

My Narrow Escape.

I never told anybody how very, very near I was to death that night, just a year ago; but as I can now look and calmly recall each thought, each word, each act, I think I will write it down as a warning to all who may find themselves similarly circumstanced, hoping, with all my heart, that the number may be few.

In the first place, my name is Frederick Putnam. I am, and have been for the past ten years, the foreman and book-keeper of the large lumbering establishment of William Winston & Co., and hope to be for another decade, unless something better turns up. Mr. Winston is the resident partner and manager of the manufacturing part of the business. The other members of the firm, of which there are two, live in the city, at the foot of the lake, and attend to the sales of lumber, which we send them by vessels.

This is by far the largest share of what the mill earns although the amount of our sales directly from the mill, to supply the country to the west of us, is quite large.

Well, one cold, December evening, just as I was preparing for home, I heard footsteps on the creaking snow outside, and presently the office door flew open, as though some one in haste had given it a push, admitting a tall, stout, well-dressed man, with a small traveling-bag in one hand, and a shawl thrown over his arm.

I was alone, Mr. Winston having gone to the house some half an hour before, locking the safe, in which we kept our books and papers, and taking the key with him, as usual.

I had already closed the damper to the stove, put on my overcoat and was just in the act of turning down the lamp—but of course I waited.

"Good evening, sir," said the man, bustling up to the stove, and kicking the damper open with his right foot. "Has Winston gone to the house?"

"I answered that he had."

"When I was afraid of it,"

"I drew out his watch—a very fine one, I thought."

"Oh, Fred! are you sick? Let me call mother and the doctor! You are as white as a sheet!"

"No, no, Carrie?" I entreated. "There I am better now."

And I was better. I was strong, all at once—desperately strong. And what brought about this change? That simple receipt which I had in my pocket. Anderson had nothing to show that the money had been paid; and was not my unsupported word as good as his?

I was foolish enough to believe that I could brave it through, and I grew confident and quite easy at once.

"There, Carrie, I am much better now. The room was too warm I guess. So some sneak thief has dodged in and stolen my coat? Well, let it go. It was an old one, and now I'll have a better one."

"But was there nothing in the pocket-etc?" asked Carrie.

It is strange how suspicious guilt will make us. I really thought Carrie suspected me, and an angry reply was on the end of my tongue. I suppressed it, however, and uttered a falsehood instead.

"Nothing of consequence, Carrie. A pair of gloves and some other trifling notions."

"I am glad it is not worse, Fred. Now if you will wait just a moment, I will get you one of father's overcoats to wear home."

Thus equipped I left her. You may guess that my slumbers that night were not very sound, nor very refreshing. I never passed a more miserable night, and in the morning my haggard looks were the subject of remark.

Brigham, the Cave Dog.

A common yellow cur is the hero of this true story. William—a wag, as well as a frigate guide—explained to me the odd name given to the dog: "We call him Brigham—'cause he's young, you know!"

This creature is remarkable for but one thing, and that is his fondness for life below ground. He seems at home among the elves and gnomes, and appears to have no fear of darkness.

Jack, the old dog, with Brigham, the new one, will trot, side by side, as far as the Iron Gate. But there they part. Jack, as usual, returns to the hotel; but Brigham advances, pushing ahead of the guides, choosing his own path, digging now and then, yet always returning in safety to the light of the lamps.

Brigham and I became fast friends during my fortnight's stay at Mesmoth Cave last summer. The gentle dignity with which he sought to aid my underground researches was very amusing.

Brigham was a great favorite with the manager of the cave, who particularly warned us not to lose him; for it was feared the dog would be unable to find his way out again. Other curs that had been left behind invariably stayed in the place where they had become lost, not daring to stir, but yelping and howling till help came.

The dreaded accident happened at last. We went one day on what is called the Long Route, to the end of the cave, said to be nine miles from the entrance; and Brigham went with us. We left the main cave at the Giant's Coffin, by an arched way, leading among some pits, the most famous of which has long been known as the Bottomless Pit. My guide, however, measured it, and found that it was exactly one hundred and five feet deep. There are six pits in all at this place, two of them lately discovered. We named them Scylla and Charybdis—because, in trying to keep out of one, you are in danger of falling into the other. These we measured, finding them to be more than two hundred feet deep.

