A TALE OF JULY ICE.

CHAPTER I.

An American girl, Kate Penfield, had been reared and educated in the home of her uncle, William R. Penfield, at Albany, in the State of New York. A month before the opening of this story, Mr. Penfield, wishing to go to Chili, had embarked at San Francisco for the ocean part of the journey aboard the merchant vessel Severn, commanded by Capt. John F. Turner. Kate was taken along in the hope that her delicate health might be strengthened by travel. The Severn was a staunch ship, and well outfitted for the voyage—save in one highly important particular. The eight sailors of the crew were desperadoes of the most murderous sort, and, when they were nine days out, they murdered the captain, the second mate, and Mr. Penfield, and took possession of the ship, which they meant to devote to the slave trade, then still existent in South America. Only two persons escaped the crew's butchery; these were Frank Evans, the first mate, and Kate Penfield, who had fallen in love with each other.

"At least spare this young lady," Evans said to Hance Walston, the leader of the mutineers, "you have nothing to fear from her."

"We will spare her, and you, too—on one condition," was Walston's reply. "It is that you navigate the Severn for us until we touch some foreign port."

Evans had no reason to rely upon the compact being kept, but to agree seemed to be the only chance of saving the girl he loved.

The massacre took place 200 miles from the Chilian coast. Evans was compelled to lay the course thence towards Cape Horn, with a view to crossing the Atlantic to the west coast of Africa. The Severn had sailed a few days only when a fire broke out on board, and it could not be quenched. The ten imperilled persons hastily launched the long boat, put a few provisions and weapons into her, and had only time enough to sheer off before the burning vessel foundered. The survivors were in a critical position, and soon their peril was increased greatly by a violent storm which drove the boat on an island.

The month was July, but the place was far south of the equator where the northern summer is reversed into a southern winter. Nobody can realize this antipodal division of the earth, if he has grown up a reader of literature in which July is described invariably as vernal, and has experienced only hot weather in that month, until he journies down into the southern hemisphere. Walston and his companions suffered so much from cold and fatigue that they were almost dead when the boat broke on the reef. Five of them were swept out of it by a wave, and a moment later two others were flung on the sand, while Kate fell on the opposite side of the wreck.

The two men remained senseless for some time, and Kate did, too; and even after she regained a sort of consciousness she remained quiet and dazed—in a kind of trance, to which abnormal state she had since childhood been subject on rare occasions. It was a condition in which she was conscious yet immovable. About three o'clock in the morning, she heard footsteps near the boat, and, with a mighty effort, she broke the spell that bound her, and took refuge behind a tree.

Hance Walston and a companion came close by, and Kate overheard their conversation unneen by them.

"Where are we?" asked Walston's fellow, named Rock.

"I don't know," said Walston. "It doesn't matter much. We mustn't stop here; we must go further in. When daylight comes we can look about us!"

"Have you got the firearms?"

"Yes, and ammunition all right," said Walston, who took out of the locker five guns and several packets of cartridges.

"That is not much," said Rock, "in a wild country like this. Where is Frank Evans?"

"Over there, watched by Cope Brandt and Cook. He'll have to settle with us, whether he likes it or not; and if he resists I'll settle him."

"What has become of Kate?"

"Kate? There is nothing to fear from her. I saw her go overboard before the boat ran ashore, and she is at the bottom of the sea now."

"That's a good job. She knew rather too much about us."

"She wouldn't have known it long."

Kate, who had heard all this, made up her mind to escape as soon as the men went away. And a few minutes afterwards Walston and his companions carried off the arms and ammunition and what remained of the provisions in the long-boat's locker—that is to say, a few pounds of salt meat, a little acco, and two or three bottles of gin.

The girl was an invalid at best. The sufferings and terrors of the munity and shipwreck had rendered her weak and ill. She had no more than overheard the conversation quoted when a deathly faintness overcome her. She staggered a few paces in the direction that the two men had taken, yielding to a vague hope of being helped, even by those murderous ruffians.

It was at that moment that she was joined by Frank Evans, who had contrived to slip away from his captors, and in whose strong arms she found what seemed, for the moment, a safe refuge. But the sense of security could not last under the circumstances.

"Can't we escape from them? she asked. "They mean to murder me. I heard them say so."

