cock, maintaining its balance on the fiercely jumping springboard, got a good deal of violent exercise.

The trainer next massaged the bird all over. He rubbed and pinched and pounded the muscles of legs, wings, neck and body. This massage was to give suppleness and strength, and to keep the skin and feathers healthy.

Now the man raised the cock in both hands above his head and threw it, as one would throw a football, on the mattress. It lighted handily on its feet, and on the vibrating springs it kept its equilibrium. Again, and even harder, the trainer tossed it down, and again it did not lose its balance. For five minutes, in this way, the man played ball with the bird. Then he took its temperature with a thermometer, rubbed it down and replaced it in its cage.

"Thus," said the millionaire, "we train our fighting cocks." He pointed here and there about the room. "Those are the shears," he said, "we cut their feathers with. The odd-looking manicure set is for their spurs—they fight with their spurs, you know, as duellists fight with swords. With the hypodermic syringe we inject 'dope' into them."

Scourge of Beri-Beri.

This disease, peculiar to rice-eating people, was the enemy of the mikado's army in the war with China, causing the death of nearly 45 per cent. of the land forces. It is now doing great mischief in the ranks of Oyama's armies and is more dreaded than the bullets of the Russians. Beri-beri is a disease that is the result of non-elimination. Uric acid accumulates in the blood and the first symptoms are distinctly rheumatic. These are followed by complete paralysis of the extremities. There is lack of sensation and the power of locomotion and this paralysis continues toward the vital centers until it reaches the heart and the story is ended.—London Mail.

Decorations.

It was a raw and gusty day for Greece and the wood nymphs shivered miserably. But they laughed in derision when clothing was suggested. "Nothing," they exclaimed, "could make us more ineffective for mural decorations in the homes of American multi-millionaires." What is grander than fidelity to a dire destiny?—Puck.

Allien Paupers.

Immigration inspectors have reported to Washington that almshouses, homes for orphans and other charitable institutions in nearly every state in the union have a large percentage of aliens, who are sent to this country because they receive better treatment here than in similar places in Europe.

Bank's Beer License.

Lloyd's bank, at Wolverhampton, has a license to sell beer. It is said to be the only bank possessing such a privilege.—London Tit-Bits.

FLOCKING INTO CANADA

EMIGRATION FROM DAKOTA AND ADJOINING STATES.

Major Edwards, United States Consul-General at Montreal, Describes the Movement as Due to Scarcity of Land.

Montreal, Nov. 15.—Major Allison Edwards, United States Consul-General, who returned to-day from a visit to his home at Fargo, North Dakota, said in an interview: "The proper way to describe the manner in which the people of North Dakota are coming over into Western Canada is to say they are coming over in droves. Among the people there did not seem to be any thought of there being a boundary line at all. It is simply a question," added the major, "of there not being any more land in North Dakota and the surrounding States, and the people are flocking to Canada to get good farms. Naturally the number that will come over will increase all the time, and I may say the people you are getting are the best people in the west. They are well supplied with money and are well acquainted with the conditions under which they will have to work." The agents of the Government located at different points in the United States are prepared to give the fullest information regarding homestead and other lands.

NOTES FROM ABROAD.

At the international poultry show, Alexandra palace, London, November 9, a partridge Wyandotte rooster was sold for \$825—a record price.

In spite of the war, the cultivation of European classical music is rapidly extending among the better classes in Japan. A native Beethoven society has been formed at Tokio.

England has more doctors, proportionately speaking, than any country in Europe. For every 100,000 persons England has 150 medical men; Germany, 48; Switzerland, 42, and Russia, 15.

A railway is about to be constructed near Elisnore, which will run across the spot traditionally believed to be the grave of Hamlet. Numerous signed protests against the projected railway have been addressed to the government.

A sausage exhibition is to be held in Berne next spring. The Berne butchers have offered a prize for a popular sausage which must be "nourishing, strengthening and cheap." It is stated that 1,785 varieties of sausage will be shown at the exhibition.

Prof. Mendelejeff, who occupies a prominent position in Russia, declares in a recent article that all Russians, from the czar down, know that many things in their country are not as they ought to be, and that reforms are urgently called for. "These reforms," he adds, "will come inevitably after the war with Japan, because this war has, I think, opened everyone's eyes."

The Blindness of Love.

"My fiancé is so different from other men."

"Of course he is, since he proposed to you."—Kansas City Star.



Miss Hapgood tells how she escaped an awful operation by using Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I suffered for four years with what the doctors called Salpingitis (inflammation of the fallopian tubes and ovaries), which is a most distressing and painful ailment, affecting all the surrounding parts, undermining the constitution, and sapping the life forces. If you had seen me a year ago, before I began taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and had noticed the sunken eyes, sallow complexion, and general emaciated condition, and compared that person with me as I am today, robust, hearty and well, you would not wonder that I feel thankful to you and your wonderful medicine, which restored me to new life and health in five months, and saved me from an awful operation."—Miss JERES HAPGOOD, 1023 Sandwich St. Windsor, Ont.—\$5000 forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

Ovaritis or inflammation of the ovaries or fallopian tubes which adjoin the ovaries may result from sudden stopping of the monthly flow, from inflammation of the womb, and many other causes. The slightest indication of trouble with the ovaries, indicated by dull throbbing pain in the side, accompanied by heat and shooting pains, should claim your instant attention. It will not cure itself, and a hospital operation, with all its terrors, may easily result from neglect.

Strawberry and Vegetable Dealers

The Passenger Department of the Illinois Central Railroad Company have recently issued a publication known as Circular No. 12, in which is described the best territory in this country for the growing of early strawberries and vegetables. Every dealer in such products should direct a postal card to the undersigned at Chicago, Ill., requesting a copy of Circular No. 12.

J. F. BERRY, Asst. Gen'l Pass'r Agent.