Brigham did not like the pits very well. It was only by much coaxing that we led him across the narrow bridge thrown over the Bottomless Pit. But, indeed, we all were glad to get away from that dangerous place.

We went through the "Fat Man's Misery," and entered River Hall, where there are several deep lakes. Presently we came to Echo river, about thirty feet deep, from twenty to two hundred feet wide, and three-fourths of a mile long. Getting into a small boat, we paddled our way ever the clear, cold water, watching the echoes from the steep, rocky walls, Brigham helping with some lively bawling. Presently, we landed on a nice sandy beach at the farther end.

Fear Brigham became very tired, and ceased less for the lovely arches of flower-like crystals than for some cozy nook where he might curl down for a nap. At length, after taking lunch with us in Washington Hall, he started in chase of a saw-saw, and probably availed himself of the chance to take his siesta. At all events, he disappeared, and made no answer to our calls.

"Perhaps he has gone ahead to Echo river," said I, "and is waiting for us there."

of its winding nature, as "The Cork-screw." We preferred this, because it saved a mile and a half of travel. Our four-footed friend, pursuing the fresh-scent, went, of course, up the Cork-screw. The opening is too irregular to be called a pit, or shaft. Yet it winds upward for a distance, vertically, of about one hundred and fifty feet; but fully five hundred feet, as one climbs, creeping through crevices, twisting through "anger-holes," and sealing confusion imaginable. Three ladders have to be mounted in threading this passage. One emerges, at last, on the edge of a cliff overlooking the main cave and down which the clammers to the level floor, where the road runs smoothly along to the Iron Gate, a quarter of a mile distant.

Only think of it! Through all this intricate and hazardous pass, where, without a guide, we should have found it difficult to make our way, even with lamps and maps of the cave, that yellow dog had safely gone alone! He offered no explanation of his proceedings, nor told us what motive prompted his independent explorations. But that was his affair, not ours. We honored him as a hero, and obtained for him, from the manager, Mr. Francis Klett, the freedom of the cave for the rest of his life.—[St. Nicholas for April.]

Marriage in Stamboul.

Without intelligent sympathy at home, forbidden all amusement and diversion out of doors, ignorant of boyish sports, even of riding, probably the Turkish lad falls into dissipation. For any kind of vice he finds liberty enough at Stamboul. No Christian have I ever met so bold, even in imagination, as to draw a picture of the dark places in that city. But several of these educated youths have assured me that the luxurious temptations of immorality in Stamboul—not Pasha or Gaiety—are unequalled in their net inconsiderable experience of Europe.

The state of society was revealed to me with rather startling force one day. I called upon a young Mohammedan whose English education had made him one of ourselves in all respects saving that he has not shaken his religious faith. He held in his arms a lovely child of two years old or so, who screamed with passion. A small Circassian boy, fair haired, blue eyed, was trying to distract her, but the apparition of the "Chelebi" was more successful.

The children were presently dismissed to the harem, and my friend observed: "I dread to think of that boy's departure. My baby has the temper of a little fiend, and only he can manage her."

Knowing the small Circassian to be a slave I asked why he was leaving.

"I must send him to Robert College soon," was the reply, "and get another play-fellow for the child."

Robert College is the American school where so many middle class youths are being educated—well educated, too, though the training is not in all respect the best.

I said: "The kindness of your people toward their slaves is well known to me, but I did not think it ran so far as to pay their expenses at college."

"He answered, laughing: 'Not as a rule, of course. But my intention is to marry those two if Ahmet turns out well. He is clever and well disposed. The missionaries will keep him honest, I hope.'

A Railroad Fifty Years Ago.

A friend of the Baltimore Sun at Clarkburg, W. Va., sends a clipping from the National Intelligencer of October, 1831, containing a description of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad by Mr. Gales, editor of the Intelligencer. The article makes curious reading as showing how impossible it is even to a man of superior intelligence, to forecast the possibilities of a great invention. It seems that the Washington editor made a trip to Ellicott's Mills in company with Dr. Gwynn, editor of the Baltimore Gazette, and George I. Brown, an officer of the railroad company, and in recounting his experience, confesses that "for celerity of transportation of persons the railroad possesses advantages over every other mode," though he is at the same time careful to warn the "general reader" that "as a great highway of commerce the canal is beyond comparison. Says Mr. Gales: 'We experienced in a very slight degree the jarring, which we have heard spoken of, in the motion of the car. It will require, to be sure, care to guard against accidents. For ourselves, we met with no accident of any sort. One of the cows, indeed, which we overtook, strolling or grazing along the edge of the road, cast a suspicious glance to ward it as the car rapidly passed her, which filled us with a momentary alarm lest she should attempt to cross our path. But, luckily, she forthwith took a direction from the road.'