Instead of a reassuring reply from her over, or any coherent answer at all, she saw that his eyes stared in vacancy, and his hands went to his head, as though he were bewildered.

"This is July, Kate—isn't it?" he muttered.

"Yes," she answered. "What is the matter, Frank?"

"I don't know. Here is snow and ice in July."

"We're in the southern hemisphere—don't you remember?—and so it is winter here. O, don't give way, Frank—don't go mad!"

The appeal seemed to dispel the irrational haze from Evans's mind for the time being, and he said: "We must hide from them. Even if we starve or freeze in doing so, it will be better to have taken the meagre chance of eluding these cut-throats. Come."

[illegible] around her, and together they made their way over a sand-blown hummock, then across a level space of ground, and thus reached a lake, the fresh waters of which had begun to freeze in the fast lowering temperature. The edge of the lake was iced solidly to a distance of a hundred feet out from the shore. The pair did not see that they were on this ice until they came to its very limit, and felt it cracking under their feet. They looked down, and saw the clear, sharp reflections of themselves in the dark water.

Then a strange phenomenon took place! A psychological marvel! A physical wonder! Frank Evans' condition had, some way, been brought into abnormality. We cannot explain it. We only know that it was so, and we tell it as it happened. At the instant that he gazed down upon his inverted self in the water, his soul quitted his corporeal body, and transformed itself into the incorporeal image beneath!

It may be that the reversal of the seasons, upon which he had just commented, worked the singular migration of his soul from his substance to his shadow. It may be something in the atmosphere of this island—but there is no use in conjecture.

The certain thing to narrate is that Evans' consciousness went down into the water, and that he believed himself to be submerged; but at the same time he retained a control of the physical faculties of the figure by Kate's side. This soulless Frank Evans strode away, like an automation, utterly heedless of her, and leaving her amazed by the desertion.

"Frank—Frank!" she cried; "don't leave me!"

But he disappeared in the gloom, for it was still night, without looking back at the abandoned girl, or slackening his rapid sliding pace over the ice. We know now that his soul separated from his body by the layer of ice, kept right along underneath, and doubtless guided his physical movements; but all his consciousness, all his mentality, was down there in the water.

Impossible! Those may conclude to who disbelieve all that they cannot understand. Yet a phenomenal thing, as to the reasonableness of which there will be no dispute (simply because states of trance are well attested by physicians), occurred to Kate Penfield. For a minute after the disappearance of Evans she stood dumfounded and motionless. Then a faintness began to overcome her, and the symptoms of a cataleptic attack, such as she had experienced several times already in her life, became unmistakable. She lost consciousness, and fell to the ground lifeless, though not dead. Not the faintest breath did she draw. Not a pulse flickered. Every function of animate life was suspended utterly.

She lay thus seemingly dead when, an hour later, Walston and his companion found her. They believed her lifeless, and, with characteristic brutality, they dragged her body to the edge of the ice, and slid it off into the water.

CHAPTER II.

The island upon which the mutineers and their two honest companions had been cas away was not wholly uninhabited. A party of young men, numbering five, had been blown to its shore in a disabled and floundering yacht, and for months had dwelt in a half cave, half hut, subsisting on wild game, and anxiously waiting for a rescue. Their place of temporary refuge was across the lake from the point where the survivors of the Severn had reached that body of water. It was on the ensuing day that the five islanders, headed by their leader, a young fellow named August Briant, started out as skaters on the ice, which had frozen completely and solidly over the lake during the bitterly cold night. Their skates had been cut out of wood, even to the blades, but they served the purposes of exercise and exploration very well. Two of these castaways, Donagan and Cross, had taken their guns with them so as to be ready for any shooting that might turn up. Before giving the signal to be off, Briant had called his comrades together, and said:

"I hope you will not be tempted into rashness. If there is little fear of the ice breaking up, there is always a risk of your breaking an arm or a leg. So be careful. Do not go out of sight. If any of you get far away remember that Gordon and I will wait for you here. And when I give the signal, mind you all come back."

