

THE IRON OF REMORSE



ELL may it be said that it is never best to be too sure what you would do under given circumstances, until you have tried and found out. A course of action which you know to be absolutely foreign to every instinct within you—when you sit down to reason about it, after the manner of the age—may be the very one you will follow when there is no time for reason. If any one had told Mackworth that under fire he would be a coward, Mackworth would have knocked the informant down then and there, and have reflected upon the danger to his commission afterward.

Mackworth had been graduated, too, but being a right-minded boy, he remembered that it was to Horatius that the molten image was made, and not to the fellow who built the bridge; so he very properly chose the cavalry, and heaven rewarded him by sending him straight to the frontier. And this was in the days when there was a frontier; when men endured discomforts that they sigh to know again, as none ever sigh for the luxuries of the past; when the Apache and the Chiricahua were in the land, and still struggling to be masters of it; and when a woman was truly a blessing of the gods, and might, even under disadvantages, have her pick of the department. But as there is no woman in all this, that is irrelevant.

Except after the manner of cadets—which is not to be taken seriously—Mackworth had not let woman enter into his scheme of existence. His ideals were of another sort, just then. He was young and full of belief and things, and he thought that the way to win the approval of the War Department and the gratitude of his country was to avoid wire-pulling, and to kill Indians. Therefore he rejoiced greatly when, after only six weeks of his thoroughly undesirable garrison, Chatto took the Chiricahua on the warpath, and he was ordered out in the field. He had had his kit all rolled in a rubber poncho, and his mess-chest pretty well stocked for the whole of the six weeks. He believed that a soldier should be always in readiness. He believed so many things then—though before long the bottom fell out of his universe, and he was filled with an enduring skepticism. And this was how it came about: The first time he was under fire was when they were caught at rather a disadvantage among the pines in the Mogollons. The fight began about dusk and lasted well into the night. It may have been the result of some bugaboo stories of his babyhood, which had fostered an unconquerable fear of the dark; it may have been some lurking instinct, or it may have been just blue funk, which overcame him. Anyway, he hid behind a bowlder, crouched and covered there, trembling so that his carbine fell from his hands.

And Morley, his captain, found him so. "What are you doing?" he demanded. He was an Irishman and a soldier of the old school, but he did not swear. Mackworth knew, from that, how bad it was. He scrambled up and babbled, "Get out of there," the captain said. He would have used a better tone to one of the troop cubs.

Mackworth felt for his carbine and got out, staggering, but no longer afraid, only ashamed—sickeningly ashamed—beyond all endurance. He tried hard to get himself killed after that. He walked up and down in front of his men, giving orders and smoking cigarettes, and doing his best to serve as a target. The captain watched him and began to understand. His frown relaxed. "You'd better get under cover," he suggested; "you are taking needless risks." Mackworth looked at him with wide, blank eyes, and did not answer. His face was not only white now, it was gray and set, like the face of a corpse.

Morley's face softened. "It's only a baby, anyway," he said to himself, "and it is unhappy out of all proportion." And presently he went to him again. "Will you get under cover, Mackworth?" he insisted.

"No," said the lieutenant. "I won't." The captain swore now, fierce oaths and loud. "I order you back under cover, sir."

Mackworth glanced at him and went on smoking. Morley did not fancy his own position, arguing with a green boy, fully exposed to an invisible enemy. He knew that wasting officers is pretty, but is not war. "I shall order you to the rear under arrest, unless you get back there with the men immediately."

Mackworth retired, with a look at his superior for which he should have been court-martialed. After that the scout went the way of most scouts, being a chase of the intangible, up mountain ranges, when you pulled your horse after you; down them, when he slid atop of you; across malpais and desert, from the level of the mesquite and the

greasewood to that of the pine and the manzanita. Chatto's band was at the north, to the south, to the east and west; but when the troops got to the spot, after forced marching, there was nothing.

It went on for two months; and all the while Mackworth's despondency grew. The weight of years was upon his yet barely squared shoulders, the troubles of a life-time were writ upon his face. And it was a pitifully young face, despite the growth of yellow beard. He would not be comforted. He was silent and morose. He would not lift up his beautiful baritone in song, be the camp never so dull. Only his captain knew why, of course—and he didn't tell. Neither did he attempt consolation. He thought the remorse healthful, and he knew, besides, that in such cases a man has to work out his own conclusions and salvation. This is the way Mackworth eventually tried to work out his.

There came one day a runner from the hostiles—a dish-faced, straight-locked creature of sinews—who spoke through the White Mountain interpreter of the troops and said that his chief was ready to go back to the reservation, but that he must go upon his own terms. And the chief stipulated, moreover, that one white man—one, alone and unguarded—should go to the hostile camp and discuss those terms. If a force attempted to come he would retreat with his braves and stay out all winter.