The Washington editor was unable to conceive that any rational mortal would conceive that a speed of thirteen miles an hour, especially at night. He says: "We traveled in a large car drawn by one horse, carrying eight or ten persons, and capable, we suppose, of carrying thirty or forty. Indeed, the car was drawn with so much ease that we do not believe that had it been so loaded its progress would have been at all retarded by the additional weight of the load. In the distance, between Baltimore and Ellicott's Mills, the horse was changed once, going and coming. In going we did not accurately reckon the time, but, in returning, the whole distance of thirteen miles was performed in fifty-nine minutes—the limit to the speed being the capacity of the horse in trotting rather than the labor he was tasked to perform. The locomotive steam machine, in the train of which cars loaded with persons are occasionally drawn, as well as those loaded with the materials of commerce, is propelled at about the same rate, and might be propelled much more rapidly if it were desirable. But for our part we have no desire ever to be carried by any mode of conveyance more rapidly than at the rate of thirteen miles the hour. A much greater speed, we are satisfied, would be attended with considerable liability to accidents, and with no little injury to the road. Even at that speed the greatest care and circumspection are necessary, and we do not think we should feel entirely safe, under any circumstances, in traveling on a railroad at night at anything like that speed."

As a Washingtonian, Mr. Gales was interested in the canal, and, therefore, disposed to be skeptical about the new means of transportation. His regard for his entertainers leads him to say: "We have not expressed in higher terms than it merits our admiration of this stupendous undertaking of our neighbors. It is worthy of the public spirit of the Monumental City." But his doubts are great: "Whether the railroad will be a profitable undertaking; whether, besides its first cost, the continual necessary expense of repairs and keeping it in proper order will not absorb too large a portion of its receipts, are questions we shall not undertake to consider. Nor shall we here institute a comparison, which might be deemed invidious, between canal and railroad transportation of the heavier and bulky articles of commerce with reference to economy, accommodation and general adaptation to the wants of the country. In this particular we will imitate the courtesy of our Baltimore friend when he visited our canal and would not allow himself to say anything disparaging of it."

The front gate has always been the favorite lounging place of lovers. Philosophers who know nothing of the tender passion, except as they have studied it in books, have been at a loss to account for this fact. The front gate is an exposed situation. It is visible to all who pass along the street, and is in most cases commanded by front windows from which the father may at any time make observations. Why lovers should prefer the broad publicity of a gate in such a situation to the safe retirement of a seat under the shrubbery is something that science cannot find out. Nevertheless, this very publicity has its advantages in the eyes of the young people. An interview at the front gate has the air of an accidental meeting. The young man happens to be passing and the young woman happens at the same moment to be swinging on the gate. Thus the pair may meet and interchange vows and portable property without exciting remark on the part of casual observers. Then there is on the part of the young woman the opportunity of being seen in conversation with a desirable young man, a sight which she knows must fill the bosoms of other girls with envy and rage. The quiet seat under the shrubbery is all very well, but it is not always easy to explain the situation to an intruding maiden aunt, and its very privacy prevents the other girls from being tormented with jealousy.

Probably the rhythmic motion of the swinging gate has an attraction for a young girl at the period when she finds her life suddenly translated into poetry. As she waits for her lover she swings dreamily to and fro, keeping time with the measure of that delicious poem of Tennyson that she read last night and thought must have been written expressly in order to describe Charles Henry's passion for her. When she comes also to swing, and they both lean on the gate, which becomes a barrier strong enough to keep them from indiscreet demonstration of affection, and yet not high or broad enough to be a real separation between them. What do the philosophers know of these things that they should attempt to discuss "The Front Gate."

