

**THE GATEMAN.**

At the railroad crossing the gateman stands.  
Through the crank in his faithful hands,  
Bent and wrinkled, yet strong and true  
To the duty only 'tis his to do.  
The sun may shine, or the clouds may  
frown,  
July be torrid, December cold,  
Yet there, in his coat of well-worn brown,  
He guards the way for the young and old,  
Keen eye with steady, tireless brain  
A watch for the loquacious, outland train,  
He signals the passage of each through  
the town,  
As with "Tinkles" and "Tinkles" the gates  
go down.  
How the waiting children caper and dance,  
And the pertious horses curvet and prance!  
How the servant-maids, upon errands bent,  
View the intruders with admiration—  
While heavy car and elegant coach  
Bumble slow on the noisy rails,  
And on the busy one's tiny vanguard  
With the waving purple and yellow  
As, smiling, of duty's stern command,  
In spite of impatient, or frowny frown,  
The gateman puts to the crank his hand,  
And steadily turning the gates go down.  
Oh! I would that on every road to-day,  
Wherever, and its train holds right of way,  
Some gateman as ready as this might stand,  
Turning the crank in his faithful hand—  
That ever when danger should threaten  
these  
Whose path must cross the enticer's  
track,  
Some gate-tinkler might interpose,  
And hold from disgrace the weak ones  
back—  
Some outguard be built for unwary feet,  
To halt them midway in the perilous street,  
And to signal to each, spite of fret or  
frown,  
"Stand back for your life, while the gates  
are down!"  
—Marcella M. Selman, in Youth's Compan-  
ion.

**The Hole in the Cliff**

By T. C. HARBAUGH.

IN THE warm summer sunshine that brightened a very humble-looking Cornish home a ruddy-faced boy of 16 sat overhauling a bird-hunter's rope. So intent was he with his work that he did not notice the ill-dressed figure that slouched down the narrow road toward him, and paused at last a few feet away to watch him with a pair of jealous eyes.

"Mending your rope, are you?" suddenly asked the man.

The boy looked up and for the first time saw the evil-looking speaker.

"Yes, Sid, I'm strengthening a few strands," answered the ropemaker. "The sharp rocks out, you know, and one wants everything safe when he goes down."

"There's something better than egg-hunting in the wind just now," said Sid Sloper, the ragged fellow.

"What is it?"

"They've just posted a reward for information that will lead to the detection of the smugglers. Three hundred pounds ain't to be picked up every day, boy, and it's better than going down over the cliffs after gulls' eggs."

The Cornish youth, who was accounted the most successful egg-hunter along the coast, made no reply, but dropped his eyes to his work and did not look up again for a few moments.

When he raised his eyes, Sid Sloper was gone, and he thought he saw the ragged man's retreating figure vanish down the road, but was not sure.

"Egg-hunting is profitable enough for me," thought the boy, "but I would not mind earning the £300. Sid Sloper's word is to be taken with a good deal of allowance, though the coast guard is very anxious to catch the smugglers, and the reward may be out."

The village mentioned by Sloper, the vagabondish Cornishman, was situated a good mile from the coast. It was farther away than the home of Brant Burton, the young egg-hunter, and as the boy had not been there for some days, he did not altogether disbelieve the man's statement about the reward.

The sun was hanging very low in the west, when, provided with a basket and a rope, he set out for the Cornish cliffs. He had discovered a hole right above a narrow ledge of rock which promised good results, and the number of birds that whirled about the place tempted the boy as he had not been tempted before of late.

There existed among the egg-hunters of Cornwall a most intense jealousy. They would watch one another like paid spies, and some even went so far as to cut the ropes hanging over the cliffs, leaving the poor bird-nester in a terrible predicament.

Brant Burton, the gull-hunter, had resolved to investigate the opening in the cliff about sundown when there was not so much danger of his being seen; and when he reached the edge of the wall the sun was disappearing, a ball of fire, beneath the waves of the channel.

Paying out his rope, he made one end fast to a jagged rock near the brink of the cliff, and with his basket strapped to his back, swung himself over the wall.

It was not his first descent on a similar mission. He always kept a cool head and steady hands on such occasions, for beneath him, hundreds of feet sometimes, boiled the whirlpools of the English channel.

This time his good rope did not fail him, for after a brisk descent he stood on a scanty ledge of rock with the darkening sky far above and the wild waters below.