Morley made answer that he had no fear of the chief staying out all winter among the mountains when the agency was so comfortable, but that if he did the white man could stand it as long as could he. Moreover, he said that none of his soldiers had any intention whatever of walking into a death-trap of the sort.

Then Mackworth spoke up. "I have," he said.

"Get out," said the captain, incredulously.

"I mean what I say," said Mackworth, "and I shall consider your permission to go the greatest and the only favor you can do me. Something may be effected by it."

"Your death, that's all; and a little preliminary torture."

The lieutenant shrugged his shoulders. "Shall you let me go?" he insisted.

"Not by a long sight."

"I wish to go, Capt. Morley."

Morley considered, and he decided that it might not be wise to refuse. There was no knowing just what the set-faced boy might do. So they parleyed together for a time, then Mackworth mounted his horse and went. He did not expect to come back, and the officers and men did not expect to see him again. They watched him go off into the distance of the plain, toward the mountains, following the hostile, who swung on at the long, untiring dog trot.

After four hours they came to the mouth of a narrow canyon. The runner had given no sign or sound, and the fixed look had not gone from Mackworth's face. Well within the canyon the hostiles were in camp. They had hobbled their lean little ponies, the squaws were gathering wood, and the bucks were squatting upon the ground or playing monte with cards of painted hide, around a cow-skin spread under a cedar tree. Four of them rose and scouted forward. There was a prolonged scrutiny upon both sides.

The chief waited for Mackworth to begin; but the white man's instincts were good. He beat the sullenly silent redskin at his own game, and in the end the chief spoke. The runner displayed for the first time his understanding, and interpreted. Mackworth made answer with decision, offsetting his own terms. The bucks scowled, and the chief began to argue. The white man, with the unflinching eyes, would not compromise. "Tell him," Mackworth said, "that this is my will. If he will not do this, I go back to the soldiers and we follow you and kill you all, man and woman." The face of the chief grew black, a growl rose from the crowding bucks, and the watching squaws began to chatter in volleys of the tinkling of glass bells.

The chief stepped suddenly forward and caught the bridle above the curb-shanks. Not so much as an eyelash of the stern, white, young face quivered, and the heart of the red man was filled with admiration. One movement of fear would have cost Mackworth his life then; but he was not afraid, not though he knew that torture might await him. He sat looking coolly down at the lowering, cruel faces. The chief turned and spoke to the bucks, and there was a growl of protest; the squaws joined with a shrill little chorus scream. But the chief flung away the bridle, with a force which made the horse back.

"He do same you say. He go back to reservation to-day. He say you ukshee

quick," said the interpreter. Mackworth turned deliberately and uksheed, with no show of haste and without a backward look.

He reported his success and went to his tent. His look of stolid wretchedness was unchanged. Morley began to be nervous. He went to the tent himself and found the lieutenant writing a letter by lantern-light. It was not a normal opportunity to take for that, so the captain, being filled with misgivings, trumped up an errand and sent him off on it. Then he looked at the letter. It was to Mackworth's mother. Morley did not read it, but he guessed the whole thing in a flash. He took up Mackworth's carbine and slid it under the tent flaps into the outer darkness. Also he broke the Colt's, which had been thrown down upon the bedding, and put the cartridges in his pocket. Then he replaced it in the holster, and going out picked up the carbine and hid it in the brush.

After the camp was all asleep and Morley snoring loudly across the tent, Mackworth groped under his pillow and brought out the revolver. He cocked it and waited a moment; then he placed the barrel well in his mouth and pulled the trigger once—and then again and again.

At first call for reveille Morley awoke. Mackworth was already up, and turning he studied his captain's face with the faintest and most unwilling of smiles twitching the corners of his mouth under the beard. It was the most natural and healthy look his face had worn in weeks.

"Well?" said Morley.

"Well," answered Mackworth. "I should like my carbine and the loads of my Colt's, please."

Morley's face broke into a broad grin. "Will you be good if I let you have them?" he asked.

"I'll be good," promised the lieutenant.—Argonaut.

Detail in Hardware Business.

"In no other business in the world," said a Chicago hardware merchant, "is there such a multiplicity of detail as there is in this. It is not a thousand and one objects you have to keep track of, but ten thousand and one. The great American inventor is forever at work in this line, and there is not a day that we do not add some new items to our stock, and relegate some others to the realms of the obsolete. It has become a business of 'specialists' to as great an extent as the profession of medicine has, and, although I have been in it twenty years, I don't know it all yet."

