CONFLICT IN A RAILWAY TUNNEL.

BY HERBERT RUSSELL.

I had taken my ticket at the London terminus of one of the great northern railways, and, having a long night journey to make, I looked about for an empty compartment, intending to swathe myself in rugs, and go to sleep as soon as ever the train should have started. I had but small difficulty in finding what I sought, and a little well-timed liberality to the conductor secured me what I then considered the additional privilege of being locked in.

I sat for a while against the window, gazing at the bustling crowd upon the brightly-lighted platform; the engine gave a shrill, prolonged whistle, and we began slowly to glide out of the great, noisy station.

It was about six o'clock on a late November evening when we started; quite dark, with a frostiness in the air that speedily clouded the windows of the carriage with hoary moisture. The lamp in the roof of the compartment gave sufficient illumination to enable me to read the advertisement tablets under the hat-rack. By the time Hornsey was left behind, and the open country stretched on either hand of us, we were bowling along at express speed. I exchanged my hat for a warm fur cap, raised my feet on to the cushions of the opposite seat, and in this posture drew a stout travelling-blanket about me, and composed myself to sleep.

I presume that I must have frequently dozed off, for the roaring of the train seemed to grow faint and distant. But my nap was of short duration, and I was soon wide awake again, gazing out through a little space which I rubbed clear upon the frosted window panes at the dark vague outline of the country whirling past in the gloom. On a sudden my eye was taken by something stirring under the seat in the far corner of the carriage. I thought at first it might be a shadow, but continuing to watch it with a dull kind of curiosity I was extremely startled to perceive a man's head thrust out of the obscurity. A pair of fierce-looking eyes glared at me for a moment, and then, while I still sat motionless with surprise, a man scrambled out, and, getting upon his feet stood surveying me.

He was a burly-looking fellow, with a coarse ugly face, immensely square shoulders, and close-cropped hair. He wore a loose, clumsily-fitting suit of some gray material that looked suspiciously like a prison dress, and his appearance altogether suggested the escaped felon. He was without a cap, and I noticed that his jacket was torn and his face a good deal scarred, as though he were fresh from some rough work. I gazed at this uncouth apparition in silence for a little while, with an expression, I do not doubt, of considerable dismay; then I instinctively looked around me for some means of communication with the guard. The fellow saw and understood my gesture, and his eyes swiftly darted round the carriage with a malevolent leer of satisfaction as he perceived that the compartment was not furnished with the usual appliance for signalling.

"All right, guv'ner," he said, in a hoarse, low voice. "No need to trouble yerself. You surely don't want to hinconvenience the rest of the passengers by delaying the train!"

"Who are you, and what do you want?" said I, slowly clearing my limbs of the folds of the rug which enveloped me.

"Who am I, an' what do I want?" he repeated. "That's axing, sir, ain't it? However, I ain't a-going to tell you who I am, an' as for what I want, you'll be finding that out before very long."

His manner, and the looks of the man, rather than his words, made me feel uneasy. Judging from his appearance, I guessed him to be more than my match in point of strength, and I was quite unarmed.

He turned, and let down the frame of the window against which he stood; then, thrusting his arm out, he tried the handle, but found the door was locked. He uttered an inarticulate curse betwixt his teeth, and pulled up the window with a vehemence which I should have expected would shiver the glass in it to fragments. The train at that moment dashed shrieking through a considerable station, the lamps of which ran past in a long glare, like a streak of lightning, and the man shrank back as though fearful of being seen.

"Let's try the door at your end, guv'ner," said he, coming along the compartment, with his hand upon the hat-rack to steady himself. I hastily rose as he approached, and backed away a step or two while he lowered the window and leaned out to turn the handle. This door proved to be unlocked. People to whom I have told this story assure me that it ought not to have been unlocked, as the off-doors of an English train are always locked. I believe this is so, but the fact remains that the particular off-door of that part of the carriage in which I chanced to be opened at once when the man tried it. He drew in his head again with an exclamation of satisfaction, leaving the door unlocked, though the rush of wind created by the passage of the train prevented it from swinging open.

