In Sheep's Clothing.

By Capt. Ormond Steele

CHAPTER XVI—Continued.

"No, I must return; it is better that we should talk here; I wish to speak about Ralph."

"Why, Ralph has gone to New York. He sailed with Capt. Fox."

"So I heard, so I believed; but did Capt. Fox go to New York?"

"Certainly, there cannot be any doubt about that, for a letter came only a few hours ago from the Captain."

"That is strange," said Untilla, drawing her little red hand across her brow.

"But why should you think it strange?"

"I cannot explain, Lea, I do not quite understand the ground for my dread, but I fear that some great harm has befallen, or is about to befall, Ralph Denham."

"But who could harm him. Your brother does not like him, I fear; but Uncas, chief of the Montauks, is not a coward."

"I cannot answer for men who do not reason, not even for Uncas when he bends his head to catch the words of white tempters. This Capt. Fox did not sail for New York. His ship remained for nearly a day off Montauk, and then he sailed to the south, after leaving some of his people on shore."

"How do you know this? Did you see it?" asked Lea, excitedly.

"I did not see it, but those who told me would not lie."

"May there not have been a good reason for this?"

"Yes; but I can but think it means harm to Ralph."

"He can take care of himself."

"One man would be weak in the presence of a ship full. I know Capt. Fox is the enemy of Ralph Denham. Has he not met my brother, and roused his anger until he has been a demon——"

"I am amazed!" gasped Lea.

"And then this Col. Graham. Do you know that he visited this place twenty-one years ago?"

"You and I were not here then, Untilla."

"True, but those are living who can recall him, though he is much changed. He is the man who brought Ralph here."

"Who told you that?"

"Dinah; she knows this Graham. She knew——"

"Stop dat! Don't say too much, honey! De time foh de breakin' ob dem ar seals ain't come yet."

The two girls turned around to find old Dinah standing behind them, with both her hands resting on the top of her long staff, and her chin resting on her hands.

Untilla sprang to her feet, and through the dusk of her oval cheeks the deep carmine of surprise, and, it may be, shame burned.

"I feel, Dinah, that she, that Lea, should know what I know," said Untilla at length, "for her life runs nearer to his than mine."

"Hush dat. Wy have de news go 'broad ez 'll ruin all? Let de story git wind, en Sag Harbor 'll never see 'im ag'in. Can't ye leave dat to me, ez ez give twenty year of my old life to de wok, foh to finish? De ind is nigh, de ind of my life, en de ind of acts ez is blacker 'n dis old dried-up skin. Ize watched 'im, en I'll keep a watchin'. De sea dat swallowed de fader won't be cruel to de son. Ralph Den'm's day of de second trial hez come, en if he gits tru' safe, den de worl' 'll see who he is, en dem ez hez turned up dere noses, coz he's no on's son, 'il git down en wo'ship at de feet of one ez hez de blood of de noblest in his veins."

The old woman straightened up as she spoke, and the girls looked at her with awe and surprise.

Then and there she pledged them to secrecy, and when Lea said:

"I have nothing to keep secret."

Dinah responded:

"Don't say ez 'ow we ever talked 'bout Ralph Den'm's name. Wait till de worl's ready to talk 'bout it.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LANDING.

It was a dark night, with a stiff southwest wind dashing mighty waves against the headland of Montauk, where the Indians, in accordance with a treaty, now kept beacons burning at night, for the guidance of ships making their way to the waters of the Sound.

The Wanderer had been out of sight of land for four days, when the lookout, up near the masthead, shouted out:

"A light on the starboard bow!"

Through the rain and the spray blown from the caps of waves by the fierce midsummer storm, Captain Fox made out the light, and at once took his place beside the men at the wheel, for, though under nearly bare poles, the little canvas out being close-reefed, the Wanderer was leaping across the waves like a race horse under the spurs of a desperate rider.

High above the wind that whistled and shrieked through the rigging, louder than the groaning of the spars and the mad dash of the waves, rang out the trumpet-like voice of Captain Fox.

In anticipation of danger every man was on deck, and as quick as the orders were given they were shouted out by the officers along the deck, and the men repeated them as they sprang to obey.

There was not a light visible on the Wanderer, and, save the flickering gleam, which the storm threatened to extinguish, on the distant headland, the world was enveloped in a darkness that could be felt.

On dashed the cruiser, till the beacon was well down on the left, now larboard and lee.

As she rounded the point a flash of lightning, that made Fox utter a horrible oath, lit up the bay to the westward, showing that the headland broke the force of the wind and left the water comparatively calm.

Just as the beacon on Montauk Point was fading from view, another light flashed close down to the shore and not more than a mile ahead.

At the Captain's order, every stitch of sail went down with a run, and before the treacherous tide could seize the ship, the command to let go both anchors was given.

Then followed a dash, and a roaring noise, and a spurt of flame where the flying cables ignited the woodwork, and the Wanderer swung round with her head to the wind.

"That was an easier job than I expected, sir," said a dripping officer, coming back to where the captain was standing.

