

Bound by a Spell

CHAPTER I.

Before commencing the narration of that strange, extraordinary series of events which began in my fourteenth year, I must glance back at the earlier years of my childhood, and at those who influenced it.

My earliest recollections are of Tabernacle House; previous to that, all is dim and shadowy. Tabernacle House was an establishment kept by the Rev. Obadiah Porter, the reception of some half dozen boys.

The reverend pedagogue was a man whose sallow face greatly belied his professions of profound piety. I could not understand, child as I was, how it ever came into his head to set up as a tutor, or how parents or friends could be induced to confide the education of children to the care of a man deficient in the commonest rudiments of learning. His original occupation was that of a shoemaker, and his hands still retained a coarse, grained look. His bullet-shaped head was covered with a thick mass of hair, which had a shaggy, ragged appearance, from being cut in irregular lengths, or rather chopped away in pieces. His forehead was very low. He had thick, shaggy eyebrows, and small, snake-like eyes, which were short-sighted, bull-necked; his arms were remarkably long, his feet spade and ill-shaped.

Obadiah Porter was a widower, with one daughter. So powerfully have terrible events engrained her after-image upon my mind, that I can scarcely recall its first impressions. I think she must have been about fifteen or sixteen, I being some five or six, when I first saw her. She did not bear the slightest resemblance to her father; she was tall, thin; her hair was bright red, her complexion pale, her eyes large, her features delicate, and sharply cut. To this young lady was handed over the tuition of her father's pupils.

There were five besides myself. There was a strange beauty of sympathy between us all—not one of us knew anything of our parents. One knew an aunt, another an uncle, a third a grandmother, or a grandfather, or a guardian, but no father or mother.

It was a peculiarity of Mr. Porter's establishment that he did not take boys who had parents. His advertisement in the newspapers ran thus: "The Reverend Obadiah Porter undertakes the care, education and religious training of orphan boys from the earliest age. Exceptional references as to piety, industry and discretion will be given. N. B.—No holidays."

It is not my intention to linger upon this period, or enter into any minute descriptions of our uninteresting, monotonous life. The years crept on, and were almost wholly passed within the precincts of Tabernacle House. It was a fine, old-fashioned dwelling. It had large gables back and front—the latter being screened from the road by a high wall—besides an extensive orchard and a paddock. Altogether, it was quite a gentleman's house. But rents are wonderfully low in these parts. Mr. Porter was very well-to-do. His borders alone brought him in a respectable income; his chapel well attended; and he numbered among the most prosperous members of the town among his congregation, to one of whom—Mrs. Humphries—this house belonged.

By and by there were changes. One boy left, and then another; but others took their places. Grim-looking persons came to take them away; but except in one case, we knew nothing of their future destiny or destination, and they dropped out of our lives completely. It seemed as though we were interlopers upon the world, and ought never to have been born.

The exceptional case I mention was that of a boy named Josiah Cook, whom Mr. Porter had transferred from his care to that of a printer in the town, as an apprentice. I little thought that Cook's transferral to Bury would so materially influence my own future life—that out of that event would spring an incident destined to shape its whole future course.

There was one large room at the top of the house, in which we six boys slept, two in each of the three beds. Cook was my bed fellow, and we were fast friends and companions. He was a bold, venturesome boy, and on the last night of his sojourn amongst us he proposed the daring plan of some night paying us a secret visit and relating all the "adventures" he should experience in his new home.

"I can easily climb over the garden wall from the next field," he said; "so look out, boys, if you hear a stone thrown up at your window, it will be me."

Six months passed away and we heard nothing more of Cook. He was rapidly fading out of our thoughts, when one autumn night we heard a sharp crack at our bedroom window, and a set of our number gently lifted the sash, and peered out. It was a bright moonlight night, and he saw, standing in the garden beneath the well-known figure of our old companion.

The back of the house was covered with a fine old pear tree. It had not been pruned for several years, and had thrown out its wood somewhat wildly. A few whispered words, and Cook was mounting the tree with his hands and feet, as easily as though he had been ascending a ladder. When he clambered into the room we all gathered round him in a sort of awe-struck manner.

