

ONE LIFE.

Her white little hand is resting
On the hand that held it of old.
And he thinks it is only the night breeze
That makes it so soft and cold.
Her eyes into his are gazing—
Eyes ever so faithful to him,
And he thinks it is the shadowy twilight
That makes them so strange and dim.
Her pretty face turns toward him;
Ah, when did she turn away?
And he thinks it is the silver moonlight
That makes her so strange and gay.
Oh, spirit that lingers and lingers,
Take courage and whisper "Good-bye,"
A life's work, a life's love,
When millions each minute die.
With millions each minute dying,
What matters one life or death?
One fragile and tender creature
One transient passing breath?
A life's work, a life's love,
What matters one life or death?
One fragile and tender creature
One transient passing breath?
—The Argosy.

AN ALGERIAN LION STORY.

How I came to be sitting in very good company, one glorious September evening, in the little moon-lighted garden of the hotel at Algiers is neither here nor there.

My companions about the round table, which was garnished with wine bottles, glasses, and pipes, were all Frenchmen—three old Algerian colonists, the fourth an ex-lieutenant of the navy who had exchanged a life on the ocean wave for that of a hunter in three-quarters of the globe.

Before dinner he picked up, which I had never seen before, and my saying something about this turned the conversation in the garden upon wild beasts and the hunting of lions.

Some wonderful stories were told, especially by the ex-sailor, though not a bit more wonderful than many one hears from old Indian sportsmen.

For the matter of that the most extraordinary story I ever heard was told by one of the men in the world—a hare hunter, who capped therewith a snake-and-elephant narrative, quite unique of its kind.

Presently, a short silence, caused by the unaccountable testing of a new bottle of hermitage, was broken by the eldest of the party, who had not said much before. He was a good looking man of fifty, with beard grayer than his hair, and a merry twinkle in his eyes.

What he said I do not remember, but the serious things it had a comic side, too. "I was a young man then, and had been some half dozen years in Constantine farming in partnership with a friend, an old colonist, whose acquaintance I had made on board ship coming out from Marseilles."

"Our business was corn and cattle-raising, and we did very well together, until my partner died of a fever, and after that I took a dislike to the place. I thought I would shift my ground into this province, Algiers, push toward the frontier, and get a grant of government land and make a farm of it. So, getting a neighbor to give an eye to things in my absence, I started on my prospecting expedition."

"I say, I, but I should say we, for there were three of us, sworn comrades as ever were."

"First, there was your humble servant; secondly, there was my horse 'Marengo,' a better looking creature than a bridle. He was bred between a Barb and an English mare belonging to the Colonel of Chasseurs, of whom I bought him in town when his regiment was going. He stood about fifteen hands, carried the Barb head, and the rest of the body was all bone and muscle. His temper was as good as his courage was high; me, he would follow about like a dog, but he had one failing, and that was an insuperable objection to the close proximity of anything, except one thing, that stood on four legs. We all have our peculiarities, and this was his. Biped was all very well, but multiply the legs by two, and he let fly immediately and never came to his aim."

"Such was Marengo."

"Thirdly, there was 'Cognac,' the faithful, the most honest, the oddest, and the wisest little dog the world ever saw. He was more like a terrier than anything I have ever known, yellow coat, a fox's head, very long ears, and a very short tail. The shrillness of his bark pierced your ears like a knife, but the awfulness of his howl—he always howled if left alone—baffled description. During the four years I knew him, he seldom left me day or night. On a journey he would run beside me, and when tired get up and sit in my wallet. The great pleasure of his life was to steal behind people and secretly bite their legs."

"By some mysterious affinity, he and 'Marengo' were friends from the first. They now stood under the same tree."

"Well, we started, and after going over a good deal of ground, I thought I had decided on a location, and turned my horse homeward. My direction was by Alma, to strike the great road that runs under the Atlas into Constantine."

"It was about eight o'clock one morning, when I had been some two hours in the saddle, that I emerged from a narrow valley, or ravine, through which the road ran, on to a sandy plain, dotted with bushes and scrub."

"I had just laid the reins on 'Marengo's' neck, when suddenly he gave a tremendous snort, and I knew that something was wrong. I turned my head, and lo! a lion was standing in the road, looking at me with a steady gaze."

"The next minute, with a horrible roar, a lion sprang right at his head."

"I made sure he was on the top of him, and so he would have been, but as Marengo wheeled short round like lightning on his hind legs, the streaming mane caught in the lion's paw, and, as it were, tripped him, so that he fell sideways on the road."