"Tut!" replied Fox, "the man that couldn't do as I have, isn't fit to command a Yarmouth bloater smack. See that everything is made snug, and the watch set, then come below. We have other work before us to-night."

"Aye, aye, sir," replied the officer, turning away.

"Give me a little brandy, Don, for I am wet to the bone," said Fox, when he entered the cabin.

The cabin boy, with that alacrity that distinguished every one subject to this man's orders, was about to start off, when the last word was uttered, but he was halted by a gesture from his master.

"See here, Don."

"Yes, sir."

"Has the storm disturbed him?" Fox jerked his thumb in the direction of the cabin, where Ralph was sleeping.

"Not much, sir," replied Don.

"Has it disturbed him at all?"

"I can't say, sir. I only know that he has muttered in his sleep."

"You couldn't make out what he said?"

"He said once, 'tis a long, long voyage,' and then called 'Lea.'"

"The longest voyage he ever started on—a voyage from which never a craft returned that ever set out. But away, and get me the brandy."

Don hurried off, and Fox, lighting a candle, went into the room where Captain Ralph Denham was lying, as he had been lying for five days, wholly oblivious to the world.

Fox bent over and pressed his ear to the broad, slow-heaving chest.

"Strong as a lion. Gad, it seems a bit of a pity that such a fine fellow can only serve my purpose in this way. If he were in league with our ships and crews, we would be monarchs of every ocean on which the sun shines. We could own rich argosies, and make treaties with kings. But the Palitons were ever either angels or devils, and this man is not a devil."

He came out as he said this and noiselessly closed the door behind him.

In the meantime Don had come in with the brandy, and Fox took a glass as another man might take water.

He was in the act of setting down the glass, when the officer, whom he addressed on deck, came down, with his hat in his hand.

"Take some brandy, Folsom. Has the rain ceased?"

"I think so, sir," said Folsom, smacking his lips, in anticipation of the brandy, and proceeding to help himself.

"Is the light still visible on shore?"

"Yes, sir."

"Frenauld is there. Signal him that I will be ashore in a short time. Get the boat ready, but do not lower it. I am going to land my sick friend," said the Captain.

"I understand, sir."

"Select good, cool men, and when all is ready let me know."

"Aye, aye, sir."

Folsom, a heavy, dark-faced man, had his foot on the first step of the companion-way, about to ascend to the deck, but Fox stopped him.

"See the steward. Tell him that Mr. Frenauld and his three men will be hungry when they come on board to-night. Put an awning up aft; I want to keep the rain from the sick man."

"Aye, aye, sir."

Seeing that Captain Fox waved his hand by way of dismissal, Folsom went on deck.

The ship's lamps were now lit and the watch was set. The ship swinging at her anchors, presented a very different picture from the wild bark plunging over the mad waves and through the darkness straight as an arrow's flight to her goal.

In the cabins and forecastle the officers and men not on duty were soon eating their first meal that day, and congratulating each other that they had found a snug port, instead of being, as they had expected, opposed to the fury of the storm that night.

Captain Fox was the only man on board who did not carry himself with an air of weariness. He was the embodiment of force and vitality, and could not feel tired so long as he could stand.

"Now, Don," he said, after the latter had brought in some articles in a leather bag, which Fox was to take with him, "make up your own kit."

"Are we going to remain ashore, sir?" asked the boy, in surprise.

"Ask no questions," replied Fox, sternly; "but do as you are told."

From an adjoining room the captain took out a great many small boxes, covered with oilcloth, and piled them on the table. They would make in all several hundred pounds, and represented the gems plundered from Indiamen during his piratical depredations.

These parcels were worth in value the rest of the ship and cargo, and were set aside in the division as the property of himself and Frenauld.

There remained still kegs of milled dollars from the Spanish Main, and ingots by the hundreds from the galleons of Acapulco, and stamped gold bars that would have doubled in themselves the fortune of the richest prince in Christendom.

In addition, there was a rich freight of plate and pictures, of costly silks and laces of fabulous prices, with tropical spices and vines of greater value than ever floated in one ship before.

Suits of antique armor plundered by the Portuguese from Hindoo rajahs, and intended for the decoration of the palace of their king; articles of rare workmanship, secured for a song in the then unknown marts of China and Japan; idols from the South seas, and the plunder of Malay junks, all filled the hold of the cruiser Wanderer, but were as nothing in value to the boxes of rare gems covered up by those oilcloths.

One of these boxes, after some searching, Captain Fox placed in the bag containing the clothing he was going to take ashore.

He strapped on a belt that must have been very heavy, for it was literally filled with small pistols of exquisite workmanship, but heavy caliber.

This done, he went on deck, gave additional orders to the men who were going to row him ashore, then called six men by name, and led them into the cabin.

These six men entered the room where Ralph Denham was lying, their sleeves pulled up as men sometimes think it necessary to have them when they are about to lift a considerable load.