"Now, mister," said he gruffly, measuring me from head to foot with his little deep-set eyes as he spoke, "you've got to change clothes with me, d'ye see? I must have them togs of yourn."

"You will do nothing of the kind," I answered resolutely, though with my heart starting to beat a trifle quicker.

"Come now," said he; "don't make no fuss. Ye'd best chop quietly."

Again I cast my eyes round the compartment in the hope of discovering the communicating cord, but without any result. At that instant the locomotive gave a long screaming whistle, and the train plunged with a roar into a tunnel.

"Look here, now," exclaimed the fellow, putting on a most menacing air, and leaning toward me with his fists clenched, "if you don't do what I want, then out you go through that door."

Without answering, I again sat down in the middle seat of the carriage. On this the man stood looking at me for a moment, as though undecided how to act. Then perceiving my silk hat resting on the rack overhead, he took it down and put it on. This impudent act of the dirty villain so incensed me that, scarcely thinking what I was about, I jumped up and snatched it off his head. In a second he whipped round and struck me a blow full in the chest with his heavy fist. I grappled with him, and then began a fierce and desperate conflict.

As soon as I closed with the ruffian I felt that his whole effort was to get me close to the door and thrust me through it. He was an immensely strong fellow, but as clumsy as a bear in his struggle. I, on the other hand, was light and nimble, with some small scientific knowledge of boxing. For all that, I felt myself greatly outmatched in that hand-to-hand fight.

No sooner had I grappled with the villain than he gave me a blow right in the face savage enough to have broken my nose and knocked out goodness knows how many teeth had he delivered it with as much judgment as he did violence. But I had taken him by the throat with both hands, with the idea of throttling him into passiveness, and I continued clutching his windpipe with the tenacity of a bull-terrier. We twisted, and wriggled, and bumped from side to side of the confined space, and all the while I felt him dragging me in the direction of the open door. At last I twined my foot about his leg, and threw him; he fell heavily, striking his head against the cushioned seat, and down I came with him, still clinging to his iron-hard, muscular throat, upon which my grip seemed to make scarcely any impression. We rolled about for a while, each endeavoring to keep uppermost, and when, with his superior strength, he got above me, and knelt upon my chest, I thought he would brutally murder me as I lay in that almost helpless posture. But instead he gasped out: "Will you change now?" and while he waited for my answer I got my first free and struck him upward under the chin, knocking his teeth together with a click like the snap of a rifle trigger and nearly dislocating his neck. Then I gave a heave up which threw him off me, and a moment later we were both upon our feet again and pounding away as before.

But I was beginning to feel that I could not continue the struggle much longer, and that exhausted as I was, he would be able to drag me to the door and pitch me through it on the line. My opponent breathed hard and fast, but showed no signs of giving in. On a sudden the train gave a violent jolt that flung us both against the bulkhead of the compartment; the flame of the lamp leaped up, then flickered a moment and went out. We continued fighting in a darkness as deep as that of the grave.

Now that we were both completely in the dark, I felt myself more on an equality with my antagonist. My sole dread was that I should find myself tumbling backward through the open door. He had hissed out amid horrid blasphemies, his intention of leaving me dead in that tunnel, where my body might lie undiscovered for weeks. Dead men, he said, told no tales, and he wasn't going to lose the liberty he had that night regained. But all at once I felt him relax his grip of my body, and he called to me to let go. Glad of a moment's respite, I released my hold of the fellow, though standing on my guard meanwhile, wary of some desperate trick upon his part. After a little, finding that he did not renew the attack, I spoke and asked what he was doing, at the same time groping about to try and feel him. I received no answer, neither did my hands come in contact with his body. At that moment the train emerged from the tunnel, and the impenetrable gloom in which the carriage had been plunged by the extinction of the lamp gave place to a kind of faintness sifting through the windows, sufficient to have revealed the figure of the man had he still been in the compartment. I had a box of matches in my pockets, and with a trembling hand I pulled it out and struck a light.

The place was empty. With a long sigh of relief and thankfulness, I sank exhausted into a seat to wait until the train should pull up at its first stopping-place.