"It takes a man's memory, too, as no other business ever does. The other day a man came in here looking for a certain style of hanger for a folding door. No other kind could be used on his doors, and if he couldn't get them he would have to have new doors made at considerable expense. The hanger was of an obsolete pattern, and, while I didn't have it, I told him I would try and get it."

"I went to my friend L—'s store and asked the clerks there if they had any of them. No, not one. Then I went to L— himself. I told him that fifteen years ago I had bought some there, and asked him if he would help me. He said those must have been the last he sold, as they had been out of date fifteen years, but, after thinking a few moments, he took me upstairs, and there, upon a high shelf, we found two hangers such as I wanted."

"I just happened to think," says Mr. L—, "that I stuck those away there fifteen years ago."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Custer's Joke on Osborn.

The late Charles Osborn, the New York broker, and Gen. Custer were intimate friends, and Osborn annually visited the general at his camp on the plains. During one of the Indian campaigns he invited Osborn and a party of friends out to Kansas, and after giving them a buffalo hunt, arranged a novel experience in the way of an Indian scare. As Osborn was lying in his tent one night firing was heard at the outposts and the rapid riding of the pickets. "Boots and saddles" was the order in the disturbed atmosphere of the night, and Custer appeared to Osborn loaded with rifle, two revolvers, a sabre and a scalping knife.

"Charlie," he said, in his quick, nervous way, "you must defend yourself. Sitting Bull and Flea-in-Your-Boots, with Wiggle-Tail-Jim and Scalp-Lock Skowhogan are on us in force. I didn't want to alarm you before, but the safety of my command is my first duty. Things look serious. If we don't meet again, God bless you."

The broker fell on his knees. "My God, Custer," he cried, "only get me out of this! I'll carry 1,000,000 shares of Western Union for you into the firm to get me home. Only save me."

But Custer was gone, and the camp by shrewd arrangement burst into a blaze, and shots, oaths and war-whoops were intermixed, until suddenly a painted object loomed on Osborn's sight, and something was flung into his face—a human scalp. He dropped to the ground, said the Lord's prayer backward, forward and sideways, until the noise died away, and there was exposed a lighted supper table, with this explanation on a transparency: "Osborn's treat."—Chicago Record.

One-half the world dare not; the other half cannot.

DISCOVERED BY ACCIDENT.

A Washington Girl's Invention for Kissing by Mail.

A Washington girl has invented a method of sending kisses by mail—a method by which she can present to the favored one the living image of a kiss from her own rosy lips. It is a sort of sign label, incapable of forgery or successful imitation. It is the veritable documentary evidence of a kiss given and received, and it may yet prove to be of vast legal import.

Like many another good thing, the malleable kiss was discovered by accident—at least that is what the inventress says. The method of the discov-

I shall write you again in the morning. I'll then kiss you with two kisses and bushels of love.
Your own
Lillian
June thirteenth
P.S. Give Dad

ery was this: It happened one day that she wished to write a letter to "him." It was a chilly day and a blustery—she says—and to protect her carmine lips from the salute of the winds she reached for a little box of salve upon her dressing table and there-with liberally anointed her lips. And in that salve there was a considerable percentage of rouge.

The letter having been finished, it was adorned at the foot with the conventional brace of inky crosses. Now, she had not seen him for a long time, and the last letter he wrote was really a nice one, so that it was understandable that the crosses having been made—and blotted—she should press her lips just once to the letter.

The rouge in the salve did the rest. It was a little greasy, but the unintentional result was a perfect picture of a pair of pursed lips. The inventress was so pleased that she tried it again, and the second picture was better than the first.

When the pictures reached their destination it did not need the inscription, "these are genuine," to tell the recipient what to do with them. They spoke for themselves.

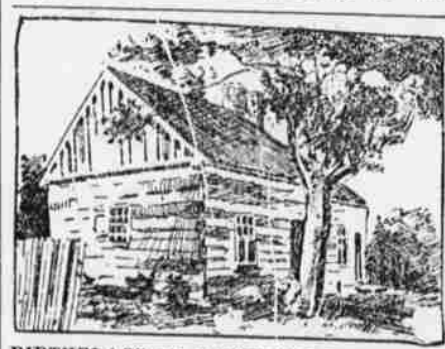
No patent upon the process has yet been applied for, but a slight improvement in the original method has been made. It is now the fashion to slightly dampen the paper and to dust with dry powder the lips of the sender. It works just as well, and the kisses don't "run."

A PRESIDENT'S BIRTHPLACE.

Buchanan's Home Unchanged, Though Moved to 'n' th' Town.

In Mercersburg, Pa., is the old cottage in which James Buchanan, President of the United States from 1857 to 1861, was born. It was removed from Stony Batter, Peter's township, fifty years ago. It is said that James Buchanan's mother put a bell on his neck, when he was a little fellow only a few years old, in order that she could tell in just what section of the wood he was wandering.