"Pick up the frame, bed and all, and see that you don't drop it as you value your lives," said the captain, sternly.

The men looked at each other in surprise, and then at the sleeping man on the bed, and began their task.

For six ordinary men, the bed with its occupant would not have been a burden; to the six giants who carried Captain Denham to the dock, the load did not seem so heavy as their own wet garments.

They placed the bed in the stern sheets, over which an awning had been spread. The officers, Don, and the men who were to row, now took their places.

"Lower away there!" shouted Fox.

There was a whirr of ropes, a cracking of blocks, and the men on deck let the boat down from the davits.

The hooks were slipped out, the six oars caught the water as if they had all been driven by one hand.

Capt. Fox had the tiller, and under his guidance the boat shot over the black waters towards the light which momentarily flashed up or was extinguished as the gig rose and fell in the trough of the sea.

As they neared the shore, Capt. Fox rose in his place and called out:

"Rest on your oars."

Like an automaton under the control of its operator, the blades stopped, while the boat under its own impetus sped on.

"Ahoy! ahoy, ashore there!" shouted Fox.

"Ahoy!" came back the reply.

"Is that Frenauld?"

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Where can we land?"

"Keep straight for the light. The beach is good and the sea low," replied Frenauld, who had been anxiously awaiting the arrival of his commander.

Again the oars caught the water. There was a moment of flying spray as the boat leaped through the surf, and the next instant the oarsmen were in the water, and, with a shout and a rush, they had the gig and its strange cargo high and dry on the beach.

Leaving the sailors who had come in the boat, and the three who had remained with Frenauld to exchange congratulations, Fox drew the latter to one side, and said:

"Denham is in the boat."

"And still alive? asked Frenauld.

"Still alive; I have trained Don to administer the drug, and he does it well. The boy is here with me. But how about the Indian, Uncas?"

"He is near by."

"And still of the same mind?"

"More determined than before, if that be possible."

"And, Frenauld, has the chief made arrangements for Denham?"

"Yes."

"Far from here?"

"About half a mile. The place is a sort of vault in an Indian burying ground," said Frenauld.

"And you have found a place where we can hide our own booty? It makes me nervous to keep those boxes longer on board, so I have brought them with me."

"I can show you just the place in the morning."

"But, Frenauld, I want you to go on board to-night and take command. You must take the vessel back at once to Sag Harbor."

"To Sag Harbor!" repeated the surprised Frenauld.

"Yes; I shall be there nearly as soon as you are. And if that fellow Thrasher has earned his money, you will be the commander of the Sea Hawk before the week is two days older. But tell me, have you not a paper, a map of the place that I can use in the morning?"

"I have, though I intended it to be used when we came back and wanted to take the plunder out of hiding," replied Frenauld, as he took a paper from his pocket and handed it to the Captain.

"Anything else to report, Frenauld?"

"Yes, sir; Colonel Graham is still here——"

"What! didn't he go to New York?" asked Fox, starting back as if his officer had struck him.

"No; he got sick and for the benefit of his health came down here among the Montauk Indians," said Frenauld, to whom this information had ceased to be exciting.

Fox hissed out a string of savage oaths, and both his hands worked nervously among the pistols in his belt.

"How far is Graham from here?" he asked when he could control himself.

"Oh, it is several miles—half-way to Sag Harbor, and he is a guest of the chief. You need not fear that he knows anything about our presence or our plans," said Frenauld, with a view to allaying his commander's excitement.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

PITFALLS FOR THIEVES.

Extraordinary Precautions in a New York Financial Institution.

Although burglar-proof vaults have been brought to a high state of perfection bank robberies continue, so that now the latest developments in this direction are not merely to increase the massiveness of the safes, but also to provide offensive measures. At the Fifth Avenue Bank and Safe Deposit vaults, in New York City, the depository of the wealth of the "400," the entire building is provided with a system of pitfalls such that no burglar could possibly escape. Every window and door is connected with burglar alarm companies. So, also, are all the stairs leading to the vault, and certain squares in the flooring. If the burglar were lucky enough to escape all these pitfalls he would find himself in front of the vault.

The vault doors are protected by apparently simple wooden affairs, which, if destroyed or in any way interfered with, send out burglar alarms and actuates a gun concealed in the side of the wall, which sends forth a broadside of buckshot.

A daylight hold-up is equally provided for. The tellers are provided with foot push buttons, so that if they were held-up they could readily give the alarm while apparently standing perfectly still, with their hands up. These buttons actuate the vault locks and at the same time lock a steel grating that extends in front of it, as well as sounding a huge gong in the middle of the building. The President's desk is similarly equipped, so that if he were threatened, while apparently complying, he would have his intruder most completely entrapped. The bank people consider that they now have absolute protection.

ANGLICIZING THE CHINESE.

Li Hung Chang Carries Out One of His Acquired Ideas.

