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DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB'S HOST.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue waves roll nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn had blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and brown.

For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved—and forever grew still.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock beating surf.

And there lay the rider, distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances uplited, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

—Lord Byron.

A GAME WITH LIVING CHESSMEN

By George Ethelbert Walsh.

"THIS happened before you boys were born," Uncle Harry asserted, stretching himself in the easy chair. "It was when I was quite a youngster myself. I didn't have as easy a time of it then as boys of to-day. I had to earn my living when I was thirteen, and before I was sixteen I had been around the world twice. I wasn't a cabin passenger, either, but simply a cabin boy, which means an all-around overworked and much-abused boy.

"When I was nearly sixteen we had a wreck on one of the islands in the Indian Ocean, and we were all washed ashore. There were sixteen of us in the crew, including one young fellow who was considered half an idiot, but who always made plenty of fun for the men in the fo-castle. When we picked ourselves up on the beach we found we had jumped from the frying pan into the fire. There stood several hundred yellow cutthroats armed to the teeth with sticks, knives and swords. At first they acted as if they intended to kill us, but their chief came down and ordered us to be carried away to prison.

"We were thankful for that, but the prison was such a dirty place that we nearly died in it. I think we would all have been executed if it had not been for Strander, the one we called the half-idiot, who had in some way attracted the chief's attention. Before we knew it he was actually serving as court jester and entertainer to his Majesty. He was a good musician and a good player of all games. He was particularly an expert at chess.

"Now, as it happened, his Majesty was also an expert chess player. This game, you know, is an Oriental one, and it was played in the Far East long before America was discovered. Well, this chief had learned to play it somewhere, and he was passionately fond of it. Strander could give him points on the game, however, every time, but he was wise enough never to beat the old chief. He would give him the hardest game he could, but always at the very end he would make a move which would let the chief win. This so pleased the chief that he spent nearly every afternoon playing chess with Strander. Then he grew so boastful of his skill that he challenged Strander to play for any wish he liked. If he won the wish would be granted.

"Then, your Majesty," Strander said, "we will play for the lives of the men. If I win they are to come forth from the prison and be given their liberty. But if you win—"

"Ah, ha!" shouted the chief. "You have said it. If you lose they shall be executed at once."

"Strander turned a little pale and demurred, but the chief insisted upon the compact. "I shall save your life," the chief added, "if you lose, for I want you to play chess with, but your friends must all die."

"But if I win do I go free with the men, too?"

The chief scowled and thought a moment, and then he said: "Yes, you

and I could see the chief scowl with anger and determination. The loss of these men made the battle more equal, and the chief grew nervous and restless. His fingers played feverishly with his long tunic, and his mustache was twisted and twirled several times between each play. His warriors also lost their cheerful manners and no longer shouted when he made a move.

"But Strander was like a sphinx. He was sober and serious, and his eyes were glued upon the players before him. I thought he often looked at me with a queer expression, and even when he was watching his opponent's play a gleam from the corner of his eyes appeared to take me in. Was he, after all, merely playing with the king to give him the impression that it was a hard-fought game? I began to believe that he was only fooling with his antagonist, and that the game was well within hand. The suspicion was further confirmed by the way he eyed me. I felt certain that he had selected me for some sharp work, and that he was planning a grand coup which would end the game. I grew more confident at this and breathed easier.

"But following this came a series of mishaps or mistakes which raised the hopes of the bloodthirsty warriors around. Four pawns, a castle, and a bishop were swept in rapid succession from the chess board. I fairly gasped in surprise at this, coming so soon after my confidence in Strander's strategy. The shouts of approval which rent the air made me feel faint and dizzy. I looked around. There were barely half a dozen of my crew left on the board. The others had all been captured. The game was surely lost, and our lives would pay the penalty.

"The old chief, in his glee, made two rapid moves to corner Strander's king and queen. Strander appeared frightened and demoralized. Then he quietly made a few moves, and, in a voice that seemed plaintively modest and frightened, he said:

"Your Majesty is checked!"

