

## THE OLD OAK.

His feet laid hold of the marl and earth, his head was in the sky, he had seen a thousand bulb and burst, he had seen a thousand die. And none knew when he began to be—of trees that grew on that ground—Lord of the wood, king of the oaks, monarch of all around.

And towering so high over others the wind in his branches roared, yet never a limb did the tempest break or shatter a bough that soared, only the ripe young acorns it flung to the earth at its knees, and they sprang up themselves in their season, a belt of protecting trees.

But at length when the storms were over and still was the forest dead, unbattered, unbroken, unbroken, he bowed himself and fell, and the breadth of that mighty clearing, when the giant had gone from his place, was like to the scene of a hundred oaks in the waste of its empty space. —Hall Caine.

## Whitridge's Burglar.

Whitridge lived in the suburbs. When he made his confession to me he admitted that this was a reckless thing to do when one considered the inconvenience of crossing the ferry, riding in a trainful of commuters, changing to a trolley car and finally groping through a dark park. But, as he explained, the heart, like the wind, goes pretty much where it wills, and his had taken up its abode in the old Walton house some 12 miles from the city, and after all it was not so bad.

Whitridge was such an indolent man that it seemed to his friends rather strange that he should have chosen to worship at a shrine that could be reached only by a veritable pilgrimage. His laziness was natural and sensible, for his grandfather had died up in an old tea warehouse on Front street and left him a million. Before that he had potted a little in law and had even advanced so far as to defend a celebrated burglar known as One-eyed Grogan, who was acquitted because of the shrewdness of his counsel's cross-examination and the eloquence of his plea. Then Whitridge retired from the bar and took to doing nothing. He did it well.

Such a career met the severe disapproval of Dorothea Walton, who, like most women of the suburbs, was cultured and had ideas. Never having done any work herself except to study the labor question from its philosophic side, she believed that every man should be busy eight hours of the twenty-four.

So when at length Whitridge asked her to marry him she said abruptly: "But you don't work. You are a man without an aim in life."

"My grandfather worked and had aims for me," Whitridge replied. "Every man should do something in this world, even if it is only driving an express wagon," said the girl, warmly. "You are a man without ambition—a man who might as well not be living at all. You—"

"It seems to me you are just a little hard," he interrupted, reproachfully. "Of course you know I like you," Dorothea went on more kindly. "But it seems so much nobler for a man to say to a woman: 'I shall slave all day in the office for you, than 'I've got a million and am willing to share it with you.' Now, doesn't it?"

"I think the average woman would say, 'I'll share the million; don't bother about the office,'" was the grim reply.

Dorothea flushed. "You consider me an average woman, then?"

"No, no!" cried Whitridge. "And if you will I shall slave for you. I'll go down town and plod along on the law, and we can live on what I make."

"Now you talk foolishly," said she, "I do not demand work for work's sake, but it seems to me that for a man to be without an occupation in these times shows a lack of brains."

"But it takes a great deal of brains to do nothing and to do it respectably. And after all, I don't think you can say that I am very bad."

"No. And that's where more trouble comes. You are not even reformable. A woman might devote herself to the work of reforming a man, but you offer nothing but mere money."

"And love," Whitridge blurted out, and he was overcome with confusion. He blushed and began to tear nervously at the lapels of his coat. But his embarrassment served to emphasize his honesty and sincerity.

The girl recognized this and said kindly: "I know I am foolish, Sam, but I have queer ideas, perhaps. So don't talk of it any more."

"Then good night," said he, rising abruptly from his chair and holding out his hand.

"Good night," said she. "I trust you will be able to find your way to the street without trouble. It is very dark."

"I have traveled the path often enough to know it," he said with a forced laugh. "I guess I shall not have much reason to follow it often after this."

