

THE IRON HEART OF PETER STARK

How It Was Changed and He Found Content.

ONCE, in that part of Pennsylvania that now is bare and dusty, with sooty smoke rising out of tall chimneys from skyline to skyline, there was a rich farm of many acres owned by old Peter Stark.

Old Peter was a shrewd business man and he accumulated a comfortable fortune. He always sold his crops to better advantage than did his neighbors, and his possession of ample cash enabled him to buy more and more land at favorable times.

Yet with all his shrewdness and success Peter Stark never turned an unseeing eye or a deaf ear to any one in need. His purse and his house were always open, so much so that throughout that part of Pennsylvania he was known as "Soft-hearted Peter," and when people spoke of him he was called by that name much more often than by his real name.

He lived to be a very old man. One day he called his only son and said to him: "I shall die soon, and everything that I possess will be left to you. There will be no conditions, except one. I foresee great changes in the land. In years to come you may wish to sell all this which is yours now. Do so if you will. But promise that, whatever may come, you will never sell the ridge at the north, suffer the trees there to be harmed, or destroy the torrent that now feeds the brook running into the valley. And if trouble comes to you at last, as it must come to all of us, promise me that you will climb to the ridge and spend a whole day among the trees alone."

Young Peter promised, and soon afterward old Peter died. His son found that he had inherited not only his lands and wealth, but also his title. As the people had called his father, so they called him—"Soft-hearted Peter."

For some years young Peter lived on the farm, happy as any king; his father's blessing seemed to lie on all his undertakings, and men loved him as they had loved old Peter.

At last young Peter decided to go traveling to see the world. All the neighbors assembled to bid him farewell, and when he looked out of the window and saw men and women and children waving their hats and handkerchiefs the tears started to his eyes and he felt an impulse to jump off and remain among them. But just then he noticed that a passenger opposite was looking at him with a smile, so he settled back in his seat, ashamed for having shown his feelings so plain.

Before long the stranger looked at Peter and said: "I see that this is your first journey, is it?"

Now there was no reason at all why Peter should not be willing to admit that he had never traveled before, but somehow he hated to admit it. Besides, although the stranger was a handsome, elegantly dressed man, there was something about him that Peter didn't like. So he answered sulkily.

"Come, come," said the stranger. "Let us be friends. We both have far to go and we won't be all the more uncomfortable if we furnish a little company for each other."

Peter, who had already repented of his sulking, could not well refuse. And soon he was intensely interested in his companion's conversation, for the stranger had seen everything. He could tell of the Rocky Mountains and the Himalayas and the South Seas and the ice. So when he proposed to Peter that they should go to the world together, Peter assented eagerly.

They journeyed by railroad and ship for many months. They saw great cities and placid islands, wide plains and desert mountains. But most of all they saw cities for the stranger seemed to care for nothing else so much as to dive into crowded streets.

Peter, on the contrary, preferred the islands and the mountains. One night when they were in the hotel together, he told his companion so. "The great cities are beautiful and wonderful," said Peter, "but it grieves me to see the poor who are crowded in them, behind all the splendor."

"I will tell you what is the matter with you, Peter," said the stranger. "You are too soft-hearted. You waste money every day on beggars and orphans. You are too soft-hearted. You will never be able to buy any of the beautiful things that we have seen."

"I wonder if I am really too soft-hearted," thought Peter. "What would he think if he knew that they actually call me 'Soft-hearted Peter' at home?"

Day after day the stranger showed Peter more beautiful things and made him long for them. And whenever he observed that Peter felt the least bit unhappy because he couldn't get them, he would tell him again that he was too soft-hearted.

So at last Peter believed it. And one night he asked his companion how he could cure himself.

"Nothing easier than that," said his companion. "Tomorrow I will take you to a place where it can be done."

The next day they jumped into a train and went far into the hills, until Peter began to recognize the country and saw that they were going toward home. His soft heart leaped in his breast and the tears of joy came to his eyes.

"We will soon cure all that, Peter," said his companion, tapping him on the breast. And his eyes shone strangely like a cat's.

Not far from Peter's home they alighted from the train, and Peter's companion led him up the mountain side till they reached the black mouth of a great shaft that seemed to bore straight down into the earth.

"Step in," said his companion, pointing to the bucket. He leaped in himself and this bucket descended slowly, till all that could be seen far above was a little circle of daylight. Down it went, down, faster and faster, so that the rocky sides of the shaft, with the water streaming from them, seemed to be darting upwards past them.

