

## THE LOT OF EARTH.

We love—the grave is deep;  
We trust—our faith's denied;  
Our storehouse with treasures heap—  
They moulder at our side;  
So, while the years pass by  
We gather naught of worth,  
And can but answer wearily:  
"It is the lot of earth."

"Oh, mournful voice," he said.  
"Wherefore thy mournfulness?  
Ours ever are the 'sainted dead,  
And near are they to bless.  
Whose store in Heaven is laid  
Shall never suffer dearth,  
And God ne'er yet a soul betrayed—  
"This is 'the lot of earth.'"

—Clare Everest.

## HOW IT HAPPENED.

BY LIZZIE I. FOLSON.

Creak, creak, went the rigging.  
Whirr-r-r, went the wind through it.  
Tearing and straining at the cording,  
and tossing the great steamer about as  
if it were a toy, the wind caught at the  
masts and made them groan and quiver,  
then, in sheer wantonness, gathered up a  
mighty wave and sent it tearing, a white  
sheet of foam, clear across the deck.  
And the passengers, most of them who  
were huddled together in the cabin,  
shivered and exchanged glances of com-  
miseration, not devoid, in some cases, of  
very human fear.

Whirr-r-r went the wind; and caught,  
on its way, a jaunty, red, knitted cap,  
twirled it aloft in derision, then left it  
bobbing desolately about at the mercy of  
the waters, and prepared to give atten-  
tion to further dishevelment of the  
wavy, dark head leaning over the bul-  
warks. There was a dismayed cry, and  
two hands grasped wildly at the empty  
air, returning to hold to the small,  
shapely head, lest it should follow.

"That's a pity! It was such a pretty  
hat!" said a masculine voice.  
"Yes, wa'n't it?" in dolorous, wind-  
tossed quaver.

Then they looked at each other a mo-  
ment in silence, and then laughed, soft-  
ly, heartily, with youth's gladness. He  
spoke first, quickly and positively:

"Forgive me for speaking to you, but  
it was such a chance. I've wanted to  
know you all along. My name is Neil  
Blake, and I live in Boston. May I talk  
to you? Do you mind?"

"My name is Eugenie Grant, and I live  
in Buffalo. I think I do not mind."

And they leaned together, clinging to  
the bulwarks, and watched the bobbing  
red cap till it was lost to view; then she  
pulled her water-proof hood over her  
curls, and they sat down in the shelter  
of the wheelhouse, and talked together  
in youthful earnestness.

Four days out from Liverpool. For  
four days he had been a victim to the  
charms of the young woman who then  
sat composedly in dripping waterproof  
beside him. He had seen her as she  
came on board, holding her gray skirts  
daintily about her, while her lace-edged  
petticoats peeped from beneath. He  
thought he had never seen a prettier fig-  
ure than that outlined by the gray suit,  
nor softer, lovelier eyes than the ones that  
glanced at him, and looked away—to  
glance again. He had wanted so much  
to know her, but she had seemed shy;  
true, she had peeped at him from behind  
the floral tower in the centre of the table;  
she had looked at him and laughed  
when, the first rough day, he supported  
his next neighbor in gasping misery from  
the table, but he had found no chance to  
speak to her. She had become prettier  
upon close inspection than he had at first  
thought, and most distractingly so in the  
ill-fated red cap, from under which her  
eyes had shone like twin, laughing stars.

So, you may be very sure that he made  
the most of the episode of the cap and,  
leaning on one elbow, talked to her  
most earnestly and confidently; he  
should give her no chance to escape—  
not, indeed, that she showed any incli-  
nation to desert her damp rope coil for  
the gorgeous upholstery of the salon.  
She seemed very contented, crossing her  
small feet in their rubber boots, and set-  
tling herself comfortably.

It did not take them long to grow con-  
fidential, and before they went into din-  
ner she had the pleasing assur-  
ance that he was the only child of a  
father who dealt in railroads—well, per-  
haps not "dealt" but something as  
sweeping and enviable, Eugenie was  
sure. And he found out that she was a  
Vassar girl, that she really was near-  
sighted, though you would never believe  
it, and that "mamma" was always des-  
perately sick on the water. It is doubt-

ful if the last fact produced the regret  
it naturally should, and, as the days  
went by, it seemed to him a positive  
blessing that "mamma" was safely  
stowed away in invisibility.