"Now, look here, boys," he said; "what do you think has brought me here to-night?"

"To see us," we supposed.

"Well, that of course; but do you think it would be the thing in me to come and make your mouths water with the story of all these nice things, unless I had something to pop into them?"

"He has brought us something nice to eat," was the idea suggested. But when he unfolded the meaning of his symbolic speech, our hairs positively stood on end. Of all the delights experienced by him in his new sphere of life, that upon which he most glowingly dilated was the theater. His master printed the bills for that establishment, and he was frequently employed to carry them to the manager. He thus gained admission behind the scenes, while his acquaintance with the bill-sticker gained him an occasional order for the pit. His proposal was to present us with some of these orders.

"You can toss up which shall go first, and when old Porter thinks you're snug in bed, you can just drop down that tree, take a run and there you are at the theater."

We knew no more about a theater than we did about the Temple of Isis, except that the Rev. Obadiah occasionally referred to it as the abode of Satan, and the house of sin—words which I ventured to quote to our tempter.

"Abode of Idollatrick!"

"How strange that we should creep into a dreamy vision. 'I think I can show you your way. I would take you, but I dare not,' she added, with a shudder. 'But first look out in the street, and see if any one is about.'"

I went to the opening of the gateway, and looked out. Not a soul was in sight. I beckoned to her and she glided to my side and pointed out the way I was to take.

"I think this is my way," she said, indicating an entirely opposite direction; then added, in an anxious tone, "But you will not tell any one that you have seen me?"

I assented here I would not. She took my hand, and we stood in the silent street, with the full moonlight shining down upon us. I could not talk. I felt like one deprived of the power of speech and volition.

"I wonder if we shall ever meet again? It is not likely," she went on, with a sigh. "That is your way, Good-by."

She lightly pressed my hand, and with one more glance from those sad eyes she hurried away.

In less than half an hour I was in the garden. As I began to climb the tree the bedroom window was cautiously raised; my companions were sitting up for me. The clock struck twelve. My suspense had escaped detection. I was overwhelmed with eager questions. I do not know what I answered. I had fallen back into my dream. I do not know whether I slept at all that night; my senses were steeped in a delicious languor, in which the play and the after-incident were inextricably woven together—in which I had changed my identity; I was Romeo, and she whom I had so mysteriously met was Juliet. With her I acted all the scenes of love that I had witnessed, but mingled with them were phantasms, shadows, intangible, flitting too quickly to be grasped, but in which Judith Porter's face was strangely mingled. And so these phantasms chased each other through my brain, until at the last a fair hand, with delicate waxen features, was and colorless, lay dead in my arms.

(To be continued.)

WARRING CATS SEEK TRUCE.

Presence of an Hereditary Enemy Reconciles the Two Tabbies.

Two Staten Island Thomas cats were settling their difficulties the other day in the manner approved among Thomas cats, while the cause of the disagreement sat on a neighboring doorstep watching her face and distinguishing the elements, shadowy, intangible, flitting too quickly to be grasped, but in which Judith Porter's face was strangely mingled. And so these phantasms chased each other through my brain, until at the last a fair hand, with delicate waxen features, was and colorless, lay dead in my arms.

Crack! There he was! My heart leaped into my mouth, and I could scarcely repress a cry, so excitedly nervous had I become. I gently opened the window and looked out. There was Josiah, looking up at me.

"Come on," I heard him whisper.

CHAPTER II.

How I managed to descend the tree without falling I cannot understand; my hands and limbs shook as with a palsy, and my head swam as with a deadly sickness. When I reached the ground I was so faint that Josiah had to support me for several seconds. When I recovered, he helped me over the garden wall.

The whole way, Josiah never ceased talking; but I was too bewildered to heed his words. He seemed to pay no attention when, upon halting before an extremely gloomy, solitary looking building, my companion cried, "Here we are!"