Half an hour later we came to a standstill in the station of a large town. I sought out the conductor and told him what had occurred. He at once despatched a porter for the station-master, and when that official arrived the two of them heard my story. They searched the compartment thoroughly, but not a trace of the villain did they discover. My own opinion is that, taking advantage of the blackness, he had got out upon the foot-board, there to wait until the train should slacken speed sufficiently to enable him to jump off with safety and make good his escape. Be this as it may, I never heard more of the matter, although the memory of that experience lingers as a sort of nightmare of my railway travelling; and whenever I now get into compartments by myself. I take very good care to first of all peer under the seats and make sure that there exists the means of communicating with the guard.—[Storiettes.

Mortgages in the States.

Some interesting statistics have recently been published with regard to the mortgage indebtedness per head of the population of the United States. Reports from all the States have not been received, but the figures to hand show that the greatest indebtedness to the head of population is in the new States of the West, and the least is in the South. As to New England and the Middle States, it must be kept in mind that their large and numerous cities and towns, where real estate is held at high rates, allow a much greater percentage of debt without danger than can be predicted of the agricultural States. Farms will not bear heavy burdens of debt like city property, and when the farmers are weighed down with mortgages their situation is serious. Following is a statement of the mortgage indebtedness to each head of the population:

Alabama	$ 26
Arkansas	13
Colorado	206
Connecticut	107
Illinois	100
Indiana	51
Iowa	104
Kansas	170
Maine	49
Massachusetts	144
Minnesota	152
Missouri	80
Nebraska	126
New Hampshire	50
Oregon	73
Pennyslvania	17
Rhode Island	106
Tennessee	123
Vermont	83
Wisconsin	72

These figures show that the heaviest load of mortgages is carried by Colorado. Next comes Kansas, then Minnesota, then Nebraska, and afterwards other Western States. The smallest load is credited to Arkansas, next to Tennessee, and third to Alabama.

A THRILLING SITUATION.

It was the second mate of one of the great lake propellers that spoke as they were passing Pointe Aux Barques, and his words were to this effect: "That is a queer coast over there, and don't you forget it." The interlocutor, a passenger, promised that he would not forget it, providing the sailor man would tell him why the coast was queer.

"Well," said the sailor man, but without hitching his trousers or shifting his quid, or performing any of the nautical gymnastics attributed to his kind in the story books, "It wasn't exactly queer, perhaps, but it is a coast that I shall remember the longest day I live.

"It was about six years ago that I was sailing on a lumber schooner, and just when we were about where we are now the captain discovered that our yawl was adrift. We had been towing it and some how the painter had parted or slipped, and there the boat was, nearly a mile away, drifting ashore as fast as the water could carry it. There was not a soul to be seen, and if there had been, it would not have been an easy matter to get him to bring us our yawl, and the captain did not know what to do. Finally, as I saw the old man was a good deal worked up over it, I volunteered to swim ashore and bring the yawl, if he would run in as close as he could and anchor until I came aboard.

"The captain accepted my proposal very gladly, and as the water was warm I thought I would have a first rate swim, little thinking what was in store for me. So I stripped and lowered myself into the water. For a quarter of an hour it was mere fun, but I soon found I had bit off more than I could chaw. The shore was further off than I had figured, and I could see a few ominous looking clouds, which indicated that the wind was rising, which might make it hard for me to get back to the schooner after I got the boat. I kept on, however, getting more and more exhausted every moment. I tried every way I knew to rest my tired legs and arms. First I turned on my back and swam in that position for a while. Then I tried swimming on my side; then 'dog fashion,' and then floating. But all the time I was getting more and more worn out. I tried to signal the schooner, but my voice was so weak I could not make them hear and they did not understand, as I afterwards learned, my frantic motions. Besides they could not have helped me if they had, because they had no boat.

