

# IN THE MIDST OF ALARMS.

BY ROBERT BARR, IN "LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE."

## CHAPTER XIV.

Yates stood for a moment regarding the dejected attitude of his friend. "Hello, old man," he cried, "you have the most 'hark-from-the-tombs' appearance I ever saw. 'What's the matter?'"

Remark looked up. "Oh, it's you, is it?"

"Of course it's I. Been expecting anybody else?"

"No. I have been waiting for you, and thinking of a variety of things."

"You look it. Well, Renny, congratulate me, my boy. She's mine, and I'm hers, — which is two ways of stating the same delightful fact. I'm up in a balloon, Renny. I'm engaged to the prettiest, sweetest, and most delightful girl there is from the Atlantic to the Pacific. What d'ye think of that? Say, Remark, there's nothing on earth like it. You ought to reform and go in for being in love. It would make a man of you. Champagne isn't to be compared to it. Get up here and dance, don't sit here like a bear nursing a sore paw. Do you comprehend that I am to be married to the darlingest girl that lives?"

"God help her!"

"That's what I say. Every day of her life, bless her! But I don't say it quite in that tone, Remark. What's the matter with you? One would think you were in love with the girl yourself, if such a thing were possible."

"Why is it not possible?"

"If that is a conundrum I can answer it the first time. Because you are a fossil. You are too good, Renny, therefore dull and uninteresting. Now, there is nothing a woman likes so much as to reclaim a man. It always annoys a woman to know that the man she is interested in has a past with which she has nothing to do. If he is wicked and she can sort of make him over, like an old dress, she revels in the process. She flatters herself she makes a new man of him, and thinks she owns that man by right of manufacture. We owe it to the sex, Renny, to give 'em a chance at reforming us. I have known men who hated tobacco take to smoking merely to give it up joyfully for the sake of the woman they loved. Now, if a man is perfect to begin with, what is a dear ministering angel of a woman to do with him? Manifestly, nothing. The trouble with you, Renny, is that you are too evidently ruled by a good and well-trained conscience, and naturally all women meet intuitively see this and have no use for you. A little wickedness would be the making of you."

"Do you think, then, that if a man's impulse is to do what his conscience tells him is wrong, he should follow his impulse and not his conscience?"

"You state the case with unnecessary seriousness. I think that an occasional blow-out is good for a man. But if you ever have an impulse of that kind, I think you should give way to it for once, just to see how it feels. A man who is too good gets conceited about himself."

"I half believe you are right, Mr. Yates," said the professor, rising. "I will act on your advice, and as you put it, see how it feels. My conscience tells me that I should congratulate you and wish you a long and happy life with the girl you have—I won't say chosen, but tossed up for. The natural man in me, on the other hand, urges me to break every bone in your worthless body. Throw off your coat, Yates."

"Oh, I say, Remark, you're crazy."

"Perhaps so. Be all the more on your guard, if you believe it. A fanatic is sometimes dangerous."

"Oh, go away. You're dreaming. You're talking in your sleep. What? Fight? To-night? Nonsense?"

"Do you want me to strike you before you are ready?"

"No, Renny, no. My wants are always modest. I don't wish to fight at all, especially to-night. I'm a reformed man, I tell you. I have no desire to bid good-by to my best girl with a black eye to-morrow."

"Then stop talking, if you can, and defend yourself."

"It's impossible to fight here in the dark. Don't flatter yourself for a moment that I am afraid. You just spar with yourself and get limbered up while I put some wood on the fire. This is too ridiculous."

Yates gathered up some fuel and managed to coax the dying embers into a blaze.

"There," he said, "that's better. Now let me have a look at you. In the name of wonder, Renny, what do you want to fight me for, to-night?"

"I refuse to give my reason."

"Then I refuse to fight. I'll run, and I can beat you in a foot-race any day in the week. Why, you're worse than her father. He at least let me know why he fought me."

"Whose father?"

"Kitty's father, of course,—my future father-in-law. And that's another ordeal ahead of me. I haven't spoken to the old man yet, and I need all my fighting grit for that."

