

HIS FORTUNE.

I know one who had prospered.
To whom a princely fortune fell,
Yet men who looked at him below
Conceived no love for him, and no
Old friend refused to wish him well.
He tasted of the pleasures
Accorded to his high estate,
But never in his ease forgot
The hardships of the poor or sought
With their small joys to fat his own.

Fate one day turned upon him
And ruthlessly took all he had,
And then he heard men honestly
In sorrow and in sympathy
The rich and poor exclaim: "Too bad!
I look on him with envy."
And if a choice were mine to make,
The fortune that Fate snatched away
Would tempt me not while I might lay
Chain to the love she could not take.

—S. E. Kiser.

THE CHOICE OF TWO.

By GERALD WHITING.

Lorry was standing at the door of his forge—a tall, strong man of 50, with a carriage of an old soldier who could still swing the lance or spear, though he had left the army some seven years or more. The sun was aglow in the cloudless sky, and the heat was oppressive. Behind, the range of hills rose blue-green in the distance. From the road came a merry jingle of harness bells and then a cloud of dust, and then a wagon, drawn by two oxen, rumbled up the incline. The driver nodded pleasantly to Lorry.

"You have heard the news, master?" he said. "No! Well, I can't stop, but here's a newspaper. Read that." And, with another nod, he whipped up his jaded cattle and passed on.

The blacksmith sat down on a bench and leisurely unfolded the paper. When he had read a few lines his face darkened, and he rose to his feet. His wife came out at this moment. She was a comely dame, with cheeks as ruddy as the apples in her orchard. They looked at each other for a few minutes without speaking.

"Annette," said Lorry at last, crumpling up the newspaper in his strong hand, "I have been reading the 'Debate'."

His wife gave a little start, but quickly recovered.

"No ill news of Pierre, surely?" said she.

"No," answered her husband; "no need to be alarmed. Pierre is all right so far as I know. But the Germans are at their old tricks. Not content with conquering, they must insult us well. You remember my remarking that I had seen three or four fellows rolling about the village in the uniforms of French soldiers, and wondered how they came to be there, and what they were doing away from the regiment? Well, the secret is out. They have elected to be subjects of the emperor at Berlin. And to think that we should be outraged by the presence of such renegades! They are no longer Austrians, but German wolves."

"What can you expect, Felix?" it is not altogether the fault of these poor fellows," remarked Annette. "To be sent to Algeria—think how far. And the lady goes sick for home."

"Hush!" said Lorry, checking her with a peremptory gesture; "you do not understand. You have grown so accustomed to the women folk hereabouts that you have come down to their level, and think as they do. I tell you these men are cowards and traitors, and if I thought our Pierre was capable of such infamy, as sure as my name is Lorry, sometime trooper in the cavalry of France, I would drive my sword through his body!"

He walked quickly into the house, and Annette followed him. He noticed the flush on her cheeks, and felt ashamed, he hardly knew why. Perhaps he had spoken too roughly.

"Bah! I am a fool to worry about such things, he said, laughingly. 'As if it is all like this! So, so; I will take a little walk to calm myself.' He put on his hat and went out.

She waited till he was gone, and then got her work-basket and sat down at the window, as was her custom, an afternoon. The sun shone full and bright on the cornfield; and in the path winding away to it in curves of dazzling white; and, lower down, the village church, with the burial ground nestling by its side, and the sheep drowsily browsing under the shadow of the trees.

"They may be traitors," she thought, remembering her husband's words, "but their mothers must rejoice to see them again."

And she sighed, thinking of the day her own boy left home, alert and trim, with his rifle on his shoulder. Only two years ago, yet it seemed an age. The tears started to her eyes. It was well for Lorry to talk, but when would Pierre return to her?

Suddenly the needle dropped from her hand, and she trembled in her chair. She heard the garden gate swing back on its hinges. But the dog did not bark, though the intruder must have passed close to his kennel.

"Mother!"