Whitridge turned and walked from the room. Dorothea Walton stood as he had left her, gazing abstractedly into the fire. She heard the door close with a bang a few minutes later, and by a sudden impulse she ran up to her room, turned out the light and peered into the darkness. If she expected to get a glimpse of Whitridge as he disappeared into the blackness or to hear the gravel crunching beneath his feet, she was disappointed. She closed the window with a crash.

Dorothea Walton's disappointment had its origin in a door knob, one of those modern contrivances that are such a bane to the man who calls. When Whitridge reached the hall he put on his overcoat and hat, opened the first door and closed it behind him. This left him standing in the vestibule. He seized the knob of the outer door, turned it and pulled, but to no avail. Then he turned the knob the other way and pulled, but the door did not budge. He turned and pushed and pushed and turned, but his efforts were unrewarded.

Now, in the 25 years of his life he had learned that locks are very human; that they resent harsh treatment and are susceptible to kindness and persuasion, so he gave this particular one a good long breathing spell, approached it again as though he were afraid of disturbing it and turned it so gently that had it been sleeping it would hardly have been awakened. He went just so far and stopped. He gave it a violent jerk and a forceful jam—all to no avail. Again he rested and again attacked the obstinate mechanism only to confess himself utterly beaten.

He thought of arousing the family, but peering through the frosted glass into the dimly lighted hall he saw that the family had retired for the night. The idea of being found in such a position was repulsive to him. After what had occurred was he to confess that he had been conquered by a door knob? He certainly was not, or at least until all hope was gone. He remembered that she had said that her father was in town and would be at home at 12 o'clock. It was an hour yet, but he believed that he could persuade the old gentleman to hold his peace, and that was worth long and weary waiting.

One more attack on the door knob convinced Whitridge of the uselessness of further efforts at freedom, so he settled down in a corner and made himself as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. As he sat there on the floor of the dark vestibule he forgot his unpleasant predicament and fell to thinking of her, and as he thought of her he forgot all else.

The sleeping man was awakened by a gentle dig in the ribs, and he opened his eyes into the dim glare of a dark lantern. He tried to raise himself, but there was a weight on his chest, and he was forced back to a prostrate condition. He would have cried out, but a heavy hand was clasped over his mouth.

From the blackness behind the lantern came a hoarse whisper: "S-sh! Mr. Whitridge, it's me, Grogan, who you got off. You ain't going to be hurt."

Whitridge was wide awake now, and the situation came to him in a flash. He recalled his one client, and though he realized the man's mission at the Walton house, he felt that to him Grogan was a messenger sent from heaven to release him from the toils. The weight was removed from the chest and the hand from his mouth after another admonitory "S-sh."

The lawyer got to his knees and leaning toward the dark form of his quondam client seized the grimy hand and squeezed it affectionately. "Can't you get me out, Grogan?" he whispered.

There was a chuckle. The light quivered in evidence of the amusement of the man who held it.

"Can't you?" repeated Whitridge. "S-sh!" Grogan answered. "Turn about 'nd be fair play, seein' ez you saved me once from the jug."

"But I'm not a burglar," Whitridge expostulated.

"It looks suspicious," was the reply. The light quivered again and more violently. "You seem anxious to get away without a row."

Whitridge was in no mood for joking.

"Now, see here, Grogan," he said, "I did you a good turn not long ago, as you remember. I got you off when I really had reason to believe you guilty. As—"

"Oh, but that was a plea o' yours, Mister Whit—"

"Hang the plea!"

"S-sh!"

"All that I ask is that you silence your conscience, disregard your suspicions and let me go my way."

"I can't. It looks like we're both caught," said the burglar. Whitridge heard a muttered oath and a reference to the door knob.

"No," answered Grogan. "I might have once, but it's been jammed all out o' shape. I can't go back, nuther."

"How in the world did you get in?"

"Why, me an' me pal come through the cellar window, of course. He stayed below and gathered up the silver while I went upstairs. I go into a room there, an' hardly was I at work till I hear a woman begin to git restless. Had it been a man I'd stayed, for a man'll mostly cover up his head and lay still, but a woman allers yells. So I sneaked. Bill, he went through the window with the main part of the swag an' all the tools, an' I come this way. Here I am. One door's closed, so I can't go back; t'other I can't open."