"The chief uttered a sort of growl and moved his king to one side. Strander followed up his advantage, and called 'check' again. In some mysterious way Strander had arranged his few remaining men so that they seemed suddenly to close in upon the chief's cornered king. In vain the old man studied the puzzle, and tried to plan a way of escape. It was a trap so neatly laid and sprung that it took some time for the spectators to realize it. An intense hush fell upon the audience. The chief's face worked spasmodically. He was facing defeat, but it was hard to acknowledge it. It was the first time that any one had defeated him at his favorite game. How would he accept the defeat? Even before the game was declared finished every one of us was questioning in our mind whether the old man's promise would be redeemed. Even Strander was in doubt, and we could see the working of his face.

"The chief bowed his head and shaded his eyes. Three times he looked up at the sky and blinked his eyes. Then he glanced coldly at his opponent seated opposite. A wave of his hand summoned one of his warriors to him. Stretching forth his arm, he shouted:

"Take them away from me! I never want to see his face again! Away with him! Away with him!"

"Was this our sentence? Did it mean immediate execution? That question also puzzled the old warrior, for he asked something in an undertone.

"No, no!" shouted the chief; "I gave my word. They shall be free. Take them away and give them their freedom. But never let me see his face again!"

"Strander had mortally offended him in defeating him at chess, but he had also saved our lives. The old chief was bowed with grief and mortification when they led us away. An expression of pity entered Strander's face, and for a moment it seemed as if he would face the danger of speaking to the chief and asking his pardon. But he thought better of it and walked away with us. We were conducted to the coast and placed in boats which carried us to the mainland. There we met a ship in time which carried us home.

"It seemed like a miraculous escape, but after all it was due entirely to Strander's skill. He had the old chief beaten from the beginning, but he had played carefully with him to keep him from losing his temper. He was afraid even then that he would not keep his promise; but sometimes a savage has as good a sense of honor as a civilized man, and certainly one who could play such a game of chess ought to. Don't you think so, boys?"—New York Times.

QUAINT LONDON LEGACIES.

Precious Worthies of Times Past Have Had Their Charities Continue.

Some curious glimpses into the life of old London are afforded by the reports made to the Charity Commission on the endowed charities in the County of London, a few of which have just been issued as parliamentary papers. For instance, in the reports dealing with the city parishes, we have an estimate of the value set on sermons by city men in olden times. That estimate varied from 5 shillings to £1 10s. One Thomas Brightwell left a bequest for a sermon to be preached on the 5th of November every time it fell on a Sunday, the minister to get 13s. 4d., the clerk 3s. 4d., and the sexton 1s. 4d. But David Gittin had a more modest idea of the value of a sermon in the same parish. He required two sermons for 10 shillings, one to be preached on the second Sunday in Advent, and the other on the second Sunday in Lent. The reader got 2 shillings, the churchwarden 2s. 8d., and the poor sexton 4 pence for each occasion. John Ireland thought 13s. 4d. enough for two sermons.

In 1690 John Winn left a curious bequest to the parish of St. Bennet, Paul's Wharf. A pound was set apart for an annual sermon, the text to be taken from the 5th chapter of St. John and the 27th verse. He also left enough to buy twelve penny loaves for twelve poor people of the parish who attended a sermon every Friday in the parish church. But he expected more for his pound than the annual sermon, for before or after the sermon the minister had to spend an hour examining or instructing the poor people in the Christian doctrine.

The most generous donor of the preacher was James Wood, who thought a sermon in St. Nicholas-Cole-Abbey was worth £1 10s. every alternate year. In 1625 he bequeathed to the Company of Bowyers a sum to enable them, among other things, to repair to the parish church named, after they had sworn in their wardens and master every second year, there to hear a sermon and pay the parson £1 10s., and the clerk and sexton 1s. 6d. each. In the parish of St. Michael Bassishaw one Edward Heylin in the eighteenth century left money, the interest on which was to be applied to purchasing two sixpenny loaves each Sunday for two poor men or women who should attend divine service.—London Daily News.

Gold-Dusted Sydney.

Gold is to be found in most things, as we know now—even in sea water—but some experiments recently made in Sydney under the auspices of the local Royal Society yielded curious results in this connection. Dust collected from the roof of the Sydney Observatory was found to contain cobalt, nickel and gold, while at the university buildings—a couple of miles further away from the sea—gold was also discovered in the dust. The Observatory is within a stone's throw of Sydney harbor, with the wharves all around it, and probably the nickel and cobalt are to be traced to the shipments of rough ore brought over from New Caledonia from time to time. But the gold is everywhere, and it was shown to be present in dust collected promiscuously at such unlikely places as Moruya, Menindie and other towns far removed from the "yellow belt." Possibly, through the agency of some future invention, this common dust may be made to pay for the working, and this would be a helpful new asset for Australia, for there is plenty of it.—London Chronicle.