Suddenly the darkness gave way to dazzling light and the bucket stopped. Peter stepped out and found himself in a huge vaulted chamber, all hung with glittering white crystals.

"Now," said the traveling companion, "we are at my home, and in a few mo-



THE MEMORIES CAME RUSHING ALL AROUND LIKE SWARMS OF WINGED THINGS.

menis you shall be cured of your soft heart."

He stepped to a niche in the rocks and returned with a finely polished, perfectly formed heart made of iron. "This," said he, "is the kind of heart to wear. I have one myself, and I have given it to many of the people whose wealth you admired so much. They are all much better off since they made the exchange."

"But how could you put it into my breast?" asked Peter, half frightened and half interested.

"Simple enough," was the reply. "This iron heart, as you can see, is hollow. I will simply press it into your breast and lock it around the absurd soft heart to prevent it from making a fool of you."

The next instant, before Peter could utter a cry, his companion grew tremendously in height, till his head reached the crystal-studded ceiling. With one immense hand, as big as a steamship, he seized the trembling Peter, and with the other, presto! he pressed the iron heart into his breast. Immediately Peter felt strangely cold and indifferent. He put his hand to his heart and found that there was none of the tumultuous beating that he used to feel. With a suspicion that he was quite new to him, he said:

"And what do you expect from me in exchange?"

"In exchange," cried the giant, with a roar of laughter that seemed to make the mountain tremble, "my dear Peter, I want nothing in exchange. Don't you know me yet? I am Mammon, the Master of the Underworld. It is quite enough for me to send you forth with an iron heart, for now you will do my work."

So saying, his great hand, on which Peter sat, holding tight to the little finger, which was big as a mast, lifted Peter rapidly up the shaft. He went so swiftly that his senses fled. When he recovered he found himself sitting in the waiting-room of the station; and he would have dismissed the affair as a strange dream if he had not touched his breast and found no heart-beat, no warmth, no sensation of any kind.

He felt none of the delight at being near home, such as he had felt the day before. But for all that, he wished to hasten there. For it had suddenly struck him that his affairs needed sharp attention.

The neighbors all crowded around him when he appeared, and Peter returned their greetings politely; but their delight at his return evoked no pleasure in his breast. He was glad when he reached his house and could escape them.

There he was met by the old steward, who still survived from his father's time. The old man tried to embrace Peter, whom he had carried in his arms when he was a baby. But Peter stepped aside and waited impatiently while the old man welcomed him home.

"Very well, very well!" said he at last, as the old steward wiped his eyes. "But let us get at the accounts."

They went at the accounts, and Peter demanded proofs of everything and criticized the expenditures, until the old man stooped sadly from the room. "I can see," said Peter to himself, "that a strong hand is needed here."

All the land around him soon felt the strong hand. Tenants who were in arrears were dispossessed. All who were

in debt to him were prosecuted. The country, which had been smiling and lovely as a garden in his father's time, became a barren waste, filled with smoking engines and derricks and railroad tracks, for Peter had found coal and iron on his land and was growing richer every day.

He felt no regret for the destruction that he was causing in the scenes of his youth. The iron heart in his breast took care of that.

Richer and richer grew Peter, till the papers printed pictures of him and told how many thousands of dollars went into his pockets with every breath that he drew. They told, too, about his steam yacht and his horses and his palaces. There was a very simple reason for that. He had none. Long ago the iron heart had made him weary of the sight of all those whom he had known and loved when he was a boy. Peter had loved her then with all his young heart, but now he saw her beauty only as he saw the beauty of other things that he purchased.

He asked her to marry him, and she looked at him with sad eyes and replied: "No, Peter, I cannot marry you. I loved you when you were the old 'Soft-Hearted Peter,' but not now."

That night Peter could not sleep. Since he had received his iron heart there had been nothing that he wanted that he did not obtain. So he felt angry and miserable by turns at being refused by her.

The next day he felt still more angry and miserable. And at last, when all his arguments failed to move her, he knew that he would never be satisfied with life if he did not win her.

Then he remembered what his father had said about the wooded ridge, and he had kept his promise implicitly about preserving the place, and it still stood, beautiful and serene and undisturbed, although it was surrounded by scores of mine shafts and derricks and busy towns. So he went there one calm morning and sat down by the side of the torrent, where he used to sit with his father when he was a boy.

He popped and sang among the tree branches overhead and fish splashed in silvery bubbles in the pools formed by the shining cascade. Peter began to think of the old days—something he had not thought of for a long time. As he sat on his heart, he remembered his father's kindly face and recalled how the old man used to sit by the torrent and speak of his plans. He thought of the childhood friend whom he used to know and who he had not looked at in years. He could remember clearly how his heart used to beat when he saw those whom he loved.

