

MEETING OF FLYERS

THE

MARWIN, from San Francisco, stepped from the Pullman to the platform of the small station where the eastbound flyer had drawn up to await the passing of the flyer going west. It was barely dawn. The dampness of the night was still upon the sweet prairie air and he threw back his broad shoulders, breathing deeply—once, twice, thrice, before the headlight of the coming train appeared like a star upon the horizon. Then he walked rapidly back and forth, intent upon getting as many of the kinks out of his travel-stiffened legs as possible before his train continued on its flight to the east.

"Exercise without definite object," he told himself, quoting from something he had read while at school, "is worse than none at all. Ergo, have an object. I do. I walk down on one side of this train and back on the other, my object being to—er—walk down on one side and back on the other."

There were faces in the windows of the coaches, and he glanced up at them curiously, wondering what nature of beings they were that they did not get out into the air and kick a bit while they had the chance. He reached the end of the train still wondering. Then his attention was attracted otherwise.

A young woman was sitting within the netting of the rear platform. She was sitting on a camp stool, and she was quite alone. Marwin grasped one of the platform irons and looked at her in bewildered astonishment for a full minute. She flushed to the roots of her hair, and her glance fell. Marwin spoke, lifting his hat.

"Good morning, Miss Dartlin," he said.

"Why, Mr. Marwin!" The young woman arose hastily from the camp stool and held her hand toward him. "I thought it looked like you, but it didn't seem possible. Where in the world did you drop from?"

"San Francisco," said Marwin, simply. He noted with some interest that the young woman's eyes were full of reproach, and that her manner was constrained. "I am on my way to New York," he added, after a short interval; "my first visit in three years."

"And I am going to San Francisco," said the young woman. "How strange."

"How long are you expecting to stay?" asked Marwin.

"I don't really know. I had arranged to remain indefinitely, but circumstances may—in fact, are quite likely to—alter my plans materially. Are you to be in New York a great while?"

"It is impossible for me to say. I had hoped to transact my business in a very short time, but one can never tell until one finds out, you know. The person I was going to see may be—er—out of town or something, and I have registered a vow not to return without a definite statement from her—his own lips."

He looked at his watch and stepped to the side of the platform, glancing nervously toward the station.

"You see," he continued, "it is really a most important matter. I undertook the commission only under protest, because it is one involving several extremely delicate considerations, and I am not good at such things. I am a natural blunderer. You know that well enough."

The young woman lowered her eyes again. "Yes," said she, "I—I have known you to blunder."

Marwin climbed over the railing and seated himself upon the platform steps at her feet. It was an impulse characteristic of him, and the young woman smiled as if pleased.

"We won't talk business any more," said he. "Business is an abomination. I want you to tell me a little—just a little—about yourself. You are not—er—married yet?"

The young woman winced, but he did not notice it.

"Of course, you aren't," he went on recklessly, "or you wouldn't be sitting out here at this time in the morning—alone. What have you been doing since that night, hundreds of years ago, when you and I last met?"

"Nothing worth mentioning, I believe," replied the young woman. "I have laughed a little and wept a great deal. I have been sick, and have been restored to something which bears a close resemblance to my normal condition of health, although it is not really the same. I am taking this trip with a definite purpose; the doctor thought it might make me feel better."

"Did he recommend California?" asked Marwin quickly.

"No, he merely recommended a change of air and scene. I chose California of my own accord."

"Why?" Marwin's tone was eager and his hand clutched the platform iron convulsively.

"Because—because I wished to see—California."

"Marion"—Marwin raised his eyes suddenly to hers, and there was supplication in them—"tell me all about it. We may as well understand each other.

We are to part in a little while. Perhaps we will not see each other again—ever."

"About what?"

"About your tears. Why did you weep? You were not much given to weeping once upon a time. About your sickness, you used to be as the trees and the birds and the winds of the prairie. About your determination to visit California. Was it—was it because I was there?"

"Do you think it could be possible?" She spoke reprovingly, and Marwin bowed his head.

"No," he replied, gloomily, "it was ridiculously presumptuous in me to suggest it. I—I had hoped it might be so, that is all."

The young woman placed her hand lightly upon his shoulder, and he quivered at the touch.

"Russell," said she, "three years ago you honored me by a proposal of marriage. I deferred my answer for one week. I was not in doubt regarding my own mind, but I had a good reason. And you did not come back for your answer. Why?"

"Why?" Marwin repeated the query as one dazed.

"Yes, why? I had a right to expect something better of you than I received. I waited for you, but you neither came nor sent word of explanation. There was but one inference to be taken, and I took it. You had changed your mind; I could forgive you for that, but it was cowardly not to let me know. It was cruel. It hurt me, Russell, more than I can tell."

"But your letter—"

"I wrote you no letter."