"This is a pretty kettle of fish," moaned Whitridge.

"Fish? Burglars you mean," retorted Grogan. "But where's your swag?"

"See here, Grogan," said Whitridge, "I got in here honestly, and I'm going to get out honestly. These people are friends of mine, and I think I'll just give the alarm."

"How about me?" said the burglar. "I don't think they're on my wiestin' list."

"But can't I say you are a friend of mine?"

"A pretty time this fer frien's to be locked up in vestybules, particular with pockets full o' spoons an' things like this." Grogan held a handsome portfolio in the light of the lantern. "I got it in her room while lookin' fer jewelry an' bills. Kin you read?"

He opened the leaves and turned the light full on a page covered with angular handwriting. A long silence followed, during which the burglar ran his finger along the lines and spelled out word after word.

"Why, it's about a fellow," he muttered. "She must 'a had 'em bad. 'If he'd only come back to me,' she says."

"Says what?" exclaimed Whitridge, grasping his companion's arm.

"S-sh! She says if he'd only come back she'd a-c-e-a-p-t-him an'—"

Whitridge seized the portfolio. "It's a woman's diary," he said, roughly, and you have no right to look at it."

Then, fixing it in the lantern light to suit his own eyes, he read the last entry: Eleven p. m. What a fool I am. I have just refused him; told him that he was a numbskull; ranted about aims and ambitions; aired all my fine ideas, and yet when he had gone I listened just to hear his footsteps as he picked his way along the path to the street. Women are geese. If only he would come back I would beg his forgiveness and accept him. If he would only come back."

Whitridge snatched the portfolio shut and arose.

"Just wait," growled the burglar. "mebbe—"

A strong hand was laid on his throat, and he was lifted to his feet and thrown violently against the door.

There was a crash of glass, a feminine scream, followed by an uproar on the upper floors of the house.

"Never mind, Dorothea," arose from the vestibule. "It's only me, Sam Whitridge. I've got a burglar. Hurry down here and let me out of this cell."

"Is it really you, Sam?" came in frightened tones to Whitridge, who had Grogan pinned fast in a corner.

"Elp, miss, 'elp! He's chokin' me to death!"

"Yes, it's I. Don't be scared."

In answer to these cries Dorothea Walton, attired in a long driving coat and carrying a golf club, led a line of five maids, similarly armed, down the stairs. The ancient negro butler drew up in the rear muttering prayers.

The door was opened and Whitridge dragged his captive forth before the household.

"How did you get him?" exclaimed the girl, her fright having given way to astonishment.

"Don't bother about that now," replied Whitridge, nonchalantly. "Have you a good closet close by?"

Dorothea ran to the distant end of the hall and threw open a door. Whitridge pulled the discomfited Grogan after her, while the maids made a threatening demonstration against the prisoner with their golf clubs.

"Plead 'ard, Mister Whitridge, plead 'ard," moaned the burglar as his captor pushed him into the closet, closed the door and turned the key.

"What does the creature mean?"

"Compose yourself, Dorothea," replied the young man, coolly. "First let us have some lights in the library. Then I shall explain."

The suggestion was quickly followed, and while the six servants watched the door behind which lay the captive, Sam Whitridge explained.

"The man thinks, and rightly, too," he said, "that he has a claim on you and me, inasmuch as he showed this to me." He drew the diary from his pocket and opened it at the last entry.

"I have been mean enough to read it."

Dorothea Walton took the portfolio, looked blankly at the man and then at the last page.

"Am I forgiven?" Whitridge asked.

The girl seized herself at the table and seized a pen.

"There is one more entry," she said. "Look over my shoulder and read it."

She glanced at the clock and then wrote: "Two a. m. He has come back, and I have accepted him." —N. M. A. L., in New York Evening Sun.

