

THE HEADLIGHT.

A. ROSCOWER, Editor & Proprietor.

"HERE SHALL THE PRESS THE PEOPLE'S RIGHTS MAINTAIN, UNAWED BY INFLUENCE AND UNBRIED BY GAIN."

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THE SHADOW AT THE FIRESIDE.

There's a shadow at the fireside when the sunset colors creep
And crinkle into waves of gold along the western steep;
The huge back-log is blazing, and before its ruddy glow
Sits Grandpa in the great oak chair, slow rocking to and fro.

Though his hair is white and scanty, still his face with pleasure glows,
His old bowed silver spectacles are afloat upon his nose,
And by his ample handkerchief, with checkered lines all through,
I read his whole life's story—or, at least I think I do.

There's a flint-lock of "ya olden time," a sword of shining steel—
Mute witnesses, but eloquent, of the way he used to feel,
And from a book depending is a bugle, burnished bright,
That spoke the magic "Forward!" in the thickest of the fight.

His voice is low and gentle now—but then it rang along
And held the "right wing" motionless—in courage doubly strong,
His words and deeds united were by faith in Freedom's cause;
He spoke and fought for conscience sake—and not for men's applause.

Then, too, the deep sea's treasures on the kitchen's walls are hung;
A wondrous shell, within whose ear the far Pacific sung;
An antler's branch-like coral; a sponge of rarest hue—
All speak of dear, old Grandpa and what he used to do.

Now, his face is quite a study of the line-graver's art;
A portrait of "old age" is he—right well he looks the part;
And, though his sight is failing, there is something in his look
Of a sweetness wise and holy—a reflection from the book.

I lie upon the settle and watch the shaded, old face,
Whose wrinkles and whose crows-feet are but the signs of grace,
I see with tears, through laughter, the grotesque shadows go
Of Grandpa and the great oak chair; slow rocking to and fro.

RUTH'S FRIGHT.

It was the fifth day of November—"Guy Fawke Day" in the old almanac that hung above the mantel in my maternal grandmother's long disused room upstairs. In this northern home to which we had recently removed, falling heirs to it through that very ancestress' will, the dwellers regarded November rather as a winter than an autumn month, and to-day the wind howled and the rain pattered with a persistence marvellous to behold.

And, as it happened, I was all alone in the house. Father had gone to take his russet apples to market—the apples that I myself had helped to harvest and pack in the barrel and was not expected home until to-morrow night at the earliest. Jack, my brother, was in Montreal, sitting up the law office which was henceforward to be his abode. Joan, our hard-featured, cross-grained old servant, had gone home with the "rheumatics," as she termed it, to be treated by a certain ancient Indian herb doctor; and just at dusk-fall Peter, our "useful man," had thrust his shock head unceremoniously in at the door.

"I say, Miss Ruth," he had said, "there's plenty of wood, and everything's all snug for the night, and I'm going over to Stephenson's. They're in trouble there."

"Trouble, Peter? What kind of trouble? Is the old man sick?"

But in answer to my query Peter only uttered an indistinct remark and went out, slamming the door behind him.

I stood in front of the fire looking down at the glowing embers, and pondering within myself. The Stephensons, who lived in an old grey-stone house on the other side of the precipitous gleu, had always been a riddle to me. The family was small, consisting only of a crabbed old man, his portentously silent wife, and two tall, ungainly sons; and what on earth they did with all the big, echoing rooms, or how they contrived to live, perched like eaglets on the side of the rock, I could not form the least idea. "City boarders," Peter had once granted out in answer to my persistent interrogations. But if they kept city boarders, why did they not leave these dreary mountain fastnesses when the leaves fell and the dismal autumn fogs gathered above the cliffs? Altogether, there was a certain atmosphere of mystery about these "Stephensons" that aroused all the Eve like instincts of my nature.

While I still stood thinking, a soft

tap sounded at the door. I opened it at once, never once remembering that I was alone in the house.

"Ye never oughter'd do that, Miss Ruth," said the well known accents of Mrs. Gludge, Farmer Gludge's buxom wife.

"Do what, Mrs. Gludge?"

"Open the door after dark, when you're alone in the house, without askin' who's there."

"How did you know I was alone in the house?"

"I just met Peter goin' to Stephenson's."

"Oh!" said I. "But we don't have traps here, Mrs. Gludge."