"What are you talking about?"

"Isn't my language plain? It usually is."

"To whom are you engaged? As I understand your talk, it is to Miss Bartlett. Am I right?"

"Right as rain, Renny. This fire is dying down again. Say, can't we postpone our tracas until daylight? I don't want to gather any more wood. Besides, one of us is sure to be knocked into the fire and thus ruin whatever is left of our clothes. What do you say?"

"Say? I say I am an idiot."

"Hello! reason is returning, Renny. I perfectly agree with you."

"Thank you. Then you did not propose to Mar—to Miss Howard?"

"Now you touch upon a sore spot, Remark, that I am trying to forget. You remember the unfortunate toss-up; in fact, I think you referred to it a moment ago, and you were justly indignant about it at the time. Well, I don't care to talk much about the sequel, but, as you know the beginning, you will have to know the end, because I want to write a second promise from you. You are never to mention this episode of the toss-up or of my confession to any living soul. The telling of it might do harm, and it couldn't possibly do any good. Will you promise?"

"Certainly. But do not tell me unless you wish to."

am on my way back from the lake. If you go down there you will see the mark of a print. A boat came over from the other shore in the night and a man got on board. I don't say who the man was, and I had nothing to do with the matter in any way except as a spectator. That is all the information I have to give."

Stoliker turned to his assistants, and nodded. "What did I tell you?" he asked.

"We were right on his track," he said.

"You said the railroad," grumbled the man who had spoken before.

"Well, we were within two miles of him. Let us go down to the lake and see the traces. Then we can return the warrant."

Remark found Yates still asleep in the tent. He prepared breakfast without disturbing him. When the meal was ready he roused the reporter and told him of the meeting with Stoliker, advising him to get back to New York without delay.

Yates yawned sleepily.

"Yes," he said, "I've been dreaming it all out. I'll get father-in-law to tote me out to Fort Erie to-night."

"Do you think it will be safe to put it off so long?"

"Safer than trying to get away during the day. After breakfast I'm going down to the Bartlett homestead. Must have a talk with the old folks, you know. I'll tell the rest of the day making up for Stoliker will never search for me there, and now that he thinks I'm gone he will likely make a visit to the tent. Stoliker is a good fellow, but his strong point is duty, you know, and if he's certain I'm gone he'll give his country the worth of its money by searching. I won't be back for dinner; so you can put in your time reading my dime novels. I make no reflections on your cooking, Renny, now that the vacation is over, but I have my preferences, and they incline towards a final meal with the Bartletts. If I were you I'd have a nap. You look tired out."

"I am," said the professor.

Remark intended to lie down for a few moments until Yates was clear of the camp, after which he determined to pay a visit; but Nature, when she got him locked up in sleep, took her revenge. He did not hear Stoliker and his satellites search the premises, just as Yates had predicted they would, and when he finally awoke he found the dark. But he was all the better for his sleep, and he attended to his personal appearance with more than ordinary care.

Old Hiram Bartlett accepted the situation with the patient and grim stolidity of a man who takes a blow dealt him by Providence which he knows is inscrutable. What he had done to deserve it was beyond his comprehension. He hesitated to stir his horses, and for the first time in his life drove into Fort Erie without any reasonable excuse for going there. He tied his team at the usual corner, after which he sat at one of the taverns and drank strong waters that had no apparent effect on him. He even went so far as to smoke two native cigars; and a man who can do that can do anything. To bring up a daughter who would deliberately accept a man from "the States," and to have a wife who would aid and abet such an action, giving comfort and support to all the traditions of 1812 or any other date in the history of the two countries. At times, wild ideas of getting blind fold and going home to break every breakable thing in the house rose in his mind, but prudence whispered that he had to live all the rest of his life with his wife, and he realized that his scheme of vengeance had its drawbacks. Finally he untied his patient team, after paying his bill, and drove silently home, not having returned, even by a nod, any of the salutations tendered to him that day. He was somewhat relieved to find no questions were asked, and that his wife recognized the fact that he was passing through a crisis. Nevertheless there was a steely glitter in the eye he unaccountably quailed under, which told him a line had been reached which he would not be well for him to cross. She forgave, but it mustn't go any further.