But very soon Donogan and Cross were half a mile away in pursuit of the flock of ducks that were flying across the lake, and in their rapid rush became merely two points on the horizon of the lake. Even if they had time to return, for the day would last a few hours longer, it was unwise to go away so far. At this time of the year a sudden change of weather was always to be feared. A shift in the wind might at any moment mean a gale or a fog. About two o'clock Briant saw with dismay that the horizon had disappeared in a thick bank of mist. Cross and Donagan had not reappeared, and the mist, growing thicker at each moment, came up over the ice and hid the western shore.

"That is what I feared," said Briant. "And now how will they know their way back?"

"Blow the horn! Give them a blast on the horn," said one of the party named Gordon.

Three times the horn sounded, and the brazen note rang out over the ice. Perhaps it would be replied to by a report from the guns—the only means Donagan and Cross had of making their position known. Briant and Gordon listened. No report reached their ears. The fog had now increased, and was within a quarter of a mile of where they stood. The lake would soon be entirely hidden by it. Briant called to those within sight, and a few minutes afterwards they were all safe on the bank.

"What is to be done?" asked Gordon.

"Try all we can to find Cross and Donagan before they are lost in the fog. Let one of us be off in the direction they have gone, and try to signal them back with the horn."

"I'll go," said Jack Baxter, a resolute fellow.

"That will do," said Briant. "Be off, Jack, and listen for the report of the guns. Take the horn and that will tell them where you are."

A moment afterwards Jack was invisible in the fog, which had become denser than ever. The others listened attentively to the notes of the horn, which soon died away in the distance. Half an hour elapsed. There was no news of the absent, neither of Donagan and Cross, unable to find their bearings on the lake, nor of Jack who had gone to help them. What would become of all of them if night fell before they returned!

"If we had firearms," said one, "we might——"

"Firearms!" exclaimed Briant, "there are some at the quarters. Let us fetch them! Don't lose a moment!"

In about half an hour Briant and the other loaded two muskets and fired them. There was no reply, nor the sound of gun or horn. It was now half past three o'clock. The fog grew thicker as the sun sank behind a hill. The surface of the lake was invisible.

For an hour a gun was fired every ten minutes. That Donagan, Cross, and Jack could misunderstand the meaning of this firing was impossible. The discharges could be heard over the whole surface of the lake, for in fog sound travels farther than in fine weather, and the denser the fog the better it travels. A few more shots were fired. Evidently if Jack were near he would have heard them, and replied. But not a sound came in answer. Night was closing in and darkness would soon settle down on the island.

One good thing happened. The fog showed a tendency to disappear. The breeze, rising as the sun set, began to blow the mist back. With the glass at his eyes, Briant was looking attentively.

"I think I see something," he said, "something that moves. Heaven be praised, it is Jack! I see him!"

They shouted their loudest as if they could make themselves heard at what must have been at least a mile away. But the distance was lessening visibly. Jack with the skates on his feet came gliding on with the speed of an arrow towards them. In a few minutes he would be home.

"I don't think he is alone!" said one, with a gesture of surprise.

The boys looked, and two other moving things could be seen behind Jack a few hundred yards away from him.

"What is that?"

"Men?"

"No! Beasts!"

"Wild beasts, probably," said Briant.

He was not mistaken, and without a moment's hesitation he rushed on the lake towards Jack. In a minute he had reached the skater, and fired at the two pursuers, who turned tail and fled.

They were two bears. But Jack was saved, and great was the general rejoicing at his return. He had been several miles away when he heard the guns, and at once he set off full speed towards the point from which the report proceeded. Suddenly as the fog began to clear he saw the two bears rushing in pursuit of him. He did not, however, lose his presence of mind, and his progress was swift enough to keep the animals at a distance, but if he had fallen he would have been lost.

"But the bears were not the strangest part of my experience," he continued. "When I first saw the beasts, they were in pursuit of a man, and would have very soon overtaken him, for they were not a hundred yards behind him. The amazing thing was that he did not look back at them, nor show by any sign that he was aware of them at all. He walked fast, but wasn't running. I shouted to him, but he didn't seem to hear me. The bears got closer and closer to him. I skated right across his course, just in front of him, and I shall never forget the vacant, unknowing, deathly look in his face. He acted like a somnambulist, and so he must have been, or else some very unusual kind of maniac. Sure I am that he didn't know what he was doing. He strode and slid along the ice like an automaton, with no soul in his body."