She sprang up with a cry. He was standing in the doorway, his hair rumpled, his gay uniform soiled with dust; pallid, shamed, more like a criminal than a soldier. She guessed what had happened. The wretched lad had returned with the rest, and had been prying about the place all day, not daring to enter while his father was there. She would fain have chided him, but had not the courage. In faltering tones he told her how tired he had grown of the prolonged toil and hardships of the war; how he had been ill, and had yearned for comfort and peace of home. And his comrades had teased him, had called him "Prussian" because of his Alsatian accent.

The mother's heart excused all. She made him sit down, and brought him food; but he could not eat. A burning thirst seemed to consume him; he called for water and drank glass after glass with avidity.

So the minutes slipped away. Presently a footstep crunched on the gravel walk.

"Pierre! Here is your father back already! I must speak to him and explain. Oh, hush! Quick, quick!" She seized him by the shoulders, pushed him into a cupboard, and turned round sharply.

She heard a sudden exclamation, and confronted Lorry, with eyes fixed on the red Zouave cap which Pierre had left on the table.

"What does that mean?" said he.

"There was an instant of silence, save for the sound of the blacksmith's heavy breathing. The next, and she was

beside him, her hands clasping his arm.

"I have something to say, Felix," she began.

He moved away till he reached the wall behind him, where his old sabre was hanging, a bit of tri-color ribbon round the hilt. He took it down with the firm touch of a hand turned backward while listening, with no sign of nervousness.

"The truth, now, Annette! He has returned!"

She bent her head so that he could not see her face. Then she twisted herself from him with an unexpected suddenness, her voice breaking into a sob.

"You will not—you shall not harm him!" she cried. "He has come back because he loved me and wished to see us again."

There was an inward struggle, and then the woman conquered. Yes, she had come home, with cheeks as ruddy as the apples in her orchard. They looked at each other for a few minutes without speaking.

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SUPERSTITIONS OF THE MALAYS.

Peculiar Belief of an Eastern People

in Signs and Omens.

You can scarcely ever get your money from a Malay on Friday, because they believe that if they pay their creditors on a Friday they will be overtaken by poverty. Malays never shave or cut their nails on Saturday or Tuesday, because these are unlucky days, and if they do part with their hair or nails on these days they believe that they will always be in trouble or will die quickly. The Malay never sleeps in the afternoon, for such an action shortens life! When a rat bites a Malay's clothes, it signifies ill luck, and usually the rat-bitten clothes are given to the poor.

There is a kind of bird called by the Malays *Rowk-rowk* which does not build a nest, and lives in fields. The Malays say that whoever obtains a *Rowk-rowk*'s nest will become invulnerable as soon as he puts the nest on his head. Of course, the Malays believe that there is such a nest, despite the fact that the bird never builds one.

If a Malay feels that his right hand is itchy, he is glad because he will receive a large sum of money, and he feels that his right eye moves, he knows that he will see a foreign friend. If tears issue from either eye, he understands that a relative of his will die, and if he too often forgets his promises to his many friends, he is aware that he will die and will shed tears rather profusely.

When there is an eclipse of the moon over the Malay's abode from taking food and performing their ablutions, in order that no contagious disease may attack them. Crows are an ill omen, and whenever a crow caw-caws near a Malay habitation, it means death to some one of the inmates. Supposing a Malay walks along a road and suddenly a black cat crosses before him, he will at once turn back and walk another path. The crossing of the black cat signifies danger involving the loss of life.

You seldom see Malays bite their nails, because this action is likely to lead the dog into poverty. If a Malay sees a pig or a Chinese funeral before the sun rises, at 5.30 a. m., he knows that he is lucky, and what ever he does on this day he is sure to meet with success. Dreaming of jumping a brooklet assures the dreamer that death will come in a short time, and in this case the unhappy man generally distributes alms to the poor so that his life may be prolonged. To see a monkey in the morning is an ill omen and signifies that the seer will lose money heavily in trade.—Penang Straits Echo.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

Japanese and Germans have the same average brain weight.

If cork is sunk to a depth of 200 feet in the sea it will not rise again to the surface.

At Rome, Italy, twins were recently born to a couple, both of whom are over 70.

Nineteen million immigrants reached the United States in the 80 years ending with 1900.

The wage won by the Lord Mayo of London is studded with diamonds to the value of \$600,000.