That the front gate is a defective piece of mechanism is known to thousands of young people. If a hot-tempered and

aggressive father suddenly approaches from the side where the young is improving his time, there is little chance of avoiding a painful scene. Mr. Tennyson, in his little fragment, entitled "The Gate," has pictured this danger with wonderful vividness and pathos:

"The lovers lean across the gate— And go not yet," she makes moan. The fierce far-bounding father comes— The swiftness on the gate alone— A still more serious defect in the modern gate is the fact that it is built without reference to the height of any particular young person. The average gate is perfectly suited to the height of the average young man and young woman, for when she stands on the lower bar her head is brought to the same level as his head, and conversation can thus be carried on without inconvenience. When, however, a very tall young man has to lean over a gate he must necessarily assume a position that is both ungraceful and uncomfortable, and the case of a tall young woman is even worse. Again, if both happen to be persons of very short stature, the gate becomes an actual and formidable barrier between them. They can only clasp hands through the bars or pickets of the gate, and few readers of Western journals can forget the fate of the small young man who had thrust both hands through a gate, and being temporarily unable to withdraw them was in that situation a helpless prey to a large and infuriated father.

A beneficent scientific journal has in its last issue an account of a newly invented gate, which will supply a great public want, since it is just the sort of improvement upon the present style of gate which has been so long needed. The upper bars of this gate can be lowered by merely touching a lever, thus reducing the height of the gate to such an extent that it can be used by lovers of not more than three feet high. The gate is constructed to swing both ways, and it can be opened or shut with a very slight exertion of strength and in less than one second. The great utility of this latter feature is visible at a glance. Let us suppose a small lover, who has properly reduced the height of the gate, is occupied in the usual way when he perceives a father approaching him with a frown on his face and new boots ready for action. Instantly that small young man opens the gate, rushes inside the front yard, closes the gate again, locks it with a spring, and hoists the upper bars to their normal position in precisely three seconds by the watch. The father, unable to jump over the high gate, and unable to open it without a key, is forced to permit the young man to escape through the back yard and the young girl to retire to her room and have a headache. How many terrible scenes of blood and mangled garments would have been avoided had this beneficent variety of gate been in use during the past ten years? The inventor is a noble man, and young people yet unborn will hang on his gate and call him blessed.

- Nineteen Reasons.
- 1. Wives like sober husbands because they can reason with a sober man.
- 2. The sober man is more companionable.
- 3. Sober men have pride, and pride is a woman's main hold.
- 4. Sobriety means a comfortable home.
- 5. Good clothes for mother and children.
- 6. A house of your own.
- 7. Evenings at home instead of in a barroom.
- 8. Better health and the enjoyment of life.
- 9. An elevated view of life and a sense of your responsibility.
- 10. You are a credit to your wife and children.
- 11. People who once despised you will now bless you.
- 12. Your words will be gauged as you resist the tempter.
- 13. Young men will pattern after you.
- 14. You will be an ornament to society and the whole town in which you live.
- 15. The whole community will take pride in you and wish they had more like you.
- 16. Your family and friends will appreciate you.
- 17. Your enemies will admire your path of sobriety.
- 18. Scoffers will be disarmed by your works.
- 19. Your many good qualities will grow with your years.

There is within us an immaterial being, an exile in our bodies, which is destined to survive eternity. This being of pure essence and a better nature in our soul which gives birth to all enthusiasm, all affection which apprehends God and heaven. The soul, so superior to the body to which it is bound, would remain upon the earth in an unendurable desolation were it not permitted to choose from among all other souls a companion which shares with its misery in this life and happiness in eternity.

When two souls which have thus sought each other, for a longer or shorter time, in the multitude, find each other at last, when they have seen that they agree together, that they understand each other, in a word, that they are alike, then there is established between them forever a union as pure and as eternal as the union of heaven. That union is love, true love, such as few men understand it.

This love is a religion which defies the being loved, which lives by devotion and enthusiasm, and to which the greatest sacrifices are the sweetest pleasures. Love, in this divine and true acceptance, elevates all the sentiments above the miserable human sphere. We are like to an angel who lifts us unceasingly toward heaven.

A strong point made in favor of the Hampshire Down sheep is the great weight and development of the lambs when sold in summer. It is no discredit to the breed to say that the unusually early lambing common in the South of England has something to do in securing these results. Prof. Wrighton, an extensive breeder living near Souleburg, says that most of his ewes will have lambed by the close of January, and he expects some lambs shortly after Christmas.