"I'm not so certain o' that," said the farmer's wife. "Your folks hain't lived here as long as I have. We're just nigh enough to the Canada line to have queer characters prowlin' about when ye least expect 'em. And then, there's Stephenson's."

"What of Stephenson's?" I cried eagerly. "Who is Stephenson, anyway? Do tell me, Mrs. Gludge."

"Well, I declare!" said Mrs. Gludge. "Is it possible, now, that they hain't told you?"

"They have told me nothing," said I. "Well, it's likely they didn't want to scare you or make you nervous," said Mrs. Gludge. "But, all the same, I think you'd oughter know."

"Mrs. Gludge," I cried, seizing her arm, "what is it? Do tell me!"

"It's a private home," said Mrs. Gludge, lowering her voice to a whisper, "is though the rain drops and the rustling of boughs could overhear."

"A what?" I gasped.

"For people of feeble mind," explained the woman, "and lunics," tapping her forehead, as she spoke.

I stared at her.

"Then," I cried, "that's what Peter meant when he said that—that—"

"One of the poor creatures has somehow given 'em the slip," said Mrs. Gludge—"an English gentleman from Montreal, as has only been there a few

lays. Nobody knows just how it happened, but happen it did. My man's gone over with a lantern to help hunt for him; so has Peter."

"He might have told me!" I cried indignantly.

"Anyway, I don't think he ought to have left you here alone," said Mrs. Gludge, severely.

"But you've come to stay with me, Mrs. Gludge?"

"Bless your heart, Miss Ruth, no! I'm on my way to carry a letter to Mr. Romney's, up the road—a very important letter, with 'in haste' writ on it." (For in addition to her duties as a farmer's wife, and mother of a large family of little children, Mrs. Gludge helped her husband in the care of the obscure little country postoffice a mile down the road.)

"And—by the way I'd nearly forgot it—I've got a letter for you, too. That's what brought me here."

"For me," Mrs. Gludge?

Instinctively I put out my hand to grasp the treasure, while the woman fumbled first in one and then in another of her pockets.

"It's very strange," said she, "I made sure I had it. I did have it when I started away from home; but now I remember. Just at the foot of Gibb's Cliff I took out my handkercher to tie around my neck, the wind came so keen around the rocks, and I must a-pulled it out with that, and everything too pitch dark around me to see. Oh, Miss Ruth, I'm so sorry! Please don't report me, there's a good young lady, or I shall lose my place."

I swallowed down a great lump of discomfiture in my throat and tried to laugh.

"Report you, Mrs. Gludge?" said I. "Of course not. It wasn't your fault. If you hadn't kindly thought of me, and started to bring it on your way to Romney's, you never would have lost it."

"And quite true," said Mrs. Gludge, ruefully, "but, all the same, I wish I hadn't been so thoughtless. I'll send the boys out to look for it just as—"

"Oh, never mind the letter," I interrupted, "I dare say it's only from Jack. To-morrow morning will do very well for that. But Mrs. Gludge you'll come back and stay with me till Peter gets back? Jean is away you know, and—"

"Yes, my dear, I'll do that," assented the woman, evidently relieved, to be let off so easily on the score of the letter. "And it won't be long first. It's only a short half mile to Romney's; the wind didn't blow so like all possessed."

With a good-humored nod she disappeared into the rain and darkness, and I ran back to pile fresh logs on the waning fire. Bank burglars, extradited wanderers, a lunatic at large—with all these possibilities whirling in my brain it not strange that I lighted a second lamp in order effectually to banish all lurking shadows from the angles of the room, and started nervously when a sudden blast of wind shook the window-shutters as if with some imperious hand.

"I'll go up to the garret and bring down some butter-nuts," thought I. "It will be fun to crack the butter-nuts and watch the shells blaze in the fire, and Mrs. Gludge will like a drink of cider when she comes back all wet and chill."

Cheered by this happy thought, I caught up a lamp and flew to the garret of the roomy old house where my father had bestowed all the nutty treasures of the autumn woods. Somehow Priscilla, the cat, had got locked into the garret, and I had to release her from quarantine vile, and replace a box or two which she had knocked off from the window sill, before I came down, driving her catnip before me, with the lamp in one hand and an apronful of butternuts in the other. Through the open keeping-room door streamed a ray of ruddy light into the Cimærian darkness of the hall. I stopped abruptly. Surely I had closed that door when I came out, remembering a certain trick it had of slamming to and fro in windy weather like this. And at the same time a curious consciousness of some human presence near by crept over me like an unseen magnetic current.