"I received a letter, Marion"—Marwin spoke slowly, after the manner of one who has been stunned—"written by you. It contained one line, and that line was 'Russell, my answer is no; I cannot.' It was delivered to me by your maid. I did not think it necessary to see you after that. I thought you did not wish me to."

The young woman stood up excitedly, then seated herself again. She was laughing, but there was a look of pain upon her face, and her eyes swam with tears.

"I understand it now," she said, brokenly; "I see how it happened. My brother was in trouble. He and father had disagreed over the payment of certain debts, and he applied to me for money. I gave it to him—poor boy!—until my allowance and my patience were exhausted. He had sent an appeal for money on the day you received that letter. I wrote to him, saying that I could not give him more. I put the message in an envelope and told the girl to take it to Mr. Russell. You and he have the same name. The stupid creature took it to you. I never knew."

"O, my dear—" Marwin grasped her hand and fondled it.

"After that," she continued, hurriedly, "I seemed to lose my strength. I was attacked one night on the street by a man—a huge, coarse brute, who threw his arms about me and stuffed a handkerchief into my mouth. I was not able to utter a cry, so suddenly did he come upon me. I was saved by sheer chance. A gentleman saw the wretch attack me and rushed to the rescue. He did not even take time to call for the police. He was very brave. He was not so large as my assailant, but he grappled him fearlessly, and—was stabbed with a knife. I knew nothing after that. I fainted. When I returned to consciousness I was in an ambulance rumbling toward home. The police knew nothing of a fight, they said, beyond the fact that the pavement was covered with blood. They seemed quite disgusted when they found that I had not been murdered. I told them all I knew, and that ended it, so far as they were concerned; but so far as I was concerned—well, it was weeks before the doctor declared the danger of brain fever passed."

She looked down into Marwin's upturned face tenderly, and something she saw there impelled her to lean forward and touch his forehead with her lips.

"Marion dear," said Marwin, gently, "I would confess to you. During those days when you were waiting for me I was following you like a dog. I wanted to be near you. I was near you that night."

"Then it was you who—"

In answer he pulled up his sleeve, disclosing a long red scar.

"It was a small price to pay for the opportunity of fighting for the girl I loved," he said. "I went away after that quite satisfied. I felt that it had been worth while after all. I—"

There was a sound of escaping air beneath the Pullman, and the train began to move. Marwin stood up and made a movement as if to jump to the ground. Then he turned to the young woman and put his arm around her.

"I think I'll go with you, dear," he said.

They stood thus, the morning sun bathing them in a radiance akin to that

which they felt within them, as they passed the eastbound train. Both were laughing like children.

"I say!" called Marwin, waving his hand at the engineer of the eastbound. "You were right, it was fate; tell the conductor that I proved it to be so!"

"I wonder what's the matter with that lunatic," said the engineer to the fireman. Then he clambered to his place and the eastbound train went on its way—David H. Talmadge.

OCCUPY A HIGHER PLANE.

Agricultural Laborers in England Better Off than a Century Ago.

The agricultural laborers of to-day are certainly better clad, more luxuriously fed, have far more leisure, are better educated and are rapidly becoming better housed than their forefathers a century ago says the Nineteenth Century. And if these are the main constituents of happiness then they are happier.

On the other hand, their grandfathers and great-grandfathers were much more gay and light-hearted than the modern; they enjoyed their lives much more than their descendants do; they had incomparably more laughter, more amusement, more real delight in the labor of their hands; there was more love among them and less hate. The agricultural laborer had a bad drunken time between twenty and thirty years ago and he has been growing out of that. A village sot is now a very rare bird—as rare as he was 100 years ago. Then the laborer could not afford a drunken debauch—he had not the wherewithal. His master, the farmer, did drink, and sometimes deeply in the days when he was prospering. And for a few years after the rise of the laborer's wages some twenty-five years ago the laborer was the publican's friend. But hard drinking has been steadily declining and the habitual drunkard is looked upon as a coarse brute to be avoided. As to other vices, things are pretty much as they were; I am afraid rather worse than better.

Perhaps the saddest characteristic of the men of the present, as compared with the men of the past, is that the men of the past were certainly more self-dependent—I do not mean independent in the sense in which that word is used now—more resourceful, more kindly, courteous and contented with their lot than their descendants are.

I think I know something about the English peasantry of a century or two gone by. I think I know just a little about the agricultural laborer nowadays. I bear him a genuine love and feel with him a cordial sympathy, and there is no knowing any men or any class of men whom we do not love and sympathize with. But as to the agricultural laborer of the future I am sometimes inclined to doubt seriously whether before another century has ended there will be any such thing as an agricultural laborer to know.

ORIGINAL SPEECH.

In All Probability It Consisted Exclusively of Vowel Sounds.