"The heavy jerk nearly brought the horse down, but the throat-lash broke, the bridle was pulled over his ears, and, recovering himself, he darted away among a grove of trees that stood by the wayside."

"So intent was the lion on the horse, that he paid no attention to me, lying defenseless before him."

"Crawling slowly along the ground, he pursued Marengo, whom I gave up for lost—for his chance against the little brute among the trees seemed hopeless."

"However, as luck would have it, there was an open space about a dozen yards across, and in the center of this Marengo took his stand, with his tail toward the lion and his head turned sharply back over his shoulders, watching him."

"The lion stood quite still, except for the slight shifting of his hind feet and lifting of his quarters, which I knew meant mischief."

"The lion probably thought so, too, for he kept dodging to right and take his opponent by a flank movement. But the

old horse knew his game, and pivoting on his forelegs still brought his stern guns to bear on the enemy."

"Soon, with a roar the lion made his spring, but Marengo lashed out both heels together with such excellent judgment of time and distance, that, catching him full in the chest, he knocked him all of a heap to the ground, where he lay motionless. Then with a neigh of triumph and a flourish of his heels, away he galloped through the grove, out on to the plain and was safe."

"The lion lay so still that I thought he was dead, or at any rate quite 'hors du combat,' and was just running to pick up the bridle and follow 'Marengo' when he sat up on his haunches. This made me stop."

"As he sat there with his head loosely wagging from side to side, and mouth half open, he looked quite vacant and idiotic."

"Suddenly his head stopped wagging, he picked his ears, and by the flash of his eye and changed expression, I knew he had seen me."

"Only one thing was to be done, and I did it. The afternoon, from the lion and low-branched trees, I ran, and up it I scrambled, and just perched in a fork about fifteen feet from terra firma as the lion arrived at the bottom."

"Looking up at me with two red-hot coals for eyes, his every hair on his body turned to wire, and his great claws protruded, he chattered at me as a cat chatters at a bird out of reach. His jaws snapped like a steel trap, and his look was perfectly diabolical. What was he doing, chattering, he stood and growled."

"Catching sight of the bridle, he walked to it, sniffed it, patted it, and then came back and lay down and glared at me."

"My carbine—confound it!—was slung at my saddle. My only weapon, besides my hanger, was a pocket-pistol, double-barreled, and what in those days we called a breech-loader—that is, the barrel grew to load, and then screwed on again."

"It would have been a handy weapon against a man at close quarters, for it threw a good ball; but for a lion! Besides, the beast was too far off."

"Then the thought flashed into my mind, where was 'Cognac'?"

"I supposed he had run away and hidden somewhere. If the lion got sight of him, it would, I knew, be soon over with the poor little fellow."

"All at once there arose, close at hand, an awful and familiar yell. It had a strange, muffled tone, but there was no mistaking 'Cognac's' voice."

"Again it came, resonant, long-drawn, and sepulchral. It seemed to come from inside the tree. Where the denuce was he?"

"The lion appeared utterly astonished and turned his ears so far back to listen that they were almost inside out, when from some hole among the roots of the tree there popped a small yellow head with long ears."

"Down, down, 'Cognac' I cried in my agony; 'go back, sir.'"

"A cry of wild delight, out short by a piteous whine, was his reply, as he spied me, and then dashing fully a yard toward the lion, he barked defiantly."

"With a low growl and ruffling mane, the beast charged furiously at the little dog."

"Bark went 'Cognac' into his cave as quick as a rabbit, and stowed at him from inside."

"Thrusting his great paw right down the hole, the lion tried to claw him out. Oh, how I trembled for 'Cognac.'"

"But he kept up such a ceaseless fire of snapping and snarling that it was either well warded off, or that the hole was deep enough to ensure his safety."

"All the same, to see the great cowardly beast digging away at my poor little dog like that, was more than I could bear. Cocking my pistol, I shouted, and as he looked up I fired at his bloodshot eye. He shook his head, and I gave him the other barrel."

"With a scream of rage he bounded back."

"'Cognac' immediately shot forth his head and insulted the beast with jeering barks."

"But he was not to be drawn again, and after a bit lay down further off and pretended to be asleep. 'Cognac' barked at him until he was tired, and then retired into his castle."

"Reloading, I found I had only three bullets left, and concluded to reserve them for a crisis."

"It was now past noon. To beguile the time, I smoked a pipe or two, sang a song, and my name, 'Cognac,' and 'Marengo's' on the trees, leaving a space for the lion's which I determined should be 'Wellington.'"