We plunged down a narrow passage. Josiah presented a small slip of paper to a man who stood behind a half-door, and we entered the pit of the theater in a twinkling. It was really a Hall of Dazzling Light. The play, I have since ascertained, was Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." Sitting in that little country theater, witnessing what was, perhaps, only a third-rate provincial performance, a new world was opened to me—the glorious world of poetry and imagination. I trembled with a dazed delight at the soft beauty of the love scenes; my heart swelled with kindred fire at the passionate outbursts; and I was so enraptured that I forgot in one another's arms. It was no fiction to me, but a reality, beautiful almost beyond realization, yet painful almost beyond endurance.

When the curtain fell, I fell with it from my Elizabethan heights. With a shiver I awoke to the dull realization of myself. My first action was to turn to Josiah, and grasp his hand in silent gratitude.

I did not wish to see any more; I wished to get away now, to dream over what I had seen. Josiah had to go behind the scenes to get the props of the next night's bill, and I waited outside the stage door until he returned. In a few moments he came out in a great flurry.

"Look here, Silas," he said; "I can't go back with you. I must get home directly, or there'll be a awful kick up. Come along; I'll put you in the road, so that you can't miss your way."

I shall never forget the sense of desolation that fell upon me when I found myself alone in the street. All the directions Josiah had given me vanished in an instant from my memory, and I stood helpless, not knowing which way to turn. I was in the outskirts of the town, it was nearly eleven o'clock, and not a soul was about. I walked straight on, feverently hoping that it might be in the right direction.

Finally I was in the middle of a long street, one side of which was occupied by ordinary houses, but that on which I found myself was distinguished by a line of vast, gloomy looking buildings, targeted walls hung with ivy, and broken ruins. I felt awe-struck at the mighty piles of masonry that towered above me. I was standing right before an archway of a grand Norman tower. I walked timidly beneath its black, vaulted roof, to the iron gates at its further end, and peered at the line of crumbling ruins that rose among the trees and shrubs, white and ghastly, in the moonlight.

As I stood thus, I heard a rustle. Chilled with a sense of fear, I turned quickly round. Through a rent in the wall, many yards above my head, came a broad ray of white light. As I turned, it was falling upon an object that fascinated my gaze. It was the head and face of a beautiful girl, but so pale, so rigid, that, for an instant, I thought they were those of a statue. She was crouching in the deep shadow of the black walls. For a moment I stood spell-bound, my eyes fixed upon hers. She was the first to break the spell. Rising quickly round, through a rent in the wall, she advanced toward me, and laid a small white hand upon my arm. The touch thrilled me like an electric shock.

"You will not hurt me, will you?" she said in a soft, pleading voice. She was a slight, delicately formed child, about my own age, with large, dark eyes, and a dark gray dress. Her features were so delicately moulded that they seemed rather those of a wax doll than of a human being, except in their expression, which was full of soul. Her eyes were wonderful in their power, they were like them—they were so sad, so abstracted, in their far-off gaze; and, as she fixed them upon mine, they thrilled my very soul.

"Hurt you?" I echoed. I knew not what to say; my brain was so confused.

"Can you tell me the road to the city?" she asked, in the same low voice.

I answered that I had no idea—that I had lost my way, and knew not where I was.

"What part do you want?" she asked, with a look of deep interest.

"I want to go to Little Bethlehem Chapel; then I can find my road," I answered.

At those words she drew back a few steps, and something of mistrust crept into her face.

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EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

The Distressing Abuse of Christmas Presents.

ANY people will sympathize with a writer in the Nineteenth Century, who complains that the custom of gift-making has degenerated into a system of barter.

How true this is we all must realize with the approach of Christmas and the shopping it entails. Pretty soon we shall sit down some morning, look over our memoranda, find out who sent us presents last Christmas, remember what was the approximate cost of each, and then start on a tour of the shops to purchase gifts of about the same value. And these we shall send to our creditor friends with a written message of Christian charity and holiday good cheer, but leaving over each parcel a heavy sigh of relief that this is off our minds and we are even.

Nor is that the worst of it, for very often we seriously embarrass our finances by paying our obligations of this sort and many a bill collector has made a man's life miserable for months because of such meaningless tokens of love and affection that generally do not exist.

As a matter of fact, the Christmas present, like the wedding present, has become a nuisance. It had its origin in a sweet sentiment, but that sentiment, except in the cases of families that are closely knit in genuine fondness (and how many are they?) has long since been destroyed by the ever-increasing costliness of gifts. The generous simplicity of the past is gone and ostentation has taken its place.