The original speech, the true primal tongue of man, was quite unlike any language we have ever heard; yet we have all the tongues of today. The primal language was a vowel language altogether; it had no consonants, or contacts as we ought to call them, at all. Its words consisted of vowel sounds following each other, repeated or varied—of words like aeae, aoao, aia, auau, aeioa, iaia, ioio, ouou, uauu, ueue—all of which, I may say in passing, are taken from a language in use today. The sentences were intermittent streams of vowels, each stream held on so long as the speaker's breath allowed or whim dictated. When all literature was recited, the same consideration, the capacity of the lungs, determined the length of the bardic line; so we have our shlokas, our hexameters, our Alexandrines, and so forth, each a lung-full of verse; in the primeval tongue it was likewise, but the sentences were vowels only.

There are about ten or a dozen pure vowels to go upon, and vowel words may run up to five syllables, so we have a very considerable fund to draw on for our vowel streams. And these streams of vowel speech corresponded to, and expressed, streams of emotion or feeling rather than descriptions of concrete objects. For we hardly realize how terribly overlaid with material trifles our life is to-day, and therefore what great demands we make on language for concrete words. But our exclamations, each of which indicates a single emotion, tend to remain pure vowel sounds even at the present day.

Sale of William Penn's Will.

At a recent sale in London of historical documents some interesting specimens of calligraphy changed hands. The list included a large number of autographs by William Penn, the quaker founder of Pennsylvania, including "My Last Will and Testament made, and writt in my own hand this twentyeth day of ye 8th month of year 1705 in ye 60 years of my age." Will and codicil cover ten pages quarto, all in the handwriting of William Penn, except, as the catalogue points out, the signatures of the witnesses.

Every thief causes a lot of honest men to be suspected unjustly.

Science AND INVENTION

The number of known explosives is stated to have increased from twenty-five to 1,100 in thirty-two years.

Cold is not fatal to micro-organisms. Dr. Macfayden and Mr. Rowland find that an exposure for ten hours to a temperature of 250 degrees C. has no appreciable effect on the vitality of micro-organisms.

Prof. Fleming of London University is now conducting important experiments in connection with the transmission of electrical energy. It is said that the professor has discovered means by which power can be distributed without wires by utilizing ether.

Caterpillars occasionally crawl from their hiding places on warm days in winter. The most common of these is a thick furred worm with a red coat banded with black, which has the appearance of chenille. Of the caterpillars that live through the winter a large number belong to species that require more than one season to develop from the egg to the perfect insect.

Moscow is probably the worst-paved city in the world. Great cobblestones driven by hand into a loose bed of sand form a roadway which is always dusty in summer and muddy in autumn and in many of the roads there is no attempt at a roadway of any kind. The streets are badly watered and cleaned. The yearly expenditure for these two operations is only about \$155,000.

Every traveler in France has been struck by the sight of multitudes of slender poplar trees growing by the roadsides and brook-sides. Two or three times in twenty years the branches of these poplars are trimmed, and the light wood thus obtained is dried and sold to bakers, whose practical science has taught them that the quick, intense heat produced by burning poplar is excellent for giving a thick crust to their bread.

A gutta-percha substitute has recently been patented. It consists of a mixture of pulverized peat and resin oil. The peat is dried thoroughly and is then pulverized and sifted until it is about the fineness of flour. It is then mixed with equal parts by weight of resin oil and 2 per cent of amyl acetate. It is then stirred and worked until it forms a smooth, dough-like mixture. It can be worked into shape and is semi-hard like gutta-percha.

In Central Africa are found districts which impress the beholder with the belief that the hand of man has shaped their features, although there is now no population capable of producing such effects. These districts, near Lake Tanganyika, are called "park lands," and their origin was recently explained before the Linnean Society in London, by Mr. Moore, as being due to the spread of vegetation over a light surface soil gradually deposited above the salt steppes left by former lakes. In some places these districts are covered with natural plantations that have a "quite homelike look."

The balloon races and contests conducted in connection with the Paris Exposition were productive of some very interesting results. Every Sunday the spectacle was witnessed of a large number of balloons starting on their journey. "One afternoon," says A. Lawrence Rotch, "17 balloons rose successively, each aeronaut endeavoring to land as near as possible to some point that he had fixed beforehand." By taking advantage of the various air-currents and skillfully manipulating the guidropes, surprising results were obtained. One aeronaut, after traveling 30 miles, landed within half a mile of the goal he had set out for. The greatest height attained by any of the aeronauts was 27,000 feet. In the long-distance race six balloons started, and three of them landed in Russia. About 1,400 miles were traveled in 37 hours.

CHARMED BY WILD BEASTS.

Perilous Experience of a Keeper in the Philadelphia Zoo.