When Yates kissed Kitty good-night at the gate he asked her, with some trepidation, whether she had told any one of their engagement.

"No one but Margaret," said Kitty.

"And what did she say?" asked Yates, as if, after all, her opinion was of no importance.

"She said she was sure I should be happy, and she knew you would be a good husband."

"She's rather a nice girl, is Margaret," remarked Yates, with the air of a man willing to concede good qualities to a girl other than his own, but indicating, after all, that there was but one on earth for him.

"She is a lovely girl," said Kitty, enthusiastically. "I wonder, Dick, when you knew her, why you ever fell in love with me."

"The idea! I haven't a word to say against Margaret; but, compared with my girl—"

And he finished his sentence with a practical illustration of his frame of mind. As he walked alone down the road he reflected that Margaret had acted very handsomely, and he resolved to drop in and wish her good-by. But as he approached the house his courage began to fail him, and he thought it better to sit on the fence, near the place where he had sat the night before, and think over it. It took a good deal of thinking. But as he sat there it was destined that Yates should receive some information which would simplify matters. Two persons came slowly out of the gate in the gathering darkness. They stroled together up the road past him, absorbed in themselves. When directly opposite, Remark put his arm around Margaret's waist, and Yates nearly fell off the fence. He held his breath until they were safely out of hearing, then slid down and crawled along in the shadow until he came to the side of the road, up which he walked, thoughtfully pausing every few moments to remark, "Well, I'll be—!" but speech seemed to have failed him; he could get no further. He stopped at the fence and leaned against it, gazing for the last time at the tent glimmering white, like a misshapen ghost, among the sombre trees. He had no energy left to climb over.

"Well, I'm a chimpanzee," he muttered to himself at last. "The highest bidder can have me, with no upset price. Dick Yates, I wouldn't have believed it of you. You are a newspaper-man? You a reporter from 'way back? You up to snuff? Yates, I'm ashamed

to be seen in your company. Go back to New York, and let the youngest reporter in from a country newspaper scoop the daylight out of you. To think that this thing has been going on right under your well-developed nose and you never saw it,—worse, never had the faintest suspicion of it,—thrust at you twenty times a day,—nearly got your stupid head smashed on account of it,—and yet bleated away like the innocent little lamb that you are, and never even suspected! Dick, you're a three-sheet poster fool in colored ink. And to think that both of them know all about the first proposal—both of them! Well, thank heaven, Toronto is a long way from New York."

[THE END.]

## GO TO THE MOLE, TROU SLUGGARD.

### The Hard-working Little Animal at Least as Industrious as the Ant.

A mole's life is by no means a gentlemanly sinecure, according to the Cornhill Magazine. He has to work harder, in all probability, for his pittance of earthworms than any other animal works for his daily bread. His whole existence is spent in perpetual raising and removing large piles of earth by sheer force of muscle. In order to sustain such constant toil and to replace and repair the used-up tissue the mole requires to be always eating. His appetite is voracious. He works like a horse and eats like an elephant. Throughout his waking hours he is engaged in pushing aside earth and scurrying after worms in all his galleries and tunnels. The laborer, of course, is worthy of his hire. Such ceaseless activity can only be kept up by equally ceaseless feeding, and so the mole's existence is one long savage alternation of labor and banqueting. His heart and lungs and muscles are working at such a rate that if he goes without food for half a day he starves and dies of actual inanition. He is a high pressure engine. His drinking is like his eating; immoderate in all things he must have his liquor much and often. So he digs many pits in his tunneled ground and catches water in them to supply his needs at frequent intervals. He doesn't believe, however, in the early closing movement. Day and night alike he drinks every few hours, for day and night are all alike to him. He works and rests by turn, after the fashion of the navies employed in digging tunnels, or measures his time by watches, as is the way of sailors.