Perhaps it was just as well, for other-  
wise, they might not have enjoyed the  
lovely moonlight nights that followed  
the stormy day; those nights when to  
think of sleep was sacrilege; when the  
whole world seemed flooded with moon-  
beams, soft, yellow moonbeams when  
the stately ship glided on, leaving be-  
hind a path of shining silver, of ripples  
that blinked and blinked in an ever-  
widening road that led straight into  
heaven. Eugenie said, straight to the  
shining stars at the distant horizon.

They sat together, night after night,  
in the dangerous moonbeams, and spoke  
to each other softly, and made of trivial  
things a low-voiced mystery, and her  
dark eyes drooped before the near, eager  
gaze of his brown ones. Oh! it was very  
well that mamma was quite an invalid!  
They talked of the red cap that had led  
to their acquaintance, but he said she  
looked more lovely with that soft, white  
affair about her head, and she was very  
glad he thought her lovely, and foolishly  
told him so. After that, perhaps, it  
was not strange that he talked to  
"Genie," and maybe, it was possible  
that once or twice his hand happened to  
lie on hers and neither of them seemed  
to know.

It had grown to be quite a serious  
thing for both by the time New York  
harbor was an immediate possibility;  
and the last night out, as they parted in  
their sheltered corner, he held fast both  
her hands, and the two shadowed heads  
on the deck melted into one—at any rate  
that is the way it looked, and Eugenie  
ran with hot, red cheeks to the cabin.

She next morning all was hub-bub;  
the bustle of disembarking; the nervous  
fury of righteous desire to evade the  
custom officers; the collecting of mislaid  
luggage, all made the scene a lively one.  
Eugenie was in her state-room, frantically  
trying to make one satchel do the work  
of two, when a rap at her door was fol-  
lowed by Neil's voice.

"Please do a favor for me," he said,  
in his emphatic way. "Wear this ring  
off the boat for me. It's very valuable;  
a friend sent by me for it, but I don't  
know"—with smiling eyes—"that I shall  
let him have it now. You wear it, and  
I'll come to your hotel to-night for it—  
if I must take it; but I hope—you know  
what, 'Genie!'"

He was gone, and Eugenie stood with  
happy blushes on her fair face, clasping  
tight the small package containing the  
ring. Her ring, it might be, if she said  
so, and was there any doubt what she  
would say? She pressed it to her lips.

"Hurry, 'Genie," cried a querulous  
voice, "hurry, child!"

She started, and tore open the pack-  
age with eager haste, bringing forth on  
the end of her finger a ring. Her face  
fell. What a wretched little thing! A  
cameo of cheapest variety, and consider-  
ably too large for her slender fingers.

"Worse than ordinary," said Eugenie.  
"What does he mean by asking me to  
wear such a paltry affair! Well, I don't  
care," she decided, at last, "but he  
needn't have said it was very valuable,"  
and it is greatly to be feared that Eu-  
genie's door shut forcibly after her.

The cuckoo on the clock in the hotel  
parlor had just screeched for 9 o'clock  
when Neil ran up the stairs and tapped  
on the door of the parlor allotted to "J.  
D. Grant, wife and daughter, Buffalo."

Very handsome and eager he looked,  
and it is small wonder that Eugenie  
blushed brightly as he took her hands.

"What a swell you are!" he said, ad-  
miring the white billows of lace that fell  
about her, leaving bare the soft neck and  
rounded arms. "How much time can  
you give me?"

"Not much; it is time to go. But I  
will see you to-morrow won't I? Here  
is your ring; I've been afraid I should  
lose it, it is so large for me."

She holds it out to him. He takes it,  
and with it both her hands.

"Then you will keep the other, 'Genie?'"  
in an anxious inquiry.

"The other! What other?" said Eu-  
genie.

"Why, the diamond, of course, what  
do you suppose?"

"The diamond?" in amazement. "There  
was no diamond!"

He stared a moment and then laughed.  
"Oh! come now! That's a joke, and  
I'll laugh at it by-and-by, but just now  
I'm more interested in something else—  
in you."

"But there was no diamond, what do  
you mean by saying so?" in wonder-  
ment.

Neil's face flushed, and his voice was  
more than unusually positive—almost of-

fensively so, Eugenie thought, as he  
said:

"You know perfectly well what I  
mean and, forgive me, but it is in rather  
poor taste to continue that unwelcome  
joke."