If you doubt this, just try sending no Christmas gifts next Christmas and the Christmas following, and see what happens. You will find that the man who gives no presents gets none. Even the glowing and philanthropic humanity of the Christmas season takes account of the dollars and cents and insists upon value received.

It is time for a reform of the abuses that have surrounded and spoiled the beautiful custom of celebrating Christ's birthday with evidences of peace on earth and good will toward men. As it is practiced now it is commercial, sordid and destructive of everything but hypocrisy.—Chicago Journal.

A Land for felons of All Nations.

WHAT is the logic of keeping criminals at the public expense? Why should the community give a man free board and lodging for his life because he has broken the law? If a man is unfit to be at large in society, then, if self-preservation is the first law of nature, society has a right to eliminate him. This it does, foolishly, at present, by locking him up for a term of years or for life. In a few cases society kills the criminal, and thus gets rid of him irrevocably and cheaply; but this is hard on the criminal who may not be incorrigible. Hence capital punishment would be too severe for crimes less than the most heinous. The maintenance of prisons, however, is a heavy drain upon the taxpayers. Moreover, prisons are not reformatories, but rather colleges for education in the criminal arts and for the formation of the professional criminal character. Therefore, they are nuisances as well as burdens to society.

Some nations have made a compromise with logic by establishing colonies, where felons are permitted, in a measure to shift for themselves. But these colonies are only half-way measures. The logical, humane and most effectual solution of the problem would be the setting apart of some great territory—say the heart of Africa or some large island, not too fertile—as a general dumping ground for the criminals of all nations. There the outlaws could set up a society of their own. Necessity would compel them to dig and build for themselves. They would have to work or starve. The frontiers or coasts of the felons' land could be policed by a patrol composed of detachments from the armies and navies of all the nations in order to prevent escapes. Summary death should be, of course, the penalty for breaking bounds. The powers, however, could refuse to take any part in the internal administration.

TRAVEL BY AIR.

Using Collapsible Air-Bag Inside Balloon Proper Meets with Success.

To regulate the height to which a balloon shall rise or fall is one of the interesting problems of aeronautics, and it usually has been solved by throwing ballast overboard or allowing the gas to escape. In balloons of the balloon type, which have recently been tried in successful experiments, this is accomplished by having collapsible air-bags inside the balloon proper, into which air can be forced or withdrawn. While the idea is old, going back to the time of the first hydrogen balloon in 1783, it has only recently been put into successful application, though in 1884 air-reservoirs were employed to regulate the shape of balloons. During the first year Henry de la Vaulx and Henri Farve have made improvements whereby successful ascents and voyages have been made, and the altitude of the balloon nicely regulated. The balloon is an annular compartment of lens-shaped section placed around the lower part of the balloon proper and provided with suitable valves. By forcing air in or out of the balloonet the displacement, and consequently the buoyancy, is altered. Thus in the first ascent made by M. de la Vaulx a crossing of the English Channel was made at a height of about 1000 feet with the balloon filled. On rising above the clouds the sun's rays would have expanded the gas within the balloon proper and carried the aeronauts to a strata where they would have been driven toward the Arctic Sea by the prevailing southerly winds had they not been able to descend to a lower level by using the balloonet. Thus they were able to proceed in the desired direction on this particular voyage, landing in Yorkshire after a trip of sixteen hours. By regulating the position of the balloon with the balloonet it is possible to save ballast, so that much longer trips can be taken with favorable winds. Further trips in this balloon were equally successful, and demonstrated the success of the balloonets, and this arrangement should be advantageous in dirigible balloons or on air ships, as they would supply a simple means of regulating the buoyancy of the envelope containing the gas.

Chased by a White Whale.

Spouting and thrashing the water with his big tail, the monster white whale, which has been sporting off the north shore from Lynn to Hockport for two weeks, gave two Beverly fishermen a chase.