According to news received from unofficial sources, Li Hung Chang's visit to England and the United States has already borne fruit in the decision of the Chinese Government to gradually anglicize the Chinese people, at least as far as their language is concerned. The Peking Government recently issued instructions to various Viceroys and Governors of the Provinces of the Empire to establish schools for teaching the English language and the western sciences in all of the principal cities of the country. According to the wording of one clause in the general instructions the reason for this is that "China, in order to keep herself on terms of equality and in touch with the great powers of Europe, must educate the masses and encourage the inventive genius and foreign learning among her people, together with that love of country and home, and that devoted patriotism, which are so conspicuously ingrained in the hearts of those who have studied such language and such sciences."

TO PREVENT COLLISIONS AT SEA.

New Rules to Go Into Effect July 1, by Proclamation of the President.

The President has issued a proclamation fixing July 1 next as the date for the taking effect of the new rules agreed on by the leading maritime Nations for the prevention of collisions at sea. The twenty-two Nations participating control 24,800,000 tons of merchant shipping and practically all the naval vessels of the world except those of Turkey and Greece. The Nations which have not yet indorsed the agreement control only 780,000 tons.

Hitherto Great Britain has first formulated rules for the guidance of her own merchant fleets, and then, at her request, other Nations have adopted them. The new rules are known as the Washington rules, and are the result of the International marine conference held here in October, 1889, on invitation of the United States, at which twenty-eight Nations were represented. The new code to prevent collisions, promulgated in the proclamation, was probably promulgated simultaneously by most of the maritime States.

Annoyed by Wolves.

Farmers around Vermillion, South Dakota, are annoyed by wolves and are complaining about it. In Wisconsin, near Superior, the Chippewa Indians are slaughtering wolves at $10 a scalp.

Boston's Unenviable Record.

More than 31,000 persons were arrested in Boston last year for drunkenness.

HOUSEHOLD MATTERS.

HOME MADE LYE.

Lye is an excellent thing to keep on hand for scrubbing. To make it, dissolve a box of potash in hot water. Let it settle and drain off in a jug. A spoonful or two of this to a bucket of water makes an excellent scrubbing mixture.

CLEAR STARCHING.

Clear starching is accomplished in this way to the best advantage: Wash the articles in three waters, dry them and dip them in a thick starch previously strained through muslin. Squeeze them, shake them gently and again hang them up to dry. When dry dip them twice or thrice in clear water, squeeze them, spread them on a linen cloth, roll them up in it and let them lie an hour before ironing them. A small piece of white wax added to the starch prevents the iron from sticking and gives a glossy surface to the material.

CARRIAGE ROBES AND BLANKETS.

Cheap and common looking carriage robes and blankets are by no means attractive; but good ones involve a considerable expenditure, and one which everybody is not able to make. A very tolerable and comfortable lap robe is made of denim, lined and caught down to the lining. One of the most comfortable of robes is of denim, made double and with an interlining of heavy table felt. The two outsides and the lining are sewed together the middle, and as the owner's monogram is embroidered in the middle, and a small device in each corner, the fabrics stay together. The denims are made thoroughly water repellent, and the lining is by this means kept dry and in good order. Such a blanket is warmer than anything except fur, and, for the cost, is one of the prettiest of all articles of its sort. It is bound with dark, fancy braid, and neatly stitched, and is not only handsome and useful, but durable, economical and thoroughly practical.—New York Ledger.

AIR AND WATER IN THE SICK ROOM.

Don't allow the temperature to go above seventy-five degrees—seventy is better. If the patient is cold, use plenty of blankets, hot water bottles, etc., but do keep the temperature down and allow him fresh air. It is hard for a well person to endure vitiated air, much less an invalid. Lower the top sash a little, and every few hours cover the patient, head and all, with an extra blanket, and open the windows, for several minutes, until the air is sweet; when the chill is off, or rather the new air is warmed, remove the blanket; he will get no cold from this freshening.

Unless for any particular reason the doctor forbids it, allow the invalid all the water he wants to drink (only in small quantities, in a fever); or if he prefers, give him cracked ice to hold in his mouth. I endured untold agonies of thirst years ago while suffering from catarrhal fever. The water was doled out a teaspoonful at a time and always with "the chill taken off;" how I did long for one good draught! We are intensely grateful to advanced science for discovering, although late in the day, that a fever patient may have all the cold water she wishes, only in moderate quantities.—New England Homestead.

TESTED RECIPES.

Rusk—Two tea-cups of light bread sponge, one cup of sugar, half-cup of butter, two beaten eggs, flour enough to make a stiff dough. Let rise and mold into high biscuit, let rise again, sift sugar and cinnamon over the top and bake.

Creamed Carrots — Scrape four medium-sized carrots, wash them and slice very thin; boil until tender in slightly salted water, drain, add a lump of butter rolled in flour, one-half cup of sweet cream, salt and pepper to taste. Let boil up and serve hot.

Iced Apples—Pare and core a dozen large apples, fill with sugar and a little butter and nutmeg; bake until nearly done, let cool and remove to another plate if it can be done without breaking. Ice tops and sides with icing as for cake, brown slightly and serve with cream.