There is something in the angry glint of a wild animal's eye that fascinates John Lover, one of the keepers at the zoological gardens, and his fondness for literally "bearding the lion in his den" some day may cost him his life. No one knows this better than Lover himself, and yet he feels that his "lines are cast in pleasant places" and would be envious of any man foolhardy enough to apply for his position.

At least half of the time this man with the daredevil recklessness of spirit goes about with bandaged limbs, the results of encounters with his "friends," the animals. When his hands, arms, or legs are torn by the claws of the maddened beasts he makes a dash for a bottle of cauterizing fluid, pours it into the ragged wound, and then goes back to subdue by kindness or punishment, as the case may require, the animal that attacked him.

"I wouldn't leave my position for any other one that could be offered to me," he said to-day. "I love wild animals and know it is their nature to attack men. No; I don't care much for tame animals. The fierceness and splendid

courage is beaten out of them, and I regard them as I would a cowardly man."

Yesterday, however, he met with his most thrilling trial, and his own words best tell the tale of the encounter with the wolves.

"About 11 o'clock yesterday morning," he said, today, "I went into the cage where the gray wolves were fighting. I thought I could separate them without force, but as a precaution I armed myself with a club and broom. Nellie, the female wolf, was more troublesome than her mate, Dan, and I attempted to pacify her first. My presence seemed to quiet them, and I thought while I was in the cage I would clean it. When I had finished I started to leave by way of a rear door, but had no sooner turned my back than Nellie sprang upon me.

"She weighs about 150 pounds, and when she struck me I fell to the floor with a thud. Dan, her mate, howled furiously, but did not make an attempt to attack me until Nellie had my left arm tightly clenched between her sharp teeth. The pain from the bite was fearful, and to protect myself I struck her with my club, which seemed at first to enrage her.

"She sprang at me again, seized my injured arm between her jaws, and the pain increased so intensely that I was almost bewildered for the time. Then she fell on the floor unconscious. I thought I was through with the struggle, and started again to leave the cage. "Dan, the male wolf, in a spirit of revenge, then attacked me, and strange as it may seem, after biting me on the thumb of the right hand, made a frightful growling noise, and to my amusement seized my already badly lacerated arm, and crunched down upon it.

"I yelled for help, and with a thin broomstick was compelled to fight my way to liberty. I worked my way to the door of the cage, leading to a small inclosure in the rear, and thought I was safely out, but I was disappointed again, as the female wolf, who is a cute, cunning beast, bent me to the door, and slipped out just ahead of me.

"I was now without club, broom, or anything to defend myself, except my right hand. My left hand and arm were useless. I was covered with blood and seemed to infuriate the beasts, who were growling and prancing about, both with their glaring eyes upon me. Fate seemed to be against me for the time, and a thousand thoughts ran through my head in an instant.

"But no time was to be lost. Nellie again started for me. I checked her leap with my foot, and quickly seized her by the throat. She struggled to get away and bit me, but fortunately Head-keeper Manley, with six men, arrived just in time to prevent the animal from tearing me to bits. After some difficulty the wolf was forced into her cage, when she and her mate walked to and fro all day long."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

John's Cue Is Doomed.

According to a resident of Chinatown the statements of the flowery kingdom are now considering the advisability of altering the Chinese law which requires Mongolians to wear cues. The local informant is authority for the statement that the Chinese wore their hair American fashion some 300 years ago, at which time they likewise wore garments similar to those in use in this country today. With a new emperor came an alteration in the two fashions and ever since cues and blouses have been quite the proper thing.

Now there is a great agitation for a change back to the old style. The Chinese are of a practical turn of mind and insist that too much time is required to dress their long braids. There is considerable objection to the style now in vogue, and so persistent for a change has become the demand that it is likely the law establishing the style of head dress will be altered. It is stated that the Chinese will not wear their hair long, but that their heads will be kept shaven. Only indefinite rumors of the proposed change have been received from the old country, but local Chinese express the belief that the present unpopular style will be abolished. —Portland Telegram.

How to Cure a Cold.

To cure a cold first stop eating. The system is overloaded with impurities and they must be eliminated. Fast until these poisons can be disposed of in a natural way. Take long walks, drawing in many deep, full breaths; exercise every muscle of the body, that the circulation may be quickened and every part of the body thoroughly cleansed by this accelerated circulation. Bathe at least once a day, rubbing the surface of the body briskly all over for five or ten minutes. After missing from two to three meals if a ravenous appetite is acquired it is, of course, desirable to indulge this appetite, but in moderation. Under no circumstances should the stomach be gorged, and those foods which are unwholesome or but moderately nutritious should be avoided.

Metric System in Russia.

The Russian government has decided to adopt the metric standard of weights and measures, and the Ministry of Finance is now engaged in considering the time and manner of introducing this reform.