"If I could feel such a sensation once more," he thought, "my heart is a halcyon kind of thing, after all, and pretty stupid."

"If you give up your wealth," said a voice, "you shall have your soft heart again." It was his father's voice, but when Peter looked around nobody was to be seen.

"Give up my money?" said Peter. "Well, I should say not!"

The birds began singing again and the torrent splashed and the fish jumped. Every sound reminded Peter anew of some hour in his youth. Memories came rushing around like swarms of winged things. The birds hummed in his ears with the music of the Summer noons of long ago.

"I certainly was happy then," said Peter to himself. "I believe that a soft heart is not such a bad thing in many ways."

"Peter, Peter!" cried his father's voice again, "let your soft heart before it is too late."

"Hum!" said Peter. "I could never afford to pay the price. Whatever would I do without my wealth?"

Again the memories of far-off years came rushing around him. He saw himself wading with bare, brown feet in the brook, with never a care in the world. He saw his companions and himself wandering hand in hand through the woods, singing. All the faces of those whom he had known in childhood and in youth, in all the days before he got his iron heart, gazed down on him.

Suddenly they all vanished. The birds ceased their singing. The fishes ceased their leaping. A great silence brooded over the ridge, and Peter felt afraid. "I cannot bear this loneliness," he cried.

"Lonely you shall be now and forever," said his father's voice again, and now he was solemn and deep. "Lonely you shall be unless you regain your soft heart. Choose, Peter, for this is your last chance."

"I choose!" cried Peter. "Take away my wealth if it will take away the iron heart, too!"

Scarcely had he spoken when a blast of lightning flashed into the ground at his feet and he fell on his face. Before he could get up he was surrounded by a half shrouded in black clouds, the gigantic form of his traveling companion racing down the valley and beating the earth with an uproar of oak.

Crash! crash! boomed the thunder. The trees on the ridge bent this way and that in the tempest. Ancient rocks, loosened from their foundations on the mountain top, went hurtling to the valleys.

The torrent, beaten into a boiling pool, started over its banks and rushed down headlong in flood.

When Peter awoke he rubbed his eyes in amazement. The forest on the ridge seemed unchanged. But as far as he could see down the valley in the light of the dawn everything was altered. Not a shafthouse chimney, not a derrick, not a single one of his structures was left standing. Everything had been laid prostrate by the great storm.

But, wonderful to say, Peter never thought of the wealth that he had lost. His heart was beating fast and hot in his breast, and he cried:

"I had hoped that no one has been killed or hurt."

He rushed down the hill and hurried to the people who stood in crowds surveying the wreck. They told him that everybody had escaped, and that he need not condole with him on his losses.

"Loses!" said Peter, with the first joyful laugh that he had uttered in years. "I have gained more than a kingdom this night!"

The people thought that his brain was turned; but Peter didn't care. He went abroad, smiling, and sat with his friends as of old and petted the children. And if he was not rich in money any longer, he was the richer in a better possession, for the pretty girl married him.

He lived to be known again as "Soft-Hearted Peter," and to hear his son called "Soft-Hearted Peter," too.

The natives told the explorer that it was the hyenas that were the most dangerous of the forest. On one occasion, when camped in the midst of a lion-infested country, Dr. Smith and his followers built a zereba, which is a little inclosure of brush of such material as comes to hand. They made ready to spend the night watchfully, for they knew that lions were all about them.

Hearing a noise, Dr. Smith parted the bushes with which the entrance to the zereba had been filled, and saw three lions prowling about. When they saw the doctor they slunk off into the brush. But when night came down the lions returned, bringing a number of other lions with them, and began to sniff about the zereba so close that Dr. Smith, lying flat on the ground, with his rifle in his hands, and watching for an opportunity to get a shot, could feel the breath of the growing animals.

Just when it seemed as if the pack of lions was about to charge the zereba, their attention was diverted by an attack upon them by a number of hyenas which came growling and snarling out of the forest.

The hyenas attacked the lions with great fury and bravery. In the excitement of the fight the ordinary howl of the hyenas changed to a deep, loud roar, which Dr. Smith declares to be nearly equal in strength to the roar of the lion.

In this fight the lions were driven off. The natives told the explorer that it was no uncommon thing for the hyenas to attack the lions, and that as a rule the hyenas got the better of the encounter.