The home of Buchanan was a trading post. It was on the line of the



BIRTHPLACE OF PRESIDENT BUCHANAN.

turnpike that ran from Chambersburg to Pittsburg, and as the father of the future President was a shrewd business man he accumulated there what was considered a large fortune in those days. He sent young James to Dickinson College, in Carlisle, from which he was graduated in 1855. The house in which Buchanan was born is now rebuilt. Before it was torn down all the logs were carefully numbered, and when it was again erected it was made a facsimile of its former self. The house is a story and a half high, containing two rooms. There is a single window and a door in front and one window on the alley side, with a door at the rear.

Mrs. Gladstone.

Mrs. Gladstone, widow of the grand old man, is a woman of wonderful strength and endurance. Not long ago she was driving in a pony carriage when the animal started to run and overturned the vehicle. Though much shaken up and shocked at the time the venerable lady soon recovered and showed no ill effects of her accident.

Cleansing Dishes.

When tin plates and dishes are very dirty, it is a good plan to boil them in strong soda and water before scouring and polishing them.

"Necessity is the Mother of Invention."

It was the necessity for a reliable blood purifier and tonic that brought into existence Hood's Sarsaparilla. It is a highly concentrated extract prepared by a combination, proportion and process peculiar to itself and giving to Hood's Sarsaparilla unequalled curative power.

Hood's Sarsaparilla
Never Disappoints

Left in the March of Progress.

There are few quieter, more secluded villages in England than the Meons, east and west, lying among the Hampshire Downes. Old Winchester Hill presiding over the scene seems to tell of some old British city thereabouts, the forerunner of the more famous city of the plains. And the Romans were busy about the hills with camps and summer settlements lang syne. But nothing much has happened there since. Sturdy Cobbett passed that way in his "Rural Rides," and marveled at the huge church of East Meon in its mighty solitude. Built to hold thousands, and now, in Cobbett's time, a few shepherds and graziers, sparsely scattered, form the whole population of the parish. And still the process of depopulation goes on, as census tables tell. But the Meons are to have a railway at last, and we read that the Meon valley railway from Alton to Fareham, a distance of about 26 miles, will run through country hitherto quite untouched by any railway, and will afford a rapid and direct means of communication between Aldershot and the southern ports and defenses of Portsmouth, Southampton and Gosport.—Household Words.

HOW TO TRAVEL.

Information for the Public.

In selecting your route to the East you cannot afford to overlook the advantages and comforts offered by the Rio Grande Western Railway in connection with the Denver & Rio Grande and Colorado Midland railroads. It is the only transcontinental line passing directly through Salt Lake City, and in addition to the glimpse it affords of the Temple city, the Great Salt Lake, the salt palace, and the picturesque Utah valley, it offers choice of six distinct routes to the East and the most magnificent scenery in the world. A double daily train service and through Pullman palace and ordinary sleeping cars, free reclining chair cars and a perfect dining car service are now in operation via these lines.

For pamphlets descriptive of the "Great Salt Lake Route," apply to J. D. Mansfield, general agent, 253 Washington street, Portland, Or.

A Fable in Stocks.

Once upon a time an operator in stocks was sold short, and ruin stared him in the face unless the market should break. In his desperation he remembered having heard that honesty is the best policy. He tried to dismiss the foolish thought, but in vain. Finally, like the drowning man catching at the straw, he resolved to try being honest. The very next day he put his design into execution, and he hadn't been honest more than 15 minutes when 17 of the leading bulls fell dead, they were so surprised at him. Hereupon the market naturally broke, and the operator could get all the stocks he wanted at his own figure. It is claimed that some, if not all, of these bulls had taken radishes and ham for breakfast, but that, it is submitted, does not destroy the moral of this fable.—Detroit Journal.

Settling a Quizzer.

Joseph Jefferson, some 10 years ago, spent a week with a Scotch peer. Among the guests was a haughty and brilliant lady who made a dead set at quizzing him. He did not detect it at first and answered some of her absurd questions about America quite innocently. At last he saw her purpose and decided to get even. His opportunity came when, emboldened by her success, she said: "By the by, have you met the queen lately?" "No, Madam," Jefferson replied with perfect seriousness, "I was out when her majesty called upon me." She colored slightly and then turned away and never spoke to him again.—Detroit Free Press.

The average duration of life in Chicago has been more than doubled in the last 30 years, resulting in the saving of 42,050 lives.

It is said that some of the sheep farms in Australia are as large as the whole of England.

Schilling's
Best
tea
sold only in
Packages