Friday Captain John Haskell, who commands the steam yacht Aurora, owned by Dudley L. Pickman, a Beverly summer colonist, was out fishing when the whale came up near him. The whale spouted and acted ugly, so that Captain Haskell, experienced as he is, began to glance shoreward and figure on the distance to the beach. The whale began to hit up his speed, and Captain Haskell began to bend to the oar. Hoping to stop the fish, Cap-

of the territory set up. The criminals could do what they pleased, have anarchy or a communism, a republic or an autocracy, whichever suited them.—San Francisco Bulletin.

At What Men Work.

A TABLE of the division of labor in different countries, published in the "Industrie Zeitung," of Berlin, presents some interesting facts and offers some profitable suggestions. Occupations are divided into three classes—namely, agriculture, horticulture and forestry; manufactures and mining, and commerce and transportation. It is interesting to observe that in the last named class America leads all the world save only Holland. With that one exception a larger proportion of our people are engaged in commerce and transportation than of any other in the world. That is doubtless because of the enormous development of railroads in America. Our percentage of men thus engaged is 10.3, while Holland's is 17.2, England's is only 13, Germany's is 10.6 and France's 9.4.

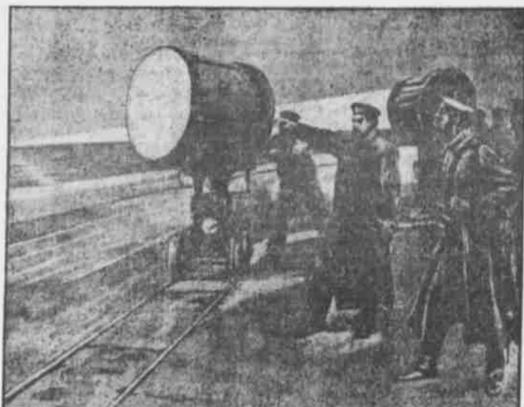
In manufactures and mining America has a comparatively low rank, her percentage being only 24.1. Scotland leads all, with 60.4, followed closely by England and Wales with 58.3. Germany has 37.4 and France 33.6. Belgium, Holland and Switzerland also, of course, rank high, each of them having more than one-third of the working population thus engaged. In the first class, of agriculture and allied occupations, America has a percentage of 45.9, while Germany has 37.5, France 44.3, Austria and Hungary, respectively, 58.2 and 58.6, and Italy 50.4. The only nations having smaller proportions in this class than America are Holland, with 30.7, Belgium, with 31.1; Scotland, with 12, and England and Wales, with only 8.

It may be seriously questioned whether it is well for a nation to show so great a disproportion among its occupations as England does, with only 8 per cent agriculturists against 58.3 in manufactures and 13 in commerce; or as Hungary does in the opposite direction, with 58.6 per cent engaged upon the land and only 12.6 in manufactures and 3.3 in commerce. A more even balancing among the classes would seem to be preferable, such as that of all the United States, in which the balance is most even of all, with the possible exception of Holland. There is an old warning against carrying all the eggs in one basket, and farmers have long since learned the disadvantage of depending upon a single crop. So it is not well for any nation to devote itself too much to a single department of industry. The more varied and well balanced its occupations are, the more self-contained and independent it will be.—New York Tribune.

May Test Britain's Strength.

IT is evident that in some Continental capitals the idea is cherished that the opportunity for a blow against British sea power is to be expected before the end of the conflict between Japan and Russia. Any power that is to be drawn into the attempt will be expected to use not only its navy, but as much of its army as can be made available. We think that bold and far-sighted statesmanship might prevent any such combination being brought into existence. But if the possibility exists, it ought to be the basis of all Great Britain's naval and military arrangements. It is such a combination as this which ought to be the hypothesis in every scheme of imperial defence. The people of this country ought to be well aware that a combination against them is possible. They ought to know that this is the one danger against which their preparations should aim at rendering them reasonably secure, and that security against the most dangerous attack would involve greater security against less formidable forms of conflict. Recent ministerial accounts of the ideas of the Committee of Defense hardly carry the conviction that the hypothesis has been worked out. Yet there never was a time when both the political and the strategical vigilance of a British Government were more urgently necessary than at the present moment.—London Morning Post.

POWERFUL SEARCHLIGHTS AT PORT ARTHUR.