"I don't know what you are talking  
about," she replied, with dignity. "I  
wore your valuable ring; if there was  
any diamond about it I failed to see it. I  
shall have to wish you good evening, Mr.  
Blake."

"Of course I did not ask you to wear  
this," in contemptuous designation of the  
cameo. "It was simply in the package  
with the other, the diamond that you do  
not seem able to remember."

"How dare you!" cried angry Eugenie.  
"You are telling a falsehood. Papa  
shall—" "Papa!" in elevated, hysteric  
voice as the door opened; "he says I  
have stolen a ring!" and subsided into a  
crushed, tearful heap on the sofa.

Papa Grant was a portly, pompous  
gentleman, with a great deal of gold-  
watch chain across a broad expanse of  
white vest.

Very deliberate and particular, he re-  
quired that the matter should be fully  
explained twice by his weeping daugh-  
ter, before expressing an opinion.

"You are an impudent young rascal,"  
said Papa Grant. "Who gave you leave  
to address my daughter at all?"

"All I can say, sir," persisted Neil,  
doggedly, "is that I gave to Miss Grant"  
—(not 'Genie any more. Alas!)—a pack-  
age containing a diamond ring, which  
ring she now declines to produce."

At this there was a fresh explosion of  
sobs from behind the handkerchief, and  
two high heels dug wildly into the car-  
pet. Papa Grant swelled with offended  
dignity, and for a moment it looked as  
if Neil's chance for a safe exit were not  
flattering, but there was a new arrival  
upon the scene.

Fair and slight and delicate, but with  
a self-possession and sweet calmness that  
reduced the white vest, calmed Eugenie's  
sobs, and reassured Neil, all at once—the  
heretofore invisible mamma.

"You are sure the ring was in the  
package, Mr. Blake?" after a third ex-  
planation had transpired.

"It was," said Neil, firmly.

"It was not," said Eugenie, as firmly.

Then they glared at each other.

"Oh, this will never do," said Mrs.  
Grant, in calm dismay. "Mr. Blske, I  
know your father, he is a gentleman. I  
think his son is one; it is impossible that  
you should try to deceive us." Neil  
bowed gratefully. "And it is equally  
impossible that my daughter should do  
so. There must be some mistake."

"There is not," declared the beliger-  
ents in a breath.

"There must be some mistake," re-  
peated the mother, calmly. "Eugenie  
may have overlooked the ring in her  
hurry. Of course you are sure you did  
not, my dear. But it may be." She pon-  
dered a moment while Neil and Eugenie  
watched her breathlessly.

"If we could," she said, at last, "if  
we could go on the boat, before our  
state room had been swept—do you think  
it possible, Joseph?"

He of the gold watch chain thus ap-  
pealed to, sniffed contemptuously.

"Absurd! Out of the question! The  
whole affair is ridiculous, and comes from  
allowing your daughter to make indis-  
criminate acquaintances, against which I  
particularly warned you. I set the whole  
matter aside."

But the calm-voiced little woman was  
a power in the household, and, after a  
little, Neil was despatched for a carriage,  
and Eugenie to take off her pretty party-  
dress and bathe her tear-stained face.

Neil was very wretched as he helped  
Mrs. Grant into a carriage, and when  
Eugenie flounced by him and stared  
stony, with red, angry eyes at him, he  
felt that he had nothing to live for, and  
climbed up by the driver a very abject  
and miserable young man.

After a great deal of driving about  
muddy streets, of talking, of arguing,  
and of loss of temper, the party found  
themselves at the door of the state-room  
Eugenie had bid a fond good-by at noon.  
She darted forward, ahead of the rest,  
and her eyes sought eagerly about its  
limited area. She kicked away with the  
tip of her shoe the pile of papers in the  
corner, and pounced down upon the  
pink jeweler's paper that had held the  
cameo. Her face flushed, her eyes  
brightened, and little dimples came and  
went as she drew forth from it a tiny box  
which, opened, sent out glittering, scin-  
tillating rays from the gem within.

The lost ring! Down under a pile of  
rubbish, waiting to be swept out by care-  
less hands, had lain the little package  
that had caused so much heart-ache and  
so many tears.

"It's well I suggested coming," said

Papa Grant. "I don't know how I hap-  
pened to think of it. Take care of that  
step, Agnes," and Neil was left alone.