Chicken Pot Pie—Cut up a chicken and stew until done. Season with pepper, salt, butter and thicken the gravy with a little flour rubbed smooth in cold water. Stir up dough as for biscuit, roll thin, cut in small squares and drop into the gravy. Let boil fifteen minutes.

Cocoanut Pie—One pint of rich sweet milk, one and one-half tablespoonfuls of corn starch, four tablespoonfuls sugar, the yolks of two eggs and three tablespoonfuls of prepared cocoanut. Bake in one crust covering with a meringue made of the whites of the two eggs, sweetened and flavored to taste.

Hickory Nut Macaroons—Take meats of hickory nuts, pound fine and mix with ground spice; make the frosting as for cake, stir in enough of the spiced meats to make convenient to handle; flour the hands and make the mixture into balls the size of a nutmeg, lay them on buttered tins, giving them room to spread; bake in a quick oven.

Golden Cream Cake—Cream one cup of sugar and one-fourth cup of butter, add one-half cup of sweet milk, the beaten whites of three eggs, one and one-half cups of flour with one and one-half teaspoonfuls of baking powder sifted through it. Bake in layers between which spread a cream made of the yolks of the eggs, one cup of sugar and two tablespoonfuls of thick sweet cream, beaten together until very light. Flavor cake and cream with vanilla.

Spiced Beef—Take four or five pounds of lean, fresh beef, place in a kettle and cover well with cold water. Let it come slowly to the boiling point, then season to taste with salt, pepper, mace, cloves and allspice whole. Let simmer slowly until it is all in shreds, if necessary add boiling water and watch closely that it does not burn. When done pick out any whole pieces of spice and turn it into a tin dish or mold and press hard. When perfectly cold turn out on a platter and garnish with cold sliced eggs, lemon or parsley.

The Philadelphians are very fond of snails as a table delicacy.

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

SUNDAY'S DISCOURSE BY THE NOTED DIVINE.

Subject: "The Song of the Drunkards."

TEXT: "I was the song of the drunkards"—Psalms lxix., 12.

Who said that? Was it David or was it Christ? It was both. These Messianic Psalms are like a telescope. Pull the instrument to a certain range, and it shows you an object near by. Pull it to another range, and it will show you objects far away. David and Christ were both, each in his own time, the song of the drunkards. Holiness of doctrine and life always did excite wicked merriment. Although David had fully reformed and written a psalmody in which all subsequent ages have sobbed out their penitence, his enemies preferred to fetch up his old career and put into metric measures sins long before forgiven. Christ who committed no sin, was still more the subject of unholy song, because the better one is the more iniquity hates him. Of the best being whose voice ever moved the air or whose foot ever touched the earth it might be said:

The byword of the passing throng,
The ruler's scoff, the drunkard's song.

The earth fitted up for the human race, in congratulation the morning stars sang a song. The Israelitish army safe on the bank of the Red Sea and the Egyptians clear under the returned water, Moses sang a song. One of the most important parts of this great old book is Solomon's song. At the birth of our Lord the Virgin Mary and old Simeon and angelic prima donnas in hovering clouds sang a song. What enrichment has been given to the world's literature and enjoyment by the ballads, the canticles, the discants, the ditties, the roundelays, the epics, the lyrics, the dithyrambs! But my text calls attention to a style of song that I think has never been discoursed upon. You sometimes hear this style of music when passing a saloon, or a residence in which dissipation is ascendant, or after you have retired at night you hear it coming out of the street from those who, having tarried long at their cups, are on their way home—the ballad of the inebriate, the serenade of the alcoholized, or what my text calls the song of the drunkards.

For practical and saving and warning and Christian purposes I will announce to you the characteristics of that well-known cadence mentioned in my text. First I remark that the song of the drunkards is an old song. Much of the music of the world and of the church is old music. First came the music of percussion, the clapping cymbal, which was suggested by a hammer on an anvil, and then the sighing of the wind across the reeds suggested the flute, and then the strained sinews of the tortoise across its shell suggested the harp. But far back of that, and nearly back as far as the moral collapse of our first parentage is the song of the drunkards. That tune was sung at least 4243 years ago, when, the deluge past, Noah came out of the ark, and, as if disgusted with too much prevalence of water, he took to strong drink and staggered forth, for all ages the first known drunkard. He sounded the first note of the old music of inebriacy. An Arab author of A. D. 1310 wrote: "Noah, being come out of the ark, ordered each of his sons to build a house. Afterward they were occupied in sowing and in planting trees, the pippins and fruits of which they found in the ark. The vine alone was wanting, and they could not discover it. Gabriel then informed them that the devil had desired it, and, indeed, had some right to it. Hereupon Noah summoned him to appear in the field and said to him: 'Oh, accursed! Why hast thou carried away the vine from me?' 'Because,' replied the devil, 'it belonged to me.' 'Shall I part it for you?' said Gabriel. 'I consent,' said Noah, 'and will leave him a fourth.' 'That is not sufficient for him,' said Gabriel. 'Well, I will take half,' replied Noah, 'and he shall take the other.' 'That is not sufficient yet,' responded Gabriel. 'He must have two-thirds and thou one, and when thy wine shall have boiled on the fire until two-thirds are gone the remainder shall be assigned for thy use.'" A fable that illustrates how the vine has been misappropriated.