Lions in the Lake Rudolf region of Somaliland, according to the reports of explorers, are accustomed to hunt in packs—probably for protection against the hyenas.

STRANGE STORY OF A MAGIC MILL

It Explains Why Sea Water Is Always Salt.



AND UPON THE TURNING OF ANOTHER CRANK IT GROUND OUT A NUMBER OF TOYS.

ONCE upon a time there lived two brothers, one of whom was very poor and the other very rich. The rich brother had no children, but in the family of the poor brother there were many little mouths to feed. The rich brother could have helped his relatives, but he was mean and sordid and loath to part with any of his wealth. However, it was his wont to give his brother a ham for his dinner once a year.

One night the poor brother had started home with his ham, but he took the wrong road and had gone some distance before he realized that he was walking underground. When he passed an old man with a long, shaggy beard approached him.

"You have lost your way, I perceive," he said, "but your best course is to keep straight on, for you will come out presently to the road you forsook at the beginning of your journey. You will have to pass through the village where the dwarfs, the Hill People, live. They will be eager to buy your ham, but do not let them reach the bottom of the mountain. The little old hand-mill that stands around the corner of the main street."

No sooner had the poor brother entered the village than he was surrounded by a crowd clamoring for his ham, but he declined to exchange it for anything except the mill. As this mill had stood on the corner for years and had never done any good, they were willing enough to make the exchange.

When he reached home he found his wife and children awaiting him, but great was their disappointment when he in-

formed them that he had sold the ham. After the children had gone to bed, he produced the mill, and placing it upon the table, said:

"Grind away, and let us have food for dinner!"

The mill began grinding, and turned out bread and taxis, a turkey stuffed with chestnuts, a large pudding and a barrel of cider. On the turning of another crank it ground out a number of toys.

"Oh, husband," said the wife, "how wonderful to have such a dinner and how happy the children will be!"

"It will grind anything," said the husband, "but be discreet, for I do not wish our neighbors to know how it is managed."

Great was the joy in the poor brother's family next morning, and the next, and forever after, for the mill ground out everything needed for their comfort. Of course, its fame soon spread, and it was not long before the rich brother came to buy the mill to save labor in his household.

After some bargaining the poor brother let him have it for a bushel of gold, and the rich man walked away with his purchase.

When he reached home he announced his intention of preparing dinner for the men in the harvest fields, and bade his wife go out and superintend the workers in his stead.

"We shall have a fine dinner," he said, "such as you and the woman here are incapable of cooking. Do you start at once, for I am anxious to get it ready."

When he was ready to fill the dishes he placed the mill on the table and said: "Grind away and let us have some herrings and milk."

Immediately the mill began to grind and the herrings and milk began to flow until two big bowls were filled, but when he tried to check the flow it continued grinding.

He shouted lustily for more bowls, and presently for kegs; and finally as the floor was swimming he gave the mill a final wrench and rushed madly out of the door, pursued by a torrent of herrings and milk.

When he reached his brother's humble door he cried:

"For heaven's sake, take back that mill!" he screamed.

But the poor brother would not consent to do so until he had received an additional bushel of gold.

The poor brother built a beautiful house upon the shore of the sea and covered the roof with gold, so that it could be seen far away. One day the captain of a merchant vessel, on his way for a cargo of salt stopped to see the wonderful mill.

"Will it grind salt?" he asked.

"Certainly, it will grind salt as well as anything else."

The mill was brought out and tested, whereupon the captain purchased it for an enormous price, glad to escape the perils of a long voyage. But he neglected to find out how to stop it.

When the casks in the ship were filled he tried in every way to check the stream of salt, but it was of no use. The mill kept on grinding, the crew were obliged to take to the lifeboats. From these boats they saw the ship slowly sink under her weight of salt. Down, down she went, until she reached the bottom of the sea with the mill still on board.

And there it is grinding to this very day, and that is the reason sea water is salt.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF LITTLE JUMBO

The Adventures of an Elephant as Told by Himself.

Chapter V.

WHEN my mother was training me for life in the forest she warned me never to go to sleep during the day when I was alone.

Elephants sleep by day as well as by night, but whenever the natives, who prowl in the forest, only by day, find an elephant asleep they seek to capture him by tying his legs fast, and many a one has thus been made prisoner.

The great animals do not always lie down to sleep. They often stand and lean against a tree. Nearly all the big ones get their sleep in this way, as it is much trouble for them to get down and up again.

I told you in my last chapter that I was alone in the forest after having been badly bitten by a crocodile, and that I was traveling slowly along in search of other elephants when there came a very hot day.