"I had swam about a mile and was still a mile from the shore. Mechanically I kept up my motions as well as I could, but I knew I was doomed. The water began to sing in my ears and my thoughts went back over my past life, as I have heard drowning men's always do. I thought of my poor wife and children, and wondered how they would get the news. I wondered whether my body would be found and get Christian burial or be carried out into the lake and find a last resting place there. It did not worry me much on my own account—I had ceased to care for myself, but I hoped somehow, for the sake of my family, that I should be washed ashore and that somebody would have my body carried home. I speculated also as to the captain's getting his boat, and felt quite sorry when I thought he might never see it again.

"I don't know how long it took me to think of all this. Probably it was not more than a minute, but it seemed to be ages and all the time I was feebly moving my arms and feet and just keeping my head above water. Meanwhile I had got perhaps within half a mile of the shore. I made up my mind—or rather it made itself up—that this was just as good a place to be drowned in as any other, and abandoning motion I sank to the bottom.

It did not take as long as I expected it would to reach the bottom. In fact, I struck it with both hands and feet about as soon as I had fairly stopped moving. I kept my feet on it and straightening up found that the water came about up to my waist. I suppose I ought to have fallen on my knees in thankfulness, but instead of that I waded ashore the maddest man on the coast. I got the yawl and sculled it back to the schooner that was waiting at anchor for me and as I went back I had the curiosity to take soundings and found that I had been exerting myself swimming for more than a mile where the water was not more than four feet deep."

"Was the captain glad to get you back?" the sailor man was asked.

"Blast the captain!" was the response. "All he said was 'You confounded fool, didn't you know that there was a mile and a half of shoal water all along that coast?'"

France and Russia.

If it be true that France has agreed to lease to Russia the port of Villefranche as a naval station, we have at least solid ground for believing that the two powers named will co-operate in the event of a European war. Hitherto no conclusive evidence of the existence of such a coalition has been forthcoming. Undoubtedly the cordial reception of the French fleet at Cronstadt and the subsequent return visit of Russian war vessels have disclosed a willingness on the Czar's part to encourage friendly relations between his subjects and French citizens; but there is a wide gap between such international courtesies and the conclusion of a definite treaty of alliance. If, however, such a country as France has been prevailed upon to let one of her harbors pass even temporarily under foreign control, we may be certain that adequate compensation will be given; and this can only take the form of assurances that Russian armies will support the French whenever the latter are involved in conflict with the three central powers. That must be the consideration for the lease; for except in one improbable contingency, France would have no need of help from Russia in the Mediterranean, whereas the acquisition of a naval station in that sea has long been deemed a matter of capital importance to the Northern Empire. It would only be in a war with England—which, so long as the Liberals are in power at Westminster may be excluded from the list of probabilities—that France could derive any advantage from the presence of a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean. In any international complications to which England should not be a party, France would be abundantly able to deal with any force which Italy, Austria, and Germany could array against her in that quarter. The threat of Berlin newspapers that the temporary cession of a French Mediterranean port to Russia would be followed by the leasing of an Italian harbor to Germany can have no terrors for France. When war breaks out, the Germans will require every war vessel at their disposal to protect their own ports in the Baltic and North seas. Any money, therefore, that might be expended by the Berlin Government in equipping a naval station in Sicily, or on the Italian peninsula, would be worse than thrown away, if it were followed by the diversion of a part of its naval force from points where the interests of German commerce are concentrated. When war comes, Italy will have to depend on the assistance of Austria alone, and no one imagines that the Italian and Austrian war ships combined could make head against the armament that Toulon would be able to send forth. So far then as France is concerned, the permanent stationing of a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean is a matter of indifference.