Jack had observed and reported well, for the reader knows that he had seen the figure of Frank Evans, alive but unconscious, yet somehow controlled in its movements by its separated soul down under the ice.

"I knew that the bears would be upon the poor fellow immediately if I didn't divert them from him," Jack continued, "so I skated around them in a way to draw their attention to me. They followed me rather too vigorously, too, as you know, for I hadn't another half mile in me when you drove the beasts off."

"And the queer stranger?" one asked.

"The last I saw of him he was gliding away across the lake."

"We must go to the rescue of Donagan and Cross."

"And of this mysterious stranger, too."

The three castaways saw that night was falling fast, and that it would be suicidal folly to go out on the mission before morning. So they built a bontire on the shore, and sat down by it to keep as warm as possible during the night.

However, the reader need not wait to know what the two missing members of the party were doing. They found themselves on the further side of the lake when the fog lifted. They had lost their bearings completely. Beyond the edge of the trees that fringed the lake was a beach a quarter of a mile wide, and on this the waves were rolling white with foam after being churned among the breakers. Suddenly Cross, who was a little in advance, came to a halt, and pointed to a dark mass on the edge of the shore. Was it a marine animal, some huge cetacean such as a whale, wrecked on the sound? Was it not rather a boat, which had been thrown ashore after drifting through the breakers? It was a boat thrown on its starboard side. Was there any land near by from which a boat could come? Was there a ship that had foundered in the storm? All the hypotheses were admissible, and during the few lulls in the storm the two young men discussed them. The night seemed interminable. It seemed as though the dawn would never come. If they could only take some note of the time by consulting their watches. But it was impossible to light a match. Cross tried to do so, but had to give it up. Then Donagan hit upon another plan for finding out the time. It took twelve turns of the key to wind his watch up every twenty-four hours. As he had wound it up at eight o'clock in the evening, he had only to count the number of turns to ascertain the hours that had elapsed. This is what he did, and having only four turns to make, he concluded that eight hours had gone by, and that it was now four o'clock in the morning. The day would soon break.

Soon afterwards the first streak of dawn appeared in the east. The storm continued, and as the clouds were low over the sea, rain was to be feared before they could get back to quarters. But before they started they must search for survivors of the wreck which had occurred. As soon as the early morning light had penetrated the thick mists in the offing, they went out on the beach, struggling not without difficulty against the blasts of the storm. Often they had to hold each other up to save themselves from being blown over. The boat had been left near a low ridge of sand, and they could see by the line of weed that the tide had risen and passed it. No trace of its former occupants was visible.

"Where are they?" asked Cross.

"Where are they?" answered Donagan, pointing to the sea, which was rolling in angrily. "There, where the outgoing tide has taken them."

Donogan crept along to the ridge of rocks and swept his glass over the waves. Not a corpse did he see! He rejoined his companion, who had remained near the boat. Perhaps a survivor of the catastrophe would be found inside her. The boat was empty. She was the long-boat of some merchantman, decked forward, and about 30 feet on the keel. She was no longer seaworthy; her starboard side had been stove in below the water line when she was cast on the beach. A stump of the mast broken off at the step, a few tatters of sail caught on to the cleats at the gunwale, and a few ropes' ends were all that remained of her rigging. Provisions, utensils, weapons, there were none either in the lockers or in the little cabin in the bow. On the stern two names showed the ship to which she belonged, and the port of register: "Severn—San Francisco."

Donagan and Cross knew, by daylight, that they were clear across the lake from their quarters, and they at once started to skate "home," as they called their island refuge. They had not gone far when they saw a trange and horrifying sight.

Imbedded in the clear ice under their feet was the body of a girl.

She was Kate Penfield, lying where the murderous mutineers had thrown her but the water had frozen over and around, her, and so it was that she was solidly encased in the ice.

(TO BE CONTINUED).

WHY SHOULD A MAN KILL HIMSELF.

Nearly All Methods of Self-Murder Have Been Exhausted.

A prominent physician who has made a study of suicide said the other day:

Why should a man kill himself? The popular answer is, "Because he is crazy!" Scientific men easily disprove that, but are still somewhat at sea in devising a better answer. Was the philosopher Seneca crazy when he entered the warm bath and opened his veins? Were all the hundreds of Romans who made happy despatch of themselves insane? Surely not.