Again, this song of the drunkards is an expensive song. The Sontags and the Parepa Rosas and Nilssons, and the other renderers of elevated and divine solos received their thousands of dollars per night in coliseums and academies of music. Some of the people of small means almost pauperized themselves that they might sit a few evenings under the enchantment of those angels of sweet sounds. I paid $7 to hear Jenny Lind sing when it was not very easy to afford the $7. Very expensive is such music, but the costliest song on earth is the drunkard's song. It costs ruin of body. It costs ruin of mind. It costs ruin of soul. Go right down among the residential streets of any city and you can find once beautiful and luxurious homesteads that were expended in this destructive music.

The lights have gone out in the drawing room, the pianos have ceased the pulsation of their keys, the wardrobe has lost its last article of appropriate attire. The Belshazzarean feast has left nothing but the broken pieces of the crushed chalices. There it stands, the ghastliest thing on earth, the remnant of a drunkard's home. The costliest thing on earth is sin. The most expensive of all music is the song of the drunkards. It is the highest tariff of Nations—not a protective tariff, but a tariff of doom, a tariff of woe, a tariff of death. This evil whets the knives of the assassins, cuts the most of the wounds of the hospital, makes necessary most of the almshouses, causes the most of the ravings of the insane asylum, and puts up most of the iron bars of the penitentiaries. It has its hand to-day on the throat of the American republic. It is the taskmaster of Nations, and the human race crouches under its anathema. The song of the drunkards has for its accompaniment the clank of chains, the chattering teeth of poverty, the rattle of executioner's scaffold, the creaking door of the deserted home, the crash of shipwrecks and the groans of empires. The two billion twenty million dollars which rum costs this country in a year, in the destruction of grain and sugar, and the supporting of the paupers, and the invalids and the criminals which strong drink causes, is only a small part of what is paid for this expensive song of the drunkards.

Again, this song of the drunkards is a multitudinous song—not a solo, not a duet, not a quartet, not a sextet, but millions on millions are this hour singing it. Do not think that alcoholism has this field all to itself. It has powerful rivals in the intoxicants of other Nations—hasheesh and arrack, and pulque and opium, and quavo and mastic and wedro. Every Nation, barbaric as well as civilized, has its pet intoxicant. This song of the drunkards is rendered in Chinese, Hindoo, Arabian, Assyrian, Persian, Mexican—yea, all the languages. All zones join it. No continent would be large enough for the choir gallery if all those who have this libretto in their hands should stand side by side to chant the international chorus. Other throngs are just learning the eight notes of this deathful music, which is already mastered by the orchestras in full voice under the batons in full swing. All the musicians assembled at Dusseldorf, or Berlin, or Boston peace jubilee, rendering symphonies, requiems or grand marches of Mendelssohn or Wagner, or Chopin or Handel, were insignificant in numbers as compared with the innumerable throngs, hosts besides hosts, gallery above gallery, who are now pouring forth the song of the drunkards.

Years ago, standing before a bulletin board in New York on the night of a Presidential election day, as the news came in and the choice of the American people was finally announced there were people in the streets who sang roistering and frivolous songs. But in the street one man, in deep, strong, resonant voice, started, to the tune of "Old Hundred," "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," and soon all up and down the street the voices joined in the doxology. May God speed the day when the song of rescue and salvation shall drown with an overwhelming surge this mighty song of the drunkards!

Notice that the second noun of my text is in the plural. Not "drunkard," but "drunkards." It would be dull work to sing that song solitary and alone. It is generally a chorus. They are in groups. On that downward way there must be companionship. Here and there is a man so mean as always to drink alone, but generous men, big hearted men, drinking at bar or in restaurant or in clubhouse, feel mortified to take the beverage unaccompanied. There must be some one with whom to click the rim of the glasses, some one's health to propose, some sentiment to toast. There must be two, and still better if four, and still better if six, to give zest to the song of the drunkards. Those who have gone down could mention the name of at least one who helped them down. Generally it is some one who was a little higher up in social life or in financial resources. Our friend felt flattered to have an invitation from one of superior name. Each one drank not only when he felt like it, but when the other felt like it. Neither wanted to seem lacking in sociality when he was invited. So 100,000 men every year are treated into hell. Together are they manacled of evil habit, together they travel toward their doom, together they make merry over the cowardice and Puritanical sentiment of those who never indulge, together they join their voices in the song of the drunkards. If the one proposes to stop, the other will not let him stop. When men are getting down themselves, they do not want their associates to turn back. Those who turn back will be the scoff and caricature of those who keep on, and there will be conspiracy to bring them back to the old places and their old environment, and so have them renew the song of the drunkards.