Austrian law prohibits marriages between Christians and Jews, and between Christians and infidels.

Considering their nutritive value potatoes are about twice as expensive as bread, and milk is even dearer.

Tamarisk timber 4000 years old has been found in perfectly sound condition in ancient Egyptian temples.

English coal is used as far as possible on Japanese warships, because the Japanese coal gives off much more smoke.

A rifle bullet is traveling at its greatest speed not as it leaves the muzzle, but at about ten feet in front of the muzzle.

A toothbrush is to be provided for each of the children in the Hampstead workhouse, and they are to be trained to use it in class drill.

A deposit of asphalt, estimated to contain about 500,000 tons, has been discovered on Table Mountain, near Cape Town, South Africa.

William Ludlam, who died at Oyster Bay, N. Y., at the age of 88, made his own coffin ten years ago, and had kept it in his house all that time.

Five of the seals of government or capitals of provinces in the Dominion of Canada are named Regina after the late Queen Victoria of England.

The biggest lump of coal ever dug out of the earth was raised from one of the Wigan collieries. It took nine months to haul it out of the seam, and it weighed over 12 tons.

The Americans and English, although they consume twice as much sugar as the French and Germans, have much better teeth. The American dentist, however, ranks first in all countries.

A German professor says that over a large area of central Russia the magnetic needle does not point north or south. It is in one part deflected to the west, and at another part to the east, and at one place it points due east and west.

Calve as a Philanthropist.

A Paris paper says that Mme. Emma Calve has founded a sanatorium at Cabrières, near her residence in the Arroyon. There nearly 60 young girls in need of pure air and medical attendance are received every summer, all the expenses are being borne by the great singer. It is reported that Mme. Calve has paid a visit to the sanatorium and removed everything they could lay their hands on. Mme. Calve has never been given instructions for the preparation of the sanatorium for the reception of the annual contingent of sick girls.

Wooden Shoes.

"The wooden shoe," says A. Quenrich of Holland, "is worn almost exclusively by the peasant classes, and they find them more comfortable than the leather shoes that are worn in America. The foot is clad in a heavy wooden stocking, and then slipped into the shoe without fastening. They never fall off because the people are used to wearing them. They would not exchange because any other kind would not be comfortable. The shoes are of elm wood and cost from ten to fifteen cents of American money. Two pairs will last a year."

KOREANS A PRETTY RACE

MOST STRIKING THING ABOUT THEM IS THE WAY THEY WALK.

The Korean Dude is Said to Be Quite a Superior Article—Is Called "Yang Ban," or Noble, and He Oppresses the Common People Woefully.

Although months ago, it seems only yesterday that whenever I had half an hour to spare in Seoul I used to sit in a shop and watch the crowd of people passing by. It was situated in the main street, just inside the gate. A few small purchases had brought me the eternal friendship of the proprietors, who always had a long pipe ready for me, longer than my arm, so that he always had to light it. The people, as seen in everyday life, interest me more in a strange country than palaces or show places. If I had to choose, I would prefer to see a slum to a "Baedeker" "sight" in a new city.

My friend was a vendor of brass pots of all sizes but of only three shapes, that shone like burnished gold on the shelves around, and were arranged outside the open door. There was no fire or bustle about his business, or importuning for custom; he would sit calmly with his legs tucked under him on the platform, about two feet off the ground, smoking innumerable pipes and wrapped in Oriental calm and his voluminous white garments. The laundering of his other suit or suits, appeared to be perpetual in progress, as could be seen by the black-whack of the stick beating on a roller, which came constantly from the back of the premises telling that his wife was at work at the Korean method of ironing, by which the indispensable satin-like gloss is given to the surface.

It was a quaint and interesting picture that passed outside. The Koreans are distinctly a handsome race. They are not in the least like either of their neighbors, the Chinese or the Japanese. Although they have the oblique eyes of the Mongolians, their nose, as a rule, is straight, and their aquiline, their forehead high, and their oval faces clear-cut and individual. The majority of a Chinese crowd look to me always as if their heads had been cast in bullet molds, while it is quite otherwise with the Koreans.