## The Battle Ship of the Future.

The battle ship of the future will, like all human contrivances, be of gradual growth, resulting from the adaptation to her use of improvements and discoveries in many branches of science. Under the crucial test of war it may be found that many mistakes have been made. If I should venture to point out one of these, it would be the multiplicity of devices which every branch of physical science has contributed to overcrowd our ships. Not that they do not admirably serve their purpose, but I fear that we, as sailors, are growing to rely upon them, and will be lost when the rude shock of battle breaks our electric wires and disrupts the delicate machinery upon which we now depend in a thousand ways.

In the main, however, I venture to think that the battle ship of to-day has a sound reason for all her principal features, and the type will persist. The stability will continue to be carefully protected by vertical armor. Many of the accidents, both in battle and in times of peace, to which great ships are liable, will be diminished by the adoption of liquid fuel. The main battery will be mounted in turrets furnished with complete protection to the guns, and, as far as possible, to the machinery for their manipulation, and for the supply of ammunition. The secondary battery will be protected in proportion to its importance, while every gun position, with its crew, will be protected against machine and rapid gun fire. The time will never come when we shall cease to demand higher requirements in the battle ship. Fortunately, all requirements are interchangeable.

Armor may be substituted for guns, guns for fuel, so that the saving in one direction may at once be utilized in another. The advent of hard-surfaced armor will demand that the calibre of the main battery be maintained for until projectiles of greater strength can be produced, the only way to overcome Harvey armor is to crush it with an overwhelming blow. In addition to this, it will undoubtedly be found that all armor under the constantly-varying angles of impact in battle will furnish greater protection than is considered possible when judged by the result of normal impact on the proving ground. For this reason again, the larger calibre of the gun must be maintained, and this, in its turn, determines the great size of the battle ship of the future, subject to the restrictions which have been indicated.—(W. T. Sampson, Captain, United States Navy.)

## ARE THESE AMERICANS?

### Rather Beg than Work for a Dollar a Day

A San Francisco despatch says:—For some three months about 300 unemployed men have been camping on the sand lot for which the Government paid \$1,250,000 last year for a postoffice site. They have been allowed to run a soup kitchen and to cook food which they begged throughout the city. Near by, on the same lot, the Salvation Army had a camp. Within a week these unemployed men have been offered work sweeping the streets, but refused to accept because the pay was only \$1 a day. They said these were Chinese wages and any one degraded laborer who accepted them. A score of these men were regularly supplied from the Palace Hotel kitchen, but yesterday when they applied for the usual cold meats, the manager asked several to work, offering \$1 and board. They all refused, whereupon he shut off the free rations. The worst of these unemployed are led by Willey and Fry, two professional labor agitators. They have been warned to vacate the postoffice lot and they will be evicted in a few days if they do not move. They counted on getting a Thanksgiving dinner, but the public has become so disgusted that no one will contribute any more. These worthless bummers fill the streets and their begging has become a nuisance.

Six anarchists have been expelled from Buenos Ayres.

The Nova Scotia ship J.Y. Robbins is reported ashore near Hakodate, Japan, and will probably become a total loss. She was owned by J. Y. Robbins, and others of Yarmouth, N.S. The vessel and freight were partially insured.

## BRIEF AND INTERESTING.

England has 4,000 idle clergymen.

Women of rank go bareheaded in Mexico.

Most workers in Switzerland labour about eleven hours a day.

Only 9 per cent. of cases of amputation are fatal.

The catgut in tennis rackets is made from the entrails of sheep.

The island of Malta is the most densely populated spot on earth.

Two-thirds of the gold now in use in the world was discovered during the last fifty years.

Pawnbrokers are not allowed to take wine and spirits in pawn.

The Czar's Royal yacht, the Polar Star, cost over £1,000,000 sterling.

Three persons are cremated, on an average, every week at Woking, England.

Thirteen million four hundred thousand Bank of England notes are issued yearly.

An oculist says that scarcely one in twenty of watchmakers suffers from weak eyes.

The Greek Church employs two rings in the marriage ceremony—one of gold, the other of silver.

The longest artificial water-course in the world is the Bengal Canal, 900 miles; the next is Erie, 363. Each cost nearly \$10,000,000.