Again, the song of the drunkards is easily learned. Through what long and difficult drill one must go to succeed as an elevated and inspiring singer! Emma Abbott, among the most eminent cantatrices that ever enchanted academies of music, told me on ocean ship's deck, in answer to my question, "Whither are you bound?" "I am going to Berlin and Paris to study music." "What!" I said. "After all your world renowned successes in music, going to study?"

Then she told me through what hardships, through what self denials, through what almost killing fatigues, she had gone in order to be a singer, and that when in her earlier days a great teacher of music had told her there were certain notes she could never reach, she said, "I will reach them," and through doing nothing else but practice for five years she did reach them. Oh, how many heroes and heroines of musical achievement! There are songs which are easy to hear, but most difficult to render. When Handel, with a new oratorio, entered a room where a group of musicians had assembled and said, "Gentlemen, you all read music?" They said, "Yes, we play in church." "Very well," said the great composer. "Play this. But the performance was so poorly done Handel stopped his ears and said: "You play in church! Very well, for we read the Lord is long suffering, of great kindness and forgiving of iniquity, transgression and sin. But you shall not play for me." Pure music, whether fingered on instrument or trilled from human lips, is most difficult. But one of the easiest songs to learn is the song of the drunkards. Anybody can learn it. In a little while you can touch the highest note of conviviality or the lowest note of besottedness. Begin moderately, a sip here and a sip there. Begin with claret, go on with ale and wind up with cognac. First take the stimulant at a wedding, then take it at meals, then take it between meals, then all the time keep your pulse under its stealthy touch. In six months the dullest scholar in this Apollyonic music may become an expert. First it will be sounded in a hiccough. After awhile it will be heard in a silly ha, ha! Further on it will become a wild whoop. Then it will enable you to run up and down the five lines of the musical scale infernal. Then you will have mastered it—the song of the drunkards.

I have been at a concert which went on for two hours and a half, and many people got up and left because it was too long. But ninety-five per cent. of those who are singing the drunkards' song will to the last breath of their lungs and the last beat of their hearts keep on rendering it, and the galleries of earth and heaven and hell will stay filled with the astounded spectators. It is such a continuous and prolonged song that one feels like making the prayer which a reformed inebriate once made: "Almighty God! If it be Thy will that man should suffer, whatever seemeth good in Thy sight impose upon me. Let the bread of affliction be given me to eat. Take from me the friends of my confidence. Let the cold hut of poverty be my dwelling place and the wasting hand of disease inflict its painful torments. Let me sow in the whirlwind and reap in the storm. Let those have me in derision who are younger than I. Let the passing away of my welfare be like the fleeting of a cloud, and the shouts of my enemies like the rushing of waters. When I anticipate good, let evil annoy me. When I look for light, let darkness come upon me. Let the terrors of death be ever before me. Do all this, but save me, merciful God! save me from the fate of a drunkard. Amen!"

You see this sermon is not so much for cure as for prevention. Stop before you start, if you will forgive the solecism. The clock of St. Paul's cathedral struck thirteen one midnight, and I so saved the life of a sentinel. The soldier was arrested and tried for falling asleep at his post one midnight. But he declared that he was awake at midnight, and in proof that he was awake he said that he had heard the unusual occurrence of the clock striking 13 instead of 12. He was laughed to scorn and sentenced to death. But three or four persons, hearing of the case, came up in time to swear that they, too, heard the clock strike 13 that same midnight, and so the man's life was spared. My hearer, if you go on and thoroughly learn the drunkards' song, perhaps in the deep midnight of your soul there may sound something that will yet effect your moral and eternal rescue. But it is a risky "perhaps." It is exceptional. Go ahead on that wrong road, and the clock will more probably strike the 12 that closes your day of opportunity than that it will strike 13, the sound of your deliverance.

A few Sabbaths ago on the steps of this church a man whom I had known in other years confronted me. At the first glance I saw that he was in the fifth and last act of the tragedy of intemperance. Splendid even in his ruin. The same brilliant eye, and the same courtly manners, and the remains of the same intellectual endowments, but a wreck. I had seen that craft when it plowed the waters, all sails set and running by true compass; wife and children and friends on board, himself commanding in a voyage that he expected would be glorious, putting into prosperous harbors of earth and at last putting into the harbor of heaven. But now a wreck, towed along by low appetites, that ever and anon run him into the breakers—a wreck of body, a wreck of mind, a wreck of soul. "Where is your wife?" "I do not know." "Where are your children?" "I do not know." "Where is your God?" "I do not know." That man is coming to the last verse of that long cantata, that protracted threnody, that terrific song of the drunkards.