Left alone; with drooping head and a  
very real ache at his heart. And so this  
was the end of it all; of the moonlight  
nights; of the whispered words; of the  
clasped hands. And he must prepare to  
forget it all. The curving rosy mouth,  
the shining eyes. Forget them! it would  
be very hard to do.

There came a soft touch on his arm  
and a jaunty hat rested against his shoul-  
der.

"Oh, Neil! How could I know the  
wretched ring was there? Can you for-  
give me? Do forgive me, and then I can  
forgive you. We'll not think about it any-  
more, will we? I came back to tell you  
so—dear."

Then he put both arms about her, and  
kissed her softly before they went out  
into the night.

All this was a year ago.

The diamond is on Eugenie's finger  
now, and daily letters fly back and forth,  
letters long and tender, but which, with  
May's first flowers, will cease, for then it  
is their wedding-day will come. —Chicago  
Curr. n.

## Persian Superstitions.

There are many and curious supersti-  
tions in Persia. Without meaning to  
exhaust the subject I will give you some  
of the more peculiar ones. The "baade  
khadem" which is approximately ren-  
dered in English by the term of evil eye,  
though literally it would be translated  
"evil step," plays the largest part in this  
line. The evil eye is believed in by every  
body in Persia, the highest as well as the  
lowest. A baby is healthy and pretty.  
A friend of the mother admires the little  
one in glowing terms. That would be  
"baade khadem"—or evil omen—and  
would be taken as a diabolical design to  
injure the child if the phrase "Eenshal-  
lah" (may it please God) were not added  
to every eulogium. An old woman looks  
at the child from the right-hand side—  
evil eye again. The child stumbles early  
in the morning—evil eye. The father,  
by accident, speaks first to the baby at  
sunrise—evil eye. A girl, pretty, well-  
mannered, healthy, with a good dowry,  
is wedded to a man. The first business  
undertaking of the young benedict turns  
out disastrously—evil eye! Nothing  
could induce that man to keep his young  
wife. She is "baade khadem" to him,  
and she's got to go, willy nilly. As the  
divorce law is such that it virtually lies  
with the husband alone to keep or send  
away his wife, and as the ceremony it-  
self is very simple, and requires neither  
time nor money, he soon gets rid of her.  
Nobody blames him. "She was 'baade  
khadem' to him," everybody says in ex-  
planation, and that's enough.

The Shah has appointed a very able  
and deserving man to an important po-  
sition, for which his previous experience  
and his capacity eminently qualify him.  
On the same day the Shah happens to  
overfeed himself with lamb and raw cu-  
cumbers, and has an attack of colic. The  
new appointee is blamed. He is "baade  
khadem," and incontinently gets the  
sack. Every thing is judged in this way.  
If a man has made a fool of himself and  
run to too great expense in entertaining  
a guest, for instance, the blame is put on  
one of the ladies of his andaroun, on his  
head servant, or somebody else, and that  
one is made to suffer. Astrology (moon-  
adshim), the horoscope (taleh), the rosary  
(tesbin) used as an oracle, and the Koran,  
the poets, especially Saadi and Hanz,  
used in the same way play also a most im-  
portant role in the life of the modern  
Persian. In all doubtful cases, called  
technically "istekhareh," recourse is had  
to one or the other or to all of them. A  
man is in doubt whether to purchase a  
horse he desires. Dealer and customer  
resort to the nearest house of a mollah  
and the Koran is opened at random. If  
the eye happens to alight on such a pas-  
sage as "Happy art thou, oh son of the  
faith, for Allah will bless thee," the pur-  
chase is effected. If not, not.

## A Dialogue.

Brown: Dear boy, I'm engaged.  
White: So am I.  
Brown: My fiancée yours will outvie.  
White: Excuse me, but that I deny.  
Brown: No fairer did e'er you descry.  
White: Her eyes are a beautiful blue.  
Brown: And hers the same beautiful hue.  
White: No fairer man ever did woo,  
Brown: And to her I'll always be true.  
White: Your words are a credit to you.  
Brown: Mamma's her name.  
White: Mine's Mamma too.  
Brown: What's that?  
White: It is just as I say.  
Brown: My boy, I'm overcome with dismay  
I pray you my fears to allay  
Don't tell me her last name is  
Both: Gay.  
—Rambler.