Nor was it a false premonition. As I stretched my neck to peep cautiously into the room I saw seated before the fire a gentleman—a youngish gentleman—pale, black-haired, and, as I thought, rather unsettled of aspect. And a decidedly wet and mud-bespattered gentleman, whose raiment steamed in the glorious blaze and crackle of the pine logs, as he sat there holding out his hands to the genial warmth.

How had he gained an entrance? Had I carelessly neglected to bolt the big door after Mrs. Gludge's departure? Yes, I must have done so—and that was a proof of how utterly unfit I was to be left by myself. For a second I stood there quailing and quaking, my heart thumping like a trip-hammer and a cold sweat breaking out upon my forehead, before I decided what to do.

I had never seen a bank burglar, to be sure, but I was pretty certain this gentleman could not belong to that race.

And I did not think he acted like any other scoundrel who was fleeing from the rigors of the law. He must be the English gentleman gone wrong in his head, who had "escaped" from Stephenson's.

I was alone in the house with a lunatic. And at the idea my heart beat more violently than ever, and the cold drops grew colder on my brow.

With a sudden instinct I decided that there was nothing for it but flight. The worst feature of the case was that I could not get out of the house (be it remembered that Peter had taken away the key of the back kitchen door in his pocket) without passing directly through the room where the escaped lunatic sat basking before the fire. This, however, must be faced; there was no remedy for it, and with one blind rush I precipitated myself through the room, tumbling over the cat and scattering a shower of butternuts as I went and darted headlong through the door, with an involuntary shriek that might have rent the ceiling, if ceilings were rent in that way, except in the pages of romance.

Directly into the arms of—Jack, my own brother Jack, who was coming in from the van with a light valise in one hand and a dripping carriage robe in the other.

"Halloo!" bawled Jack, staggering under the blow of my very unexpected appearance. "Why—what the—I declare if it isn't Ruth!"

"Oh, Jack! oh, Jack!" I screamed, clutching at him like the drowning man at the proverbial straw.

"Where are all the folks? What have you done with Carleton?" he demanded. But I paid no heed to his interrogatories.

"Come, Jack!" I cried, "come quickly! The escaped lunatic! He's right there in the keeping room! Oh, Jack, I do hope you've got your revolver!"

"What?" roared Jack. "An escaped lunatic? Where the deuce has he come from? Has he hurt Carleton?"

He made a spring toward the keeping room, in whose door stood the tall, pale

man, straining his eyes out into the night.

"Where is he?" shouted Jack.

"Where's who?" said the escaped lunatic, in a pleasant, slightly drawing voice. "It wasn't he. It was a she. And she cleared the floor in a single bound, and—Oh, I'm sure I beg a thousand pardons"—as he caught sight of me. "But please, what is the matter?"

In a second my mental vision became as clear as crystal. I saw it all, and I envied Priscilla, the cat, because I could not vanish under the china cupboard as she did, and be gone. I could only blush and hang my head, and stammer out incoherent apologies amid the laughter of Jack and the polite apologies of the friend whom he had unexpectedly brought from Montreal with him, and whose coming had been announced, as it seemed, by the very letter Mrs. Gludge had lost.

That's all. There is no sequel to my story. In real life I have found that stories seldom do have sequels. I had had a dreadful fright, and they all laughed at me at first, and made excuses for me and petted me afterward and said "Poor Little Ruth!" Father declared that he would never risk such a thing again, and discharged Peter on the spot—but Peter came back to his work the next day, just as usual, as he is here still. Mr. Carleton was very nice and apologetic for coming in without knocking, to dry himself, while Jack was leading the horse to the barn, but he has not yet fallen in love with me, as an orthodox hero ought to do. The genuine escaped lunatic was captured near Stephenson's and taken to Montreal, under the impression that he was the Governor-General, going to take possession of his vice-regency. And just half an hour after we had settled down to the cracking of butternuts that night, a merry group, a sepulchral knocking sounded at the door, and Mrs. Gludge's voice was heard proclaiming:

"If you please, miss, I've come to keep you company!"

The Largest Newspaper.