The Greeks rarely committed suicide, but at one time it was quite the fashion in Rome. It is the rarest of rarities for a slave to commit suicide, though a slave owner often does. Extensive inquiry fails to develop a single case of an American negro's committing suicide, though there have been a few cases among mulattos and octoroons. Shall it be said, then, that the superior race is the suicidal? Surely not, for the Greeks were at least the equals of the Romans. The solution must be sought elsewhere.

Perhaps religious belief has something to do with it, but it would be hard to prove it. One fact, however, gives us a clue: Among the lowest races of mankind and in the lowest intellectual grades of any society suicide is practically unknown, and among the highest in race or culture it is extremely rare, while in the middle or lower middle classes it is most common. It is those who are midway on the course, whether as races or individuals, those who are in the struggle, who lose heart and rush unbidden into eternity. This is only another way of saying there where the battle is fiercest there are the most wounds and sudden deaths; those who have won the victory and those lying idle in camp and designing no struggle are fairly well satisfied with the situation. The cultured and well-to-do Philadelphian is, on the whole, as willing to live as the naked Senegambian.

The causes assigned for suicide are to the last degree curious. In many cases well-to-do suicides simply allege that they are tired of life—the monotony of it is too much for them. An English gentleman left a note to the effect that he was tired of "coming in and going out, laying down and getting up, buttoning and unbuttoning." A London cabman wrote that he had exhausted all the pleasure of driving in this world and wanted to see how they drove in the other. Strange to say, love and poverty furnish the smallest number of cases, and mere bodily suffering the greatest. But the saddest cases are those in which a whole family dies together, and of these the Salford case, which occurred some years ago, was the most mournful of all.

Salford was a druggist's assistant, threatened with the loss of position and poverty. He succeeded in gaining his wife's consent, as his letter said, that the "whole family should go together," but she did not want to know when the fatal dose was given. So he gave her and the youngest child prussic acid in a cooling drink as they lay down for the night, and in a few minutes they expired without pain. One by one he disposed of the other five children in the same way—"all in peace and without pain, thank God," he wrote. He then drew up his will, went out and obtained the signature of witnesses, returned and wrote four letters, and then swallowed the poison, and was soon a corpse. Such a case is beyond analysis by a healthful mind. Yet we cannot say it was insanity.

It is scarcely possible to conceive of any method of suicide not already employed by some one; but whenever one strikes a novel method he is sure to have a host of imitators. Hanging, drowning, poisoning, stabbing, or other forms of cutting, shooting, and jumping from high places are most common. Many women have swallowed hot coals, powdered glass, and other destructive articles. Cleopatra applied an asp to her bosom, and it is worth noting that she has had no imitators. Women have a horror of serpants, and they are not easily obtained at the time desired. France leads all other nations in suicides, as in the last year for which we have the record 216 persons killed themselves in each 1,000,000 of the population, and the increase is rapid. Of 7,572 suicides in one year one-fifth were in Paris, and smothering by charcoal fumes is the favorite method. In London nearly all suicides are with the knife and razor, and it is plain truth that in this respect the British are the worst "cutthroats" in Europe.

Ground for Umbrage.

"I detest that man Bangle," said the boarding-house keeper to her Star Boarder.

"Why?"

"As he got up from the breakfast table he said to Mr. Fivaweek, 'Now let's go to the restaurant and get a square meal.'"

ATTACKED BY NORWAY RATS.

Three Children Almost Devoured as They Lie Asleep.

Help Luckily Arrives in Time.

Excitement is running high in Temple, a village in Pennsylvania, and mothers have been filled with feelings of horror ever since yesterday morning, when the citizens awoke to find that a family had been visited during the night by a most unusual and remarkable experience. The family was that of John Reubright, engineer for the Temple Furnace Company.

Some weeks ago a colony of Norway rats was discovered on the premises. They were supposed to have their quarters in the stable, but no nests could be found. Whence they came no one knew, and their presence was not suspected until the entire colony was found. They were large and ferocious, so much so that they attacked the person who found them and would probably have bitten him had he not driven them off with a club.