The hole in the cliff was large enough to admit a man, though it had not looked so from his point of observation. To the Cornish boy it seemed more than a mere rendezvous for gulls.

All at once something fell past the boy, and the next moment to his horror he discovered that his rope had vanished!

For a moment he stood paralyzed by the awful catastrophe, for he could realize fully what it meant.

After awhile he went to the very edge of the ledge and looked up. He could not catch a glimpse of a dangling cord of any kind, and a hundred feet below the white waves of the channel dashed against the foot of the wall.

His situation was terrible.

"If this is your work, Sid Sloper, may Heaven forgive you!" exclaimed the young egg-hunter. "I've caught you following me before now, for you don't want anybody to make a few shillings but yourself."

As far as his vision could reach, Brant Burton saw nothing but the tumbling white caps of the ocean. The sun had gone down, and the surface of the water was fast losing its brilliant hues in the shadows of descending night.

The roar of the breakers came up to the boy on the narrow rock and filled his heart with terror. A few late gulls whirled before his eyes, as if to mock his fleeting hopes, and darkness came down over the scene.

The young egg-hunter of Cornwall was terribly imprisoned.

It was some time before he ventured to investigate the hole in the cliff. The loss of his rope had taken his mind from everything else.

When he did turn into the dark place and struck a match along the rough wall, a most astonishing discovery rewarded him. He seemed to have been suddenly transported into a veritable smugglers' paradise.

On every side were the fruits of many a night's foray along the coast—boxes containing silks and laces, and contraband merchandise of every description.

The cave was provided with natural shelves, which were stored with goods, and costly furniture existed everywhere in profusion.

If the Cornish boy had found the smugglers' cave with his good rope waiting for him over the cliff, he would have rejoiced, but he was imprisoned where his life was in imminent danger.

A return of the smugglers, luckily for the young hunter at that time absent, would pretty soon put an end to his career of cliff-climbing, and the little home behind the waters would never know his fate.

Brant Burton had no doubt that he had discovered the cave of the very men for whose detection the government had offered a large reward. No person had dreamed that it had existed in that vicinity, and the interior of the cavern in the cliff told the boy that it had been used for evil purposes a long time.

After awhile the moon came up and silvered the rolling waves of the channel. Its light fell against the foot of the cliff, and showed the boy at intervals the coast pathway between the sea and the rock.

Armed with a coil of rope which he had found among the smugglers' goods, he leaned over the ledge and tried to measure the distance between him and the water. It was uncertain work in the moonlight, but he did the best he could.

There was but one hope of escape, and that lay along the foot of the cliff, which was slippery and washed by the tide.

The Cornish boy dropped the rope and saw it reach the rocks below.

A thrill of exultation took possession of his heart.

He fastened the other end of the rope to an iron staple in the cavern, and thrust into his bosom a piece of peculiar lace which he took from one of the boxes. He remembered having heard a coast guardsmen say that a certain kind of lace was being smuggled into Cornwall, and he believed he had found it.

When all was ready, the young gull-hunter again trusted his fortunes to a swaying rope—this time to one he had never before tested.

The following moment he was swinging between the cliff and the sea, going down hand over hand toward the surging tide.

When he touched the rocks beneath, he was forced to hug the wall, for the waves were at his very feet.

He shuddered when he thought that he would have to follow the narrow path for more than a mile before there was a break in the cliffs, but he nerved himself for the task and started off.

It proved to be the most perilous journey of his life. All the way he was compelled to hug the wall of rock, with the roaring surf inlaping at him. More than once he was caught, and barely saved himself by clinging to rocks that cut like knives.

At last Brant Burton reached the break in the Cornish wall. It was to

aim a gate of safety.

Springing forward, after a brief rest, he ran to the village and told his story to the constable of the coast guard. It was hard to believe, but his hands and the lace were proof enough.

That night half a dozen men went down over the cliff to the smugglers' cave, and when the thieves came back with more booty, every one fell into the hands of the law.

Sid Sloper had no idea when he cut the Cornish boy's rope that he was enriching Brant with £300, and when he found that his young rival had escaped, he left the country before the law could deal with him, and the village is not sorry that he has never returned.—Golden Days.

**A German Possibility.**

For our part, we hope Emperor William will compete for the America cup and enter the next race with a sort of German Shamrock. It would be an inspiring spectacle, thinks the Chicago Tribune, to see a magnificent yacht bearing the name of Das Kaiserliche-Koenigliche Gruene Kleeblatt in full chase for that cup.

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