The largest newspaper, to my knowledge, ever published in this country was The Illuminated Quadruple Constellation, New York, July 4, 1859, a monster paper filled to overflowing with useful and entertaining reading for everybody. It was a 28,000 edition and sold at fifty cents a copy. The size of this mastodon sheet was 70x100 inches, or almost forty-nine square feet, eight pages, thirteen columns to the page, or a total of 104 columns, each forty-eight inches in length. It was illustrated with good portraits of President James Buchanan, Edward Everett, Henry Ward Beecher, N. P. Banks, Edwin H. Chapin, Horace Greeley, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Alexander von Humboldt, James Gordon Bennett and several others. The paper contained thirty-six different poems entire, among them "Bradlock's Defeat; or the Battle of Monongahela," a poem of sixty-four eight-line verses, occupying one column and a fourth, or exactly five feet of space. Among other articles of especial note published in that levathanic sheet was the celebrated "Moon Hoax," taken from a copy of the New York Sun published in 1835. The weight of the paper required for the edition of 28,000 was equal to that required for printing 2,000,000 copies of either the New York Times or Herald. The paper cost the publisher, a Mr. George Roberts, \$800 a ream and each ream weighed 300 pounds. It required the work of forty persons ten hours per day for eight weeks to set up and publish this gigantic edition.—*St. Louis Republic.*

Scouting Newspapers.

According to a London letter "a decided innovation in the printing world has been introduced into the office of the News and Post, of which J. H. Coppleston, formerly well known in New York as a journalist, is the manager. Any desired odor may be produced, and the experiment has proved not only a great success, but a big advertisement for the journal."

There is nothing new under the sun in journalism. A Canadian patent for scenting white paper for newspapers was granted years ago. Any one interested can find it in the Dominion patent publications on file in the Astor Library.—*New York News.*

England may yet have to go to war, suggests the Buffalo Express, in order to give her soldiers something to think of besides munitry. That was the reason why Louis Napoleon's wars were fought.

The Reporter's Revenge.

I was luncheon, says a correspondent of the Washington Post, with one of the best reporters in New York, and in the course of the meal he told the following story: He said that recently he was assigned to write biographical sketches to accompany two cuts. Concerning one of them he had very misty knowledge. All he knew was that the subject was a sporting character of some sort. Armed with this clue he called upon the editor of a sporting paper for information. He asked this dignitary, "Do you know such a person as William Easton?" "William Easton?" replied the sporting editor, with undisguised amusement and scorn in his tone. "Don't you know William Easton? Well, you must be fresh. Why, I supposed everybody knew who William Easton was: Why, he's the auctioneer in the New York Tattersalls." The reporter took the rebuke meekly and then showed him his second cut. "Here's another man," he said, with a demure expression of innocence on his face. "Perhaps you can tell me who he is. But the sporting editor confessed his inability. "Why," said the reporter, "this is a portrait of Shelby M. Cullom." "Cullom," said the sporting editor, with a meditative and far-away look. "Who's Cullom? Does he keep a stable?" "Why, you must be fresh," said the reporter. "He is United States Senator from Illinois, the friend of Lincoln, father of the interstate commerce law, and one of the likeliest candidates for the Presidency of the United States. Didn't you ever hear of Cullom? Why, I supposed everybody had heard of Cullom." The sporting editor smiled a painful smile and said he thought honors were about even.

A Brilliant Scheme.

"That's a good story," said the newspaper man's friend as he finished reading the tale. "You can sell that."

"Well, I don't know about that," said the newspaper man doubtfully. "It has the merit of brevity, of course, but the papers are not running much to that style of story now."

"I see 'em every day."

"That may be, too; but it's no sign that this will be accepted."

"I'll bet you a dollar it will be."

"Take you!" shouted the newspaper man so suddenly that it made his friend start.

The friend reached down in his pocket and pulled out a silver dollar, and as he put it up he said:

"Look here, old man, what's the game?"

"Playing a sure thing," was the reply. "I'll get \$3 or \$4 for that if I sell it and \$1 if I don't. I've got three bets on three different stories now, and if my friends hold out I'll make an everlasting fortune with my pen."—*Chicago Tribune.*

"Advertiser."

The editor of *American Notes and Queries* (Philadelphia) asked 480 editors all over the country which pronunciation each preferred: advertisement or adverstisement. Roughly speaking the canvass yielded, from all parts of the country: For advertisement 230 votes. For adverstisement 250 votes, or a majority for advertisement of twenty votes.

Among the delicacies to be obtained at a Japanese railroad station are sliced lotus roots, roots of large burdock, lily bulbs, shoots of ginger, pickled green plums and the like.



A cream of tartar baking powder. Highest of all in leavening strength.—*Latest U. S. Government Food Report.*