## WOODFORD'S ESCAPE.

### HOW THE BULLFIGHTER'S SAVED THE EX-MINISTER'S LIFE.

A Lucky Mistake at a Funeral — The Effect of It—A Mob, a Row of Drawn Swords and a Retreat — Spanish Gratitude in Evidence in the Nick of Time.

General Stewart L. Woodford, former United States minister to Spain, owes his life to an act of courtesy that he once paid to a Spanish torador, or bullfighter. There is no moral in the story, as the act of courtesy was entirely unintentional and the torador was dead, says the New York Commercial Advertiser.

One afternoon during the Spanish-American crisis, a few weeks before war was declared, General Woodford, accompanied by his wife and niece, went for a drive in the embassy carriage through the streets of Madrid. A noted Spanish torador had died a few days previously, and it happened that his funeral was being held that day. Owing to his wonderful success in killing bulls the man had become a popular idol and his funeral was attended by all classes of Spanish society, even the grandes sending their carriages to swell the procession.

Miss Woodford having expressed the wish to see the funeral, the general ordered his coachman to drive to a certain point where the procession would pass. When they arrived there it was found that a great part of the procession had already gone by. General Woodford ordered the driver to turn about and go home, but the man misunderstood him and drove on. He attempted to drive right through the funeral procession.

Such an act is not considered good taste in any European country, and in Spain it is a heinous offence.

To make matters worse, General Woodford, owing to the unpleasant relations then existing between Spain and the United States, was a marked man and by no means a popular one with the people. The embassy carriage was one of the best known vehicles in Madrid.

Realizing how the mistake would be misinterpreted by the populace, General Woodford directed his coachman, when he had reached the middle of the street, to turn and accompany the procession, intending at the first opportunity to leave the procession and drive to his residence. The opportunity did not offer.

Owing to the dense crowds that lined the sides of the streets the minister was compelled to accompany the funeral to the cemetery, intending to remain there until the funeral party had gone and the streets were once more quiet.

After waiting for about an hour they started to leave the cemetery and go to their carriage. At the gate the general found to his surprise that a company of the civic guard was drawn up on either side of the path leading to the carriage. As the Americans approached the officer in command of the guard gave an order and immediately the swords of the men rose in salute. Wondering what on earth it all meant, the general returned the salute and re-entered his carriage. He passed several soldiers and officers on the way back and his astonishment was intensified, for they, too, stopped, faced the carriage and saluted as it passed.

Shortly after he had returned to the embassy he learned the reason of all the unusual respect that had been shown him. A deputation of toradors called upon him and thanked him for the honor that he had done their profession in attending the funeral of their chief d'armes in person instead of only sending only his carriage. They assured him that they would never forget it, and that their feeling of affection was shared generally by the people of Madrid.

The toradors were appreciative; the people of Madrid were not. A week or so afterward, when international matters had almost reached a climax and nearly all the Americans had left Madrid, a mob formed for the purpose of destroying the American embassy and, it was feared, to assassinate the minister and his family. The toradors, who live in a certain part of the town by themselves, heard of the intention of the mob and they resolved to frustrate it.

They got together and went to General Woodford's house to assure him of their protection and advised him to send for military aid. Then they went out to do their part. They walked down the street a few blocks, drew the terrible little whip-like swords, in the use of which they are so expert, formed a double line across the street and waited. The mob came up, saw the toradors with their swords ready for use and cheered them. Then they saw that the bullfighters had their backs turned to the embassy and their swords pointed at themselves—and they halted.

They couldn't understand it. The leading torador explained matters. He said that General Woodford had once taken the trouble to do honor to a dead torador. He had gone with his wife and family to the funeral in his carriage, and had driven all the way to the cemetery as a mark of respect. The toradors were going to protect the American minister with

their swords and lives if necessary, and asked the mob what they were going to do about it.

The mob stared. They looked the toradors up and down, at their faces and then at their swords. Then they dispersed.

