

The Two Vanrevels

By BOOTH TARKINGTON,
Author of "The Gentleman from Indiana" and "Monsieur Beucaire"

Copyright, 1902, by S. S. McClure Co.

CHAPTER III CONTINUED

The space between the burning warehouse and that next it was not more than fifty feet in width, but fifty feet so hot no one took thought of entering there, an area as discomfiting in appearance as it was beautiful with the thick rain of sparks and firebrands that fell upon it. But the chief had decided that this space must be occupied and, more, must be held, since it was the only point of defense for the second warehouse. The roof of this building would burn, which would mean the destruction of the warehouse, unless it could be mounted, because the streams of water could not play upon it from the ground nor from the ladders do much more than wet the projecting eaves. It was a gable roof, the eaves twenty feet lower on the south side than on the north, where the ladders could not hope to reach. Vanrevel swung his line of bucketers round to throw water not upon the flames, but upon the ladder men.

Miss Carewe stood in the crowd upon the opposite side of the broad street. Even there her cheeks were uncomfortably hot, and sometimes she had to brush a spark from her shoulder, though she was too much excited to mind this. She was watching the beautiful fiery furnace between the north wall of the burning warehouse and the south wall of its neighbor, the fifty feet brilliant and misty with vaporous rose color, dotted with the myriad red stars, her eyes shining with the reflection of their fierce beauty. She saw how the vapors moved there, like men walking in fire, and she was vaguely recalling Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, when over the silhouetted heads of the crowd before her a long black ladder rose, wobbled, tilted crazily, then lamely advanced and ranged itself against the south wall of the second warehouse, its top rung striking ten feet short of the eaves. She hoped that no one had any notion of mounting that ladder.

A figure appeared upon it immediately, that of a gentleman, bareheaded and in evening dress, with a brass trumpet swinging from a cord about his shoulders. The noise grew less, the shouting died away, and the crowd became almost silent as