After I had eaten breakfast and drunk my fill I lay down in the thick woods to rest for the day. In the early morning there were many animals moving about, but in the middle of the day everything became so quiet that I got sleepy.

It did not seem to me that there could be the least danger in my going to sleep for a couple of hours, and I finally closed my eyes and knew no more till mid-afternoon.

I was awakened so suddenly, and by such a great noise, that I was terribly frightened. I attempted to scramble up, but found my legs fast. All around me were natives, shouting and laughing, and I struggled to break my bonds and cried out in my fright a white man came up and called out:

"That will do, boys. He must have been very sound asleep, so let you tie him so stoutly. It surely is the dwarf elephant we have been looking for so long, and now I will give you the presents I promised."

I think there must have been a hundred natives. All set off after the white man, and I saw no more men till next morning.

Then three white men came with a big elephant. Of course, I did not know anything about the men then, but later on I came to understand that they belonged to a party which made it a business to capture wild beasts and animals for zoological gardens and circus shows.

You may guess that I had a hard time of it lying there all the afternoon and all the long night, but whatever I was going to do, that did not help the case. I had been made captive, and whether they were going to kill me or send me away across the seas I could not tell.

When the big elephant stood beside me I asked him what was to be done, and he replied:

"How foolish in you to go to sleep as you did. You will not be killed, but you will be sent away to a far-distant again, and never see these forests again."

"But I will fight to the death!" I exclaimed.

"You will do nothing of the kind. I am here to take you to the white men's camp, and if you do not so willingly I shall beat you well. I have been with these men for years, and have helped them to capture at least 30 wild elephants. They treat me well, and I do as they tell me."

"But why not let me escape to the forest?" I asked.

"They would punish me if I did, and then you are so headless that you would soon come to some bad end anyway. As soon as your legs are free you must get up and come along. If you go to acting badly I shall knock you about."

I wanted to rush off to fight, but I knew it was no use, and so I went quietly along. After a walk of three miles we arrived at the camp, and there I saw two other captive elephants, with two lions, three panthers, four buffaloes, seven wolves and many serpents.

after crossing a river he had got mired, and though other elephants did all they could to help him out it was not possible to get free.

He had been there two days when the white men and natives arrived and fastened ropes to him and lifted him out. When taken to camp he had refused all drink and had tried to kill one of the white men, and in return he had been punished severely.

"The best thing you can do is to be quiet," he said. "You will get all the food you can eat, and if we are sent away we must make the best of it. As for me, I should like to see other people and strange lands. Here in the forest we see nothing but the same old sights over and over again."

We were at the camp a full month before we moved, and during this time the men captured another elephant, two more buffaloes and several wolves.

As everybody spoke kindly to me, and as I got the best of food, I began to like the people around me and the new life I was living.

In my next chapter I shall have a thrilling adventure to tell you. (To Be Continued.)

The Lighting Power of the Firefly

The Smithsonian Institution, while making inquiries into the cheapest forms of producing light, experimented with Cuban fireflies, among other things. The insects were placed in the center of concave mirrors and the most delicate instrument in the Government observatory was employed to measure the amount of heat radiated by them.

A sperm candle was used for comparison and a flame spot from it which was just as big as the firefly was thrown into the mirror.

The instrument recorded the heat from the candle at once, but no movement was caused by the insect, although the instrument was so delicate that, had the firefly produced even as little as one-eighth thousandth part of the heat produced by the tiny spot from the candle it would have shown on the records.

It was different with light. Comparing the flame spot of the candle and the light from the insect, the instrument showed

the firefly gave one-eighth as much light as the candle, size for size. Compared with the full flame, it was found that the insect gave light amounting to one-sixteen thousandth part of a candle.

A Lohore Limerick.

— Dressed to slide down his pe's cellar-door
— But one day the door broke—
— You may think it a joke,
— But that youngster was awfully sore.

Solution of Last Sunday's Numerical Puzzle.

"The elephant" is the animal described by the 11 letters in last Sunday's paper.

Only Sometimes—Sparticus—Does that fountain pen of yours leak that way all the time? Smarticus—No; only when I have ink in it.—Baltimore American.



THEN THREE WHITE MEN CAME WITH A BIG ELEPHANT

NEW SERIES OF PICTURES TO PAINT BEGINS NEXT WEEK.

FROM EVERY STORY BOOK OF MINE I HAD THE BEST BOOK. PNEUMONITIS IS AN AWFUL THING EVEN FOR A BOY.