Uncle Sam's Business Methods.

The Postoffice Department of the United States was considered a good deal of an institution before the Civil War. In 1852 its receipts were \$6,900,000. In 1862 they were \$8,200,000. Last year they were \$121,800,000. The receipts of the department have trebled since 1862. They have increased \$50,000,000 in ten years, and in the same time the annual deficit has fallen from \$8,000,000 to \$2,000,000. These are big figures on a big subject. If the abuses in the postal business can be reformed, no difficulty will be experienced in making receipts and expenditures balance. Congress should deal promptly with postal affairs. They touch the welfare of the people at many important points.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Tired of Themselves.

It is incorrect to say that one is tired of life. People expressing themselves that way mean they are tired of themselves.—New York News.

TRIP STONE IN THE ROAD.

Up hill with heavy load
A farmer's wheels went round;
A stone was in the road,
At which the farmer frowned.

At once, with snap and crack,
The shaft gave way and dropped;
The wagon staggered back,
But struck the stone and stopped.

That stone, frown on at first,
Now held the wagon fast;
The stone the farmer cursed
Reclaimed his load at last.

'Tis thus through life, I wis:
The evils often bless,
And hindrance often is
A rock of sure success.

—John Edward Everett, in Ram's Horn.



"Is he a well informed man?" "I should say so. Why, his wife tells him everything."—Town Topics.

Little Clarence—"Pa, how many senses have we?" Mr. Calipers—"Six, my son—five senses and a nonsense."—Puck.

Struggling Author—"I am told you gave that book of mine a awful roast." Literary Editor—"I did. I threw it in the fire."—Chicago Tribune.

"Where the wife is the better half, what is the husband?" "Perhaps he is what is meant by the submerged tenth!"—Detroit Journal.

Miss Sere—"Did I tell you what I had intended to do on my thirtieth birthday?" Miss Jere—"No, but I suppose you did it."—Philadelphia Press.

She—"My mind, I'd have you understand, is on something higher than dress." He—"Oh, is it? On your hat, I suppose?"—Philadelphia Bulletin.

He sent his boy to college.
And now he cries, Alack!
He spent ten thousand dollars,
And got a quarter back.

The Artist's Wife—"And did he say anything complimentary about your picture?" The Artist—"Yes; he said he thought I had sold it."—Yonkers Statesman.

"The Shobsbys must be wealthy to give away so much to charity." "They are. Shobsby got a corner not long ago in one of the necessities of life."—Town Topics.

A girl seldom marries her brother's friend, or even her girl friend's brother. Their temperaments would never blend; they know too much of each other.—Philadelphia Press.

Mrs. Highblower—"Elsie, you never speak outside of the quarrels between your papa and myself, do you?" Elsie—"Oh, no, mamma. But whenever you are pleasant to each other I always mention it."—Life.

Worthless Husband—"Going to leave me, are you, Moll? Didn't you take me for better or worse?" Long Suffering Wife—"Yes, but you are absolutely the worst. I didn't take you for that."—Chicago Tribune.

First Heiress—"Why did you cut Miss Plumleigh so the other day?" Second Heiress—"Oh, she's impossible. Not in our sphere at all. She's never been sought by a European syndicate."—Chicago Record-Herald.

"Oh, yes," replied the bright and scientific young mother; "I always give Clifford twenty-five cents when I speak him. The best authorities are quite agreed that punishing a child for nothing tends to confuse his ethical notions."—Puck.

"Have you weighed anchor yet?" demanded the new commodore of the yacht club. "Aye, aye, sir," answered the petty officer, touching his hat. "Then why," thundered the commodore, "don't you announce the weight?"—Chicago Tribune.

"What are you two fumbling about?" asked the suspicious chaperon, as she suddenly entered the room. The bright young girl looked meaningfully at the brave but modest effort on the young man's upper lip. "That was not a fumble at all, aunty, dear," she said, in her soft, sweet tones; "that was just a touchdown."—Baltimore American.

A Query

Are executed murderers entitled to be called martyrs because they have died for their convictions?—New York Times.

A woman may think she admires the hero of a novel, but it is doubtful if she would tolerate his perfection in real life.