The most striking thing about the Korean is the way he walks. He carries himself better than the man of any place I know. There is practically nothing to indicate to a stranger difference of rank, but as you watch a man coming along the street there is a slight swing, a nod of immense dignity, that points out the patrician to the most casual onlooker. Some of them look as if they were always walking up the center of a palace chamber to the dais, amid admiring eyes. It is not swagger, but a very quiet, superlative self-consciousness of their own worth of position. The young "Yangban," or noble, is a delicate and refined creature. No London, Paris or New York swell, flaneur or dandy is in it with him. His white suit is spotless—there is not a hair straying from his "Mang-Kun," a crownless skull cap of horsehair gauze coming well down over his forehead and fastened so tightly as to produce a permanent groove in his skin and frequent headaches, to be borne for the sake of the white suit. This hat, also of horsehair, is polished and under his chin, by black ribbons. If he has brown hair, it has been darkened with lamp-black to the fashionable shade. He is invariably attended by a servant, he carries nothing for himself, not even his pipe; even going to school their books are carried for them. When he travels he is attended by as many servants as he can possibly muster. When he is in the street, he is attended by a servant, and he is not above holding the reins of his diminutive horse. It is not a horse, but a mule, and he is attended by a servant, and he is not above holding the reins of his diminutive horse. It is not a horse, but a mule, and he is attended by a servant, and he is not above holding the reins of his diminutive horse.

These Yang-bans are the curse of Korea. The common people are woefully oppressed by them. If a peasant is known to have accumulated a little money it is not long before the local Yang-ban comes down on him, perhaps nominally for a loan, which is never repaid, or perhaps for a levy pure and simple. If the hind objects, he is promptly taken to the Yang-ban's yamen and kept there until he pays, or is imprisoned on some trumped-up charge and kept locked up until his relatives produce the required amount.

One great peculiarity of the streets of Seoul is that during the daytime practically no women are to be seen about. One occasionally sees an old woman of the lower class, dressed very much as the men, but wearing her cloak over her head, holding it with her hands, so as to conceal the lower part of her face. About 8 o'clock in the evening the great bell of Seoul tolls, which is the signal for men to retire off the streets, and gives permission to the women to emerge from their seclusion. This extraordinary regulation is strictly enforced, except as regards blind men, foreigners and persons going with prescriptions for the sick. Korean men are frequently found going about with sticks pretending to be blind; but such is the rigid solution that the majority of the ladies of Seoul have never seen the streets of their city by daylight.

From 8 o'clock until 12 the streets are alive with women, most of them attended by servants carrying lanterns. During this time they go visiting their friends. At 12 o'clock the great bell tolls again, from which time they have to be indoors, and men are again at liberty to go out if they like.—London Chronicle.

LONELY CORNERS IN ENGLAND.

Places in Which a Strange Face Is Not Seen for Months.

Mr. James Blyth, writing of "Isolated England" in the London Daily Mail, describes some singularly lonely corners of the populous island. Says Mr. Blyth:

"I myself lived for two years in a village on the edge of Norfolk marsh-lands where there was no doctor within seven miles, where there was no telegraph office for delivery within five miles, where until recently the only village postoffice was a slat in a hollow elm against the churchyard, and where the great excitement during the Boer war was the dread lest the enemy should effect a landing and invade the marshes. And there are plenty of villages which are worse off than this, to say nothing of the houses of the marshmen dotted about the sodden flats, and the shepherd's huts on the fells and in the dales of the moor country. These lonely dwellings go weeks, aye, and months, without seeing any strange face to break the monotony of the eternal daily round—a monotony of which their inhabitants are happily unconscious."

One of the Diamond Jubilee postal reforms was that there should be letter boxes at least one free delivery of letters at every house in the kingdom. And I find that (except where there is a railway station) where there is a letter box there is a letter carrier.

There are some remote tracts of fenland in the marshes dotted about the sodden flats, and the shepherd's huts on the fells and in the dales of the moor country. These lonely dwellings go weeks, aye, and months, without seeing any strange face to break the monotony of the eternal daily round—a monotony of which their inhabitants are happily unconscious."

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