After that General Woodford had military protection night and day.

### CARRIED A CORPSE 25 MILES.

Singular Experience of Moose Hunter in the Canadian Bush.

George M. Sinn has just returned to Montreal, after a short business trip to the Temiscamingue district in Canada, during which he had a thrilling experience, never to be forgotten. It was in connection with the accidental killing of Mr. Edward Miner, a wealthy manufacturer of Kingsville, Ontario, highly respected in Montreal and throughout Canada, and the champion pigeon shot of the Dominion.

Mr. Miner, his brother and Mr. Bennett Squire of Windsor, Ontario, set out on a hunting trip, and were soon buried in the woods thirty miles from Temiscamingue. Mr. Squire fired at a fine moose, wounding it, and the enraged animal charged the hunter, who attempted to fire a second time with his repeating rifle. Something was wrong, however, and the weapon did not go off. Seeing the danger of his friend, Mr. Miner stepped forward, and was in the act of raising his rifle to fire at the beast when Mr. Squire's gun went off, the ball passing directly through Mr. Miner's head, killing him instantly.

The brother and unhappy friend became crazed with grief. They were thirty miles from the nearest railway station, and there was absolutely no means whatever of conveying the corpse thither except by carrying it. For twenty-five miles they carried the body through the terrible wilderness, and finally, exhausted and half-famished for want of food, they reached the track at a small signal station, seven miles from Temiscamingue station.

It was here that Mr. Sinn found them. Utterly incapable of making another move, the two gentlemen sank to the ground, and with the body of friend and brother between them awaited the coming of assistance. The circumstances were soon explained to Mr. Sinn, and as quickly as possible he secured a handcart and got the corpse and two men on board. When they got to Temiscamingue it was found that no trains were running, so Mr. Sinn determined to take the party on the car all the way to Mattawa, where the body could be prepared for burial. Getting two men to help him Mr. Sinn started at the lever, and the fearful journey of forty-one miles was commenced. Mr. Squire and Mr. Miner were half beside themselves with grief, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Mr. Sinn kept them sufficiently calm to compete the forty-one-mile run. A handcart is small for four men to ride upon it, but when an extra man and a corpse are added the difficulty of pumping the lever may be imagined. Then, too, the horror of the ride was heightened by the inky darkness of the night.

As daylight broke Mr. Sinn's efforts increased, and his hands now show the strain to which they were subjected. At last the little car passed a farmhouse, another and another, and soon the depot was reached. The news quickly spread through Mattawa, and while kind friends looked after the suffering travelers the Odd Fellows took care of the body. It was embalmed and sent to Kingsville for burial. Mr. Miner and Mr. Squire could not find words sufficient to thank Mr. Sinn for his goodness. He was found at his office but not in any too good a condition for work. When asked about the matter he said: "I have not much to say. I only did what I thought to be my duty."

Soldiers Beg in Spain's Capital.

The soldiers of the Spanish army who have returned from Cuba are starving in the streets of Madrid, and are enduring great suffering in other provinces of the kingdom. None of the returning soldiers have been paid their salary for months, and some of them not for years. Many have received no part of their pay since they have been in Cuba, and upon their return to Spain are now in the most destitute circumstances.

Many of the recruits were taken from the jail and other penal institutions to serve in the Spanish army in Cuba, and their terms of service having expired they have been turned out of the army helpless, and owing to the condition of affairs in Spain they are unable to obtain employment. In Madrid hundreds of the returned soldiers are seen daily, many of them begging of the passerby for food and for money, which is grudgingly given to them, even by the generous.

The pitiful condition of the Spanish soldiery has been called to the attention of General Weyler, who prides himself upon being a friend of the army and the soldiers who served in Cuba in particular. He has publicly declared that the soldiers must be supported by the government until they are able to care for themselves. He has given largely of his private means to assist in providing clothing and food for the returned soldiers. —New York Journal.