Some of the healthiest children in the world are found in the Scottish Highlands, where shoes are seldom worn at an earlier age than twelve and thirteen.

It is said that pansy leaves, spread among furs and woollens, will protect them from moths.

There are said to be 698 newspapers and journals issued within a radius of six miles from Charing Cross, London.

The United States have 245 life-saving stations—181 on the Atlantic, 48 on the Lakes, 18 on the Pacific, and one at the Ohio Falls, Louisville, Ky.

The slag that accumulates about iron furnaces, and that heretofore has been a great nuisance, has been discovered to contain valuable fertilizing qualities and the German farmers are using it freely.

Mr. Sims Reeves, it is said, receives 30s. per hour for teaching at the Guildhall School. This is in addition to the fees he receives from pupils.

Statistics show that 23,010,000 inhabitants of the United States are maintained by agriculture, 15,620,000 by manufactures.

Beggars swarm so in Malta that the only way to avoid being pestered by them is to put out your hand and anticipate them with their own whining "Give me something," "Me plenty poor man," "Me very large family."

Clusters of clover, if hung in a room and left to dry and shed their perfume through the air, will drive away more flies than sticky saucers of treacle and other fly traps and fly-papers can ever collect.

In Germany, when the vote of the jury stands six against six, the prisoner is acquitted. A vote of seven against five leaves the decision to the court, and in a vote of eight against four the prisoner is convicted.

A frog cannot breathe with its mouth open. Its breathing apparatus is so arranged that when its mouth is open its nostrils are closed. To suffocate a frog it is necessary to prop its jaws so that they cannot shut.

A lady physician attends the Queen of Corea, and receives pay at the rate of £5,000 a year. When the queen is sick the salary stops, and of course the physician, at such time, feels almost as wretched as her noble patient.

A rainmaker now operating in India has an apparatus consisting of a rocket capable of rising to the height of a mile, containing a reservoir of ether. In its descent it opens a parachute, which causes it to come down slowly. The ether is thrown out in a fine spray, and its absorption of heat is said to lower the temperature about it sufficiently to condense the vapour and produce a limited shower.

The little toe is disappearing from the human foot. At a recent meeting of the French Academy of Science, it was demonstrated that in the last two centuries the average size of the toe has decreased so much that instead of three joints it has most frequently only two, and that in addition the nerves and muscles that control it are slowly becoming useless.

While making some excavations beneath a church in the Prussian town of Angerburg, the workmen made a horrible discovery—a small walled-in space in which they found a human skeleton a broken chair, and the remains of a helmet and a pair of boots. The walls bore marks as if of finger-nail scratches, and there was other evidence that some person had been walled in alive.

The Turkish Sultan lately decided that his 167 wives should be vaccinated. A doctor was called to the harem, and he stood on one side of a temporary wooden wall, through which a hole was bored, no outsider being ever permitted to gaze upon the faces of the Sultan's wives. The arm of each excited woman was passed through the aperture, and the doctor vaccinated them all without getting a glimpse of their faces.

Cattle shipped from Chicago to Philadelphia are denied water during the whole trip. On their arrival in the Quaker City, just before being sold they are given all the water they can drink, and excessive thirst makes them absorb about sixty pounds of fluid. This the purchaser buys as beef, as the animals are sold by weight.

On the island of St. George, one of the Pribilof group in Behring Sea, the breeding of blue foxes has become very profitable. They generate rapidly, and when an island of good size once becomes well stocked it is impossible to deplete it, as the law provides that they must not be shot, but trapped, the restriction being imposed mainly to keep them tame.

The cheapest way to get rid of rotting tree-stumps, if there is no suitable means of pulling, is to bore a one and a quarter inch auger hole down the centre of the stump about eighteen inches deep, and put in one and a quarter pound of saltpetre, fill the hole with water, and plug it tight. In the spring take out the plug, pour into the hole a half-pint of crude petroleum oil, and set it on fire. The stump will burn and smoulder to the ends of the roots, leaving nothing but ashes.