For a whole week after they were discovered nothing was seen of them and no traces were found until yesterday morning. William Reubright, aged 16, and Paul, a babe of eighteen months, sons of John Reubright, and Willie Lutz, aged 5 years, his grandson, slept together in a room through which a large chimney passed.

Shortly before daylight the other six members of the family were awakened by cries and shrieks of pain and fear. They rushed to the room in which the three children slept just in time to see a dozen or more huge rats escape through a hole which they had dug in the chimney.

A hasty examination of the boys showed that the ferocious beasts had attacked and bitten them all. The fingers of Paul, the baby, were chewed to the first joint, and his hands were severely bitten. Willie Lutz was bleeding from a dozen wounds on the face and ears while the feet and other portions of the body of William Reubright were badly injured.

Dr. Huyett, the family physician, was called at once. The wounds were cauterized and everything was done to prevent blood-poisoning. The children are still in great pain and danger is not passed, although the wounds have commenced to heal.

They are being watched carefully by the Doctor, but he does not feel that they are out of danger.

It appears from investigations made that the rats had colonized in the stables, and from there dug a tunnel to the house, where they entered the huge chimney, and from there dug through to the sleeping room, where they attacked the boys. The rodents are described by those who have seen them as being of unusual size, over twice as large as the ordinary rat and are said to be so fierce and strong that no cat and none but the largest dogs dare attack them.

STAYING THE HAND OF DEATH.

A Certain and Rapid Means of Resuscitating Persons.

Colonel Henry Elsdale, of the Royal Engineers, claims to have discovered a certain and rapid means of resuscitating persons from the effects of suffocation. A sapper among the men under his command at Chatham was one day found enveloped in the folds of a half-empty war balloon. The coal gas with which it had been inflated had suffocated him, and to all appearances he was a dead man. But efforts were made to restore him, though the pulseless heart and cadaverous face of the man gave no encouragement to persevere. In a moment of something like inspiration it occurred to Colonel Elsdale to send for some tubes of compressed oxygen which had been prepared for the oxyhydrogen light.

This pure oxygen, at a very high pressure, was hurriedly conveyed into the mouth of the prostrate sapper by means of inserting the nozzel of the valve between his teeth, and the supply was "gently turned on" to the smallest extent. The effect was absolutely instantaneous. In an instant he opened his eyes and seized the nozzle between his teeth. In short, the sapper not only thoroughly revived within a few minutes, but in half an hour walked away, quite well, to the barracks, and refused to go to the Military Hospital, as was suggested by his commanding officer.

Of course, the objection will be raised that everybody has not tubes of pure oxygen at high pressure in readiness to apply to such cases. Happily oxygen in quantities as large as those administered is not needed, and it can be stored "in small, strong bottles made of the finest steel, with a valve giving an absolute hermitic seal." These vessels may be as small as a soda-water-bottle, and may be made part of the medical stock of every doctor. Oxygen at any degree of compression required can, in fact, now be obtained, and the whole apparatus for restoring vitality can be packed in a small box quite portable.

What possibilities may not such a discovery as that to which we have drawn attention involve! It is equally available, we are assured, for those persons who have been asphyxiated by choke damp in coal mines, or by ordinary coal gas. People apparently drowned, and those insensible from long exposure in the rigging of a ship, might also be saved from an untimely end by what Colonel Elsdale calls "a dose of oxygen." It would probably be invaluable, too, in cases of suffocation from the fumes of charcoal, or in cases where chloroform had operated injuriously on a weak heart. Such a discovery should at once occupy the attention of the Royal College of Physicians, with a view of ascertaining whether Colonel Elsdale has overrated the beneficent effects to be anticipated from the administration of pure oxygen.

A Story With a Moral.

The weather never suited Mr. Jones.
If it was too hot,
He wasted all his strength in futile groans;
If it was not.
He said it froze the marrow of his bones,
And swore a lot.

But Mrs. Jones would never make complaint.
It is was cold,
She shivered, but stood it like a saint
In times of old;
And, though 'twas hot enough to make her faint,
She'd never scold.

They're both dead now, this worthy pair
(I knew them well!)
And Mrs. Jones is very happy where
The angels dwell.
Where Mr. Jones is I don't care
Just now to tell.