Russia, on the other hand, considers the acquisition of a seaport in the Mediterranean an indispensable move in the game, the prize of which is Constantinople. It is true that the clause of the treaty of Paris forbidding the Czar to maintain war vessels in the Black sea was abrogated during the Franco-German war, but the strong naval force since collected there is still confined by treaty to that basin, and could not effectually co-operate with the Czar's Baltic fleet, unless the latter should obtain a coaling station in the Mediterranean. For a time the St. Petersburg Government hoped to acquire one of the Greek harbors, but her plans were thwarted at Athens by the central and western powers, including conspicuously England. Then, when Montenegro obtained a seaport on the Adriatic after the Russo-Turkish war, this would have been practically converted into a Russian naval station but for the interposition of England and Austria, supported by Germany. The only power at once able and willing to give Russia what she has long wished is France; and there is nothing better calculated than the leasing of Villefranche to bind the Russian sovereign with the strongest ties of amity, for nothing obviously could more powerfully further his designs upon Constantinople. In view of the collapse of the Turkish navy, the Sultan's capital would almost certainly succumb should the Russian fleet in the Black Sea assail the Bosporus simultaneously with an attack by Russian ironclads upon the forts that fringe the Dardanelles. Such a concerted operation could not safely be undertaken unless Russia had a naval station of her own within a reasonable distance of the Ægean. The moment Russia becomes a naval power in the Mediterranean, England would have to face the alternative of abandoning her traditional role of the Sultan's defender, or of materially increasing her war vessels in that sea. The naval force which she has hitherto been accustomed to maintain there would no longer be deemed more than sufficient to safeguard the Suez Canal and the short route to India. In such circumstances, and especially while a Liberal Government is in power at Westminister, England will probably determine to leave the Turk at the mercy of his neighbors and reserve her own naval forces for the protection of her national interests.

Dictation That Takes.

Gen. Lew Wallace must be a bother to the critics and novelists. These have been busy for a score of years proving to us that romanticism in literature is an outlived folly unworthy of our highly cultivated age and unacceptable to it. Yet here comes Gen. Wallace, writing pure romance with a simplicity rivalling that of a century ago, and his books outsell those of all our realists combined wherever the English language is spoken. Howells and Boyesen and their fellows have preached the gospel of commonplace triviality, and practised it, too, in full faith that fiction is in their hands "a finer art" than when Scott and Dickens and Thackeray clumsily essayed it. Only recently Mr. Boyesen wrote sneeringly of Walter Scott as a childish romance-monger, and pityingly of those feeble-minded folk who prefer Scott's methods to his own. Yet hundreds of thousands of English-speaking people all over the world have taken to Lew Wallace, have read "Ben Hur" and are reading the "Prince of India" quite as if they had never been taught that the romanticism which alone gives charm to the latter work is a folly to be scorned. The fact appears to be that in spite of all theories the average man or woman likes fiction with incidents in it more stirring than the dropping of a pair of scissors and emotions more intense than those that prevail at summer resorts. There is blood in the veins of men still. There survives a sympathy with high emotion and strenuous endeavor. Pity still has tears to shed over sorrow and the healthy man is still able to rejoice in that "gospel of roast turkey"—which Howells finds to be so unworthy in Dicken's "Christmas carol"—a gospel distinctly plagiarized from Jesus of Nazareth.

There has been no deadlier folly in the history of literature than this latter-day attempt to rule out the stronger sentiments and sympathies of men. There has been no greater blight upon endeavor, no more mischievous perversion of taste than this apostleship of trivialty in the name of realism, as if reality were always tame and obedient to the laws of etiquette. Literature in a dress suit is the literature of dawdling, of weakness, of deadly dulness. A touch of wit, a gentle humor, serves to disguise the inanity somewhat, but its presence cannot be completely or for long hidden. It is not the function of literature to picture the commonplace and the uninteresting facts of life. Its business is to select the things worth presenting. The imagination is the creative faculty, and in all arts its successful exercise is the measure of excellence. Our modern school insists that it shall wear kid gloves and conform to the dull, monotonous usages of conventional society. The romance writer more justly estimates his art, and he gets at the hearts of his readers. To the critic he may well say: "Dost think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale? Ay, and ginger shall be hot i' the mouth, too."

A new mountain railway has been constructed on the Schafberg, in the Salzkammergut, often called the Rigi of Austria. The mountain rises from the Wolfgangsee, a beautiful lake situated an hour from Ischl. The summit is nearly 3,900 feet above the level of the lake, and the length of the line is about 3½ miles. There are several tunnels, one of which is 400 feet long.

DRUNKENNESS IN WOMEN

Is a Vice Which it is Impossible to Cure—The Reasons Why.