## THE FALL OF MANILA.

Capt. Mott Describes Entry of American Troops into Philippine Capital.

Every shop and house in the place was closed, and one noticeable thing was the prevalence of the British flag. Every Chinaman's house and every Chinaman's window displayed this emblem of protection, so that the business part of the city looked as if it were dressed for a British holiday. The Spanish inhabitants, the officers, and soldiers gave not the slightest token of hostility or displeasure. The prevailing feeling in the atmosphere on all sides was one of relief—relief that the strain of war, of hunger, of uncertainty was over. General Merritt sent for General Greene about eight o'clock, and I accompanied the latter to the governor-general's palace in the old walled city, where we found General Merritt and his staff seated at a comfortable dinner, which the late governor-general's people were serving. The entrance to the palace is a large marble-paved court, with a fine statue of Sebastian Cabot between the two broad flights of stairs which lead up to the state apartments. This court was piled headlong with captured muskets, equipments, and Manner cartridges, while a company of soldiers were sleeping on the floor along the walls. Outside, strings of surrendered cavalry horses were tied to the trees of the garden, and the whole place suggested the picturesque side of war.

It is needless to say that everybody was in good humor and good appetite; but it seemed utterly strange to see a group of officers in the uniform of the United States, staid with mud and belted with revolvers, sitting about and smoking their cigars with a comfortable air of proprietorship in these lofty rooms of viceregalty, hung with splendid old portraits of Spain's weak rulers and Spain's bold robbers. The weather-beaten face of one old fellow in a casque seemed to look upon us with a stern eye, and I said to myself, "If that old sixteenth-century buccaner had been in command today, there would have been more American soldiers left dead upon the fields of Malate." —From "The Fall of Manila," by Captain T. Bentley Mott U. S. A., in Scribner's.

## Colorado's Prairie Population.

The weather in Eastern Colorado is monotonous. There is practically always the cloudless sky, the brilliant sun, the strong, dry wind, and if it be in midsummer, it is so hot that it curls the leaves of the young corn and turns the buffalo grass brown. Women and men, too, become withered and prematurely old. Hair and skin take on the general tint of things about them. And there comes a certain feverish look in the eyes—a look of intense expectation, straining into the future. They lose all thought of appearances; such things get to mean vanity rather than self-respect to them. The tragedies of a city are unheeded and brought to light, but the silent tragedies of these desolate lives are swallowed up and lost in the immensity of the prairie wastes.

It is a motley assortment of humanity that takes the homesteads on the opening up of a country like this—ex-cowboys, confirmed pioneers who move with the advance of civilization, people of refinement and reverses of fortune, many Russian and German immigrants, and a sprinkling of all the other nations of the earth. There is a shifting process which divides these people into classes after the country is settled, but during the first years there is no distinction in society. The sodhouse levels all ranks, and at the rare intervals when any of the people are brought together socially it is on terms of equality; they simply take one another for granted, with no questions of antecedents or family history. They are people who are starting life anew, and living, on hopes of the future, with forgetfulness of the past. A woman's lot is the harder; she misses more things in such a life than a man does. —New York Sun.

## His Clever Scheme.

In a certain church a certain man caused the ban of marriage to be published between himself and a lady to whom he is not engaged, and who has no intention to marry him. He is poor and has no credit. She is wealthy, and at the time of the publication of the ban was in Europe. The effect of the announcement was instantaneous. The man's credit revived, congratulations poured in, and for a few weeks he had a delightful life. Then came a letter from the lady in the case. She denied her engagement to the audacious and penniless one, and threatened to bring proceedings against him for libel. But suppose he pleads that he had hopes of the lady, who can prove that he had not? Then few persons understand the real object of publishing the ban. It is popularly thought that they are made public to bring out such facts as whether either party has been previously married and has a partner still alive, or whether they are under age. The true object of ban being published was to give the church warden an opportunity to object if the parties were poor and likely to be a charge on the parish. —New York Commercial Advertiser.