One of the big searchlights used by the Russians at Port Arthur is shown in the illustration. From the forts these projectors were worked incessantly at night, and their intense white rays disclosed whatever movements the Japanese made. The light, when thrown on an advancing enemy, also tends to dazzle and confuse them. In conjunction with the electric projectors the Russians also used star shells, which in exploding brilliantly lighted up the immediate territory.

tain Haskell threw one of his extra oars aboard, and then bent down again. He did not watch to see whether the fish swallowed the timber or not, but pulled hard for the shallow water and was soon out of danger.

Former Alderman Fred W. Trowt, of Beverly Farms, also had an experience with the monster which he does not care to repeat. He was out fishing off Pride's crossing when the whale suddenly appeared, headed directly for the tenderboat. The former alderman concluded that discretion was the better part of valor and began to hit up a fast stroke toward the beach. He also escaped the fish by running into shallow water, the whale being unable to follow him in.—New York Herald.

Fish's Tenacity of Digestion.

A singular instance of tenacity in the digestion of fish is reported from a fishing village on the Atlantic coast. The fish, which is a Hog, four feet long, had what appeared to be an abnormally hard liver. But the cutting up process revealed something far stranger. The supposed hard liver turned out to be a piece of stout netting, over two yards long and fourteen inches wide, which had been pressed into the form of a football. How this great mass of indigestible material came to be swallowed by the creature is a mystery, and the suggestion that the fish caught in the toils of a fisherman's net solved the problem of how to escape by devouring his prison walls is not considered scientifically practicable.

Taking Up The Public Lands.

More than 22,824,299 acres of the public lands were turned over to private individuals last year. This means that an area almost equal to that of the State of Indiana has within that time been added to the productive regions of the United States. Most of these newly opened lands were homesteaded by farmers.

Webster's Lost Opportunity.

The campaign of 1840 had a dramatic and unexpected sequel. Thar-

ONE WHO REMEMBERED.

The New Member Could See Why the Old Member Was Popular.

Mrs. Bates joined the club just as Mrs. Ames left it—the very week, indeed, after the Amesas went to Arizona. The newcomer was aware that Mrs. Ames had been prominent in the social life of the town, and expected to hear a good deal about her; but she owned to herself a little surprise, at first, at the form of the tributes rendered at this impromptu memorial meeting.

"I wonder if we shall get any birthday letters after this?" the secretary, for one, had said. "Mrs. Ames always remembered when her friends' birthdays came," she explained to the stranger, "and she never failed to send a little note of love and best wishes."

"Do you suppose there's any one of us who could tell the favorite flower of every other member?" the minister's wife asked, with a laugh that yet had a little quiver in it. "I couldn't, I own, but I'm sure our friend could have done it. If ever any one was ill, it was her favorite flower that Mrs. Ames always sent."

"There's no one left who can 'happily' our old folks the way she could," another added. "How much good it used to do mother to call there! Mrs. Ames remembered all her little peculiarities and likings, and never omitted the small attentions that elderly people appreciate, and a half-hour spent with her used to make mother feel cheerful and comfortable for a week or two."

"Mrs. Ames never forgot anything 'bless her!' the minister's daughter declared, energetically.

Not a word about Mrs. Ames' wealth and beauty, her social pre-eminence or the high position of her family! The stranger wondered a little. But the secretary summed up the whole matter a moment later.

"We loved her because she did remember all the little things—that make so much of life," she said. "I suspect anybody can do a heroic deed or make a generous sacrifice once in a while; but the people who make this earth worth living on are the people who are always ready to give the 'cup of cold water' naturally and gracefully and with a loving heart."—Youth's Companion.

STORY OF THE KOHINOR.

How the Famous Gem Came to Be Among English Crown Jewels.

In a recent speech in London Lord Curzon, of Kedleston, the Viceroy of India, referred to his predecessors in the government of that empire as men who "worked between two earth like iron and a sky like brass, laying the foundations of empire." None worked more valiantly than the great pioneer of material and moral progress, the Marquis of Dalhousie, to whom is mainly due the unity of the Indian Empire. As governor-general Lord Dalhousie introduced the telegraph, built railways, constructed canals, re