The terrible consequences of drunkenness among women, as elicited by the "Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Inebriates," is well accounted for by some of the facts recently laid before the public by Prof. Ludwig Buchner. He shows, first, that when the relative and not the positive weight of the female brain is considered, it is not less but slightly greater than that of a man for—taking into consideration her smaller bodily size—she possesses "probably even more brain than man." But he next proceeds to state that the development of the female brain is less as regards the front portion and greater as regards the top or crown portion. If one looks at a woman's skull from above, its outline approximates to that of two cones with blunted ends joined together at their bases, whereas a man's skull presents, from a similar point of view, an egg-like appearance, expanding in the middle and towards the back. Prof. Huschke is cited as showing that the "middle brain" containing the "central grey matter, which has no connection with the intelligence, and which in animals shows a considerable proportional development compared to the rest of the brain, exhibits also in women a noticeable preponderance," so that in reality the fair sex have more crown and middle brain and the sterner sex more forehead and thinking brain; in other words, the passional and emotional, when crippled or misdirected in woman, have not the amount of thought-power and intellectual control to count upon as they have in man. At the departmental enquiry mentioned above Sir Andrew Clark stated that when the vice of drunkenness has become a habit in men it is difficult of cure, but that in women it is all but impossible. "When taken early in hand cures are obtained in both sexes; but even then the proportion in women is painfully small." Dr. Street, licensee of a retreat at Westgate, being asked if it was his experience that a woman, having once become addicted to drink, has a greater difficulty in throwing off the craving for stimulants than a man has, replied: "I should say, generally, yes to that, because I think that, perhaps, the man has more likelihood of having an occupation to keep his thoughts from the one subject than a woman has." Here, then, is a second difficulty against which woman has to contend; she is thrown more upon herself for control, while constitutionally she is not so well equipped as man is for resistance. Add to this the fact of hereditary drunkenness, and a third difficulty is seen as telling against the weaker sex. Prof. Clifford Albutt, in answer to a question, pointed out as "a curious thing" that drunkenness is generally hereditary as drunkenness, while with regard to kleptomania a father might be a dipsomaniac and a child might be a kleptomaniac; "but drunkenness generally comes in the same form and manifestations; it appears not merely as a general tendency to insanity, but as a special form of it. I have been very much struck in practice by the extraordinary drinking-streak which runs through certain families, and this in many cases where the members have not had very much association with each other. It seems to me to be a very strong hereditary tendency to a special craving." In view of these facts, it is clear that woman, in a greater degree than man, has in this matter of inebriety a claim upon special and kindly attention on the part of both Legislature and society. Under the triple burden of organization, domesticity and heredity, the poet's plea goes far in her favor: "What's done ye easily may compute; ye know not what's resisted."

Physicians are made, not born—no boy ever yet took naturally to medicine.

Mdme. Patti is fond of collecting autographs, and has a very unique and costly fan in her possession, upon each ivory joint of which is inscribed the genuine autograph of some celebrated personage.

A Hindoo baby is named when it is twelve days old, and usually by the mother. Sometimes the father wishes for another name than that selected by the mother. In that case two lamps are placed over the two names, and the name over which the lamp burns the brightest is the one given the child.

Clifford Blackman

A Boston Boy's Eyesigh. Saved—Perhaps His Life

By Hood's Sarsaparilla—Blood Poisoned by Canker.

Read the following from a grateful mother: "My little boy had Scarlet Fever when 4 years old, and it left him very weak and with blood **poisoned with canker.** His eyes became so inflamed that his sufferings were intense, and for seven weeks he

Could Not Open His Eyes.

I took him twice during that time to the Eye and Ear Infirmary on Charles street, but their remedies failed to do him the faintest shadow of good. I commenced giving him Hood's Sarsaparilla and it soon cured him. I have never doubted that it **saved his sight,** even **if not his very life.** You may use this testimonial in any way you choose. I am always ready to sound the praise of

Hood's Sarsaparilla

because of the wonderful good it did my son." ABBIE F. BLACKMAN, 2888 Washington St, Boston, Mass. Get HOOD'S

HOOD'S PILLS are hand made, and are perfect in composition, proportion and appearance.