"Having some milk in my bottle, I took a drink, and should have liked to give some to 'Cognac.' The lion began to pant, and his red, thorny tongue hanging a foot out of his mouth. He was a very angry and disreputable-looking brute as ever I saw. By and by he got up and sniffed the air all around him, and then, without as much delight as much as looking at me, walked off and went deliberately down the road."

"Slipping to the ground, I caught up 'Cognac,' who had crept out directly, and, after looking carefully round for the lion, was smothering me with caresses. The lion was turning toward a bushy clump in a hollow about two hundred yards off. That light green foliage was a willow, and had the cunning brush sniffed it out."

"Anyhow, it was a relief to stretch one's legs after sitting six mortal hours on a branch. The lion disappeared around the bushes. I strained my eyes over the plain, but could see nothing moving. Then I gave 'Cognac' a drink of milk and a few bits of bread-cake, for which he was very grateful. Of course, it was no use beginning a race against a lion with only 200 yards start in any number of miles. The tree was better than that."

"All the same he was a long time; perhaps, he was really gone for good. Bah! there came his ugly head around the corner again, making straight for us. 'When he was pretty near I kissed 'Cognac' and threw a bit of cake into the hole. Then I climbed again to my perch. 'Cognac' retired growling into his fortress, and the beast of a lion mounted guard over us as before."

"He looked quite comfortable and comfortable and had evidently had a good drink."

"Another hour and he was still there."

"While I was wondering how long he really meant to stay and if I was destined to spend all night on a bough like a monkey, and on very short commons, he got up, and walking quietly to the foot of the tree, without uttering a sound, sprang up at me with all his might."

"He was quite a yard short, but I was startled that I nearly lost my balance."

"His coup having failed, he lay down right under the branch I was on, concluding his head on his paws as if to hide his mortification."

Suddenly the thought came into my

mind: Why not make a devil and drop it on his back? I dismissed it as ridiculous, but it came again. As we have all, including our English friend here, been boys, you know what I mean—not a fallen angel, but the gun-powder devil."

"Good! Well, it seemed feasible—I would try it."

"I had plenty of powder in my little sack, so pouring some into my hand I moistened it with spit and kneaded away until it came out a tiny Vesuvius of black paste. Then I formed the little crater, which filled with a few grains of dry powder, and set it carefully on the branch."

"My hands shook so with excitement I could hardly hold the flint and steel; but I struck and struck—the tinder ignited—now, Vesuvius!"

"Whiff, whizz! The lion looked up directly, but I dropped it plump on the back of his neck. For an instant he did not seem to know what had happened; then with an angry growl up he jumped and tore savagely at the big fiery fleck on his mouth and nose."

"Again and again he tried, and then raved wildly about, using horrible leonine language, and no wonder, for the devil had worked well down among his grey hair, and must have stung him like a hundred hornets. His back hair and mane burst into a flame, and he shrieked with rage and terror."

"Then he went stark, staring mad, clapping his tail between his legs, laid back his ears, and went out of the grove in twenty miles an hour, and disappeared up the ravine."

"Almost as mad as the lion with joy, and feeling sure he was gone for good, I tumbled down the tree and ran off along the road as hard as I could, with 'Cognac' barking at my heels. By and by I had to pull up, for the sun was still very hot; but I walked as fast as I could, looking out all the time for 'Marengo' who would not, I knew, go very far from his master. Presently I spied him in a hollow. A whistle, and whinnying with delight, he trotted up and laid his head on my shoulder."

"In my hurry I had forgotten the bridle, but with my belt and handkerchief I extemporized a halter, and tied around his nose, and the Swift for 'Cognac,' mounted, and galloped off, defying all the lions in Africa to catch me."

"There were still two hours before sunset to reach the next village, and by a hard riding I did it. That was all three of us enjoyed our supper with a saying. And that gentlemen, is my story."

We agreed it was wonderful.—All the Year Round.

Disappointed History of Aerial Navigation.

The original idea of balloons belongs to the Greek and classical world. Ctesibius, a Greek, who died nearly a century before the elder of the Montgolfiers was born. Ctesibius was the Jules Verne of the seventeenth century. He wrote a number of fantastic books, which seem to have been written for the purpose of 'Gulliver,' and Fontenelle for his 'Micro-megas,' and Fontenelle for his 'Mondes.' The most popular of these was 'A Trip Through the Moon,' in which the hero is made to ascend from the earth by means of a bladder filled with hot air. Etienne Montgolfier and his brother Joseph improved upon this suggestion by substituting one globe of silk for several bladders. In other respects the balloon was an adaptation of Bergamini's idea, for it had an aperture at its base in which hot air rose from a charcoal stove in the car. 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