But if these words should come—for you know the largest audience I reach I never see at all—I say if these words should come, though at the ends of the earth, to any fallen man, let me say to him: Be the exception to the general rule and turn and live, while I recall to you a scene in England, where some one said to an inebriate as he was going out of church where there was a great awakening, "Why don't you sign the pledge?" He answered, "I have signed it twenty times and I will never sign it again." "Why, then," said the gentleman talking to him, "don't you go up and kneel at the altar, amid those other penitents?" He took the advice and went and knelt. After awhile a little girl, in rags and soaked with the rain looked in the church door, and some one said: "What are you doing here, little girl?" She said: "Please, sir, I heard as my father is here. Why, that is my father up there kneeling now." She went up and put her arms around her father's neck and said: "Father, what are you doing here?" And he said: "I am asking God to forgive me." Said she: "If He forgives you, will we be happy again?" "Yes, my dear." "Will we have enough to eat again?" "Yes, my dear." "And will you never strike us again?" "No, my child." "Wait here," said she, "till I go and call mother." And soon the child came with the mother, and the mother, kneeling beside the husband, said: "Save me too! Save me too!"

And the Lord heard the prayer at that altar, and one of the happiest homes in England is the home over which that father and mother now lovingly preside. So, if in this sermon I have warned others against a dissipated life, with the fact that so few return after they have once gone astray, for the encouragement of those who would like to return I tell you God wants you to come back, every one of you, and to come back now, and more tenderly and lovingly than any mother ever lifted a sick child out of a cradle, and folded it in her arms, and crooned over it a lullaby and rocked it to and fro, the Lord will take you up and fold you in the arms of his pardoning love.

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in his justice,
Which is more than liberty.

Forest Fires in New York.

Forest fires have destroyed 49,000 acres of timber in New York State in the past three years.

RELIGIOUS READING.

LORD ALWAYS PRESENT.

Not a day of the new year, not an hour, but is in the hand of the Lord. And if the Lord is our Friend, whatever the year may bring will be good to us; not pleasant, perhaps, but good; we can depend on that. Sometimes it is necessary for us to sit in the school of suffering; we all have to go to school there now and then; even our Lord has sat there before us. But the lessons we must learn there will be only such as the Master appoints. Disappointment, to the Christian, is his appointment. Like a stout staff in the hand of a traveler, we may take hold of the assurance that "as thy days so shall thy strength be." It is not unnatural that in the hearts of some there should arise anxiety as they look out into another year. . . . But how tenderly has Jesus answered the fears of our hearts by pointing to the flowers; He will clothe you. God feeds the birds; He will feed you and your little ones. The little sparrows in our streets are not beyond God's care; much less are we. . . . The days of the new year—if God shall give you the whole year—shall bring you only what the Lord appoints. He metes out the days and He metes out the strength we may trust Him that the measure shall be equal. As you set out upon this year's journey, God is willing that you should take His hand—His strong hand, the hand that fashioned the world, that formed the stars, that holds the sceptre of the universe. As a little child puts its hand in his father's and walks carefreely his side, so if you put your feeble hand into the strong hand of your Heavenly Father, you shall walk in peace.—Rev. T. J. Kommers, in Christian Intelligencer.

EACH NEW YEAR.

Each New Year is a milestone showing we are nearer the end, a reminder that whatever is needed to be done or thought of for ourselves, or whatever kindness we would show our fellow-travelers, must be proffered promptly, for the opportunity is rapidly hasting away. But the thoughts of the New Year need not be sad or depressing. They surely should not be so for the Christian. All his best things lie before him, for "the path of the just . . . shineth more and more unto the perfect day." St. Paul's courageous motto is good for us at the beginning of 1897: "Forgetting those things which are behind . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In such a spirit let us begin another year—leaving what we cannot undo, sorry though we may be for our shortcomings and foolishness, with Him who, by divine alchemy passing human thought, is able to make "all things" work for good to them that love him; taking up the new opportunities with a stronger purpose and more loving reliance upon the wisdom and strength which will be given liberally if we ask; remembering that the time grows short in which to be good and true, kind and loving to the friends who are around us in this earthly life. "Only once will we pass this way."—Christian Advocate.

ALL NATURE OBEYS GOD'S LAWS—MAN ONLY DISOBEDIENT.

"We are told that without faith it is impossible to please God, and you will find that it is impossible to please God without obedience. Did you ever notice that everything except the heart of man obeys God? If you look right through history you will find that this is true. In the beginning God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. 'Let the waters bring forth,' and the waters brought forth abundantly. One of the proofs that Jesus Christ is God is that He spoke to nature, and nature obeyed Him. At one time He spoke to the sea, and the sea [illegible] nized and obeyed him. He spoke to [illegible] tree and instantly it withered and die[illegible] obeyed literally and at once. He spo[illegible] the devils and the devils fled. He spok[illegible] the grave, and the grave obeyed him [illegible] gave back its dead. But when he speaks [illegible] man, man will not obey him; that is w[illegible] man is out of harmony with God, and [illegible] will never be different until men learn to obey God. God wants obedience, and he will have it, or else there will be no harmony."—D. L. Moody.

BE PATIENT.

To wait on a sick bed, or to wait by one, is a sore trial for the sufferer in body or in mind. And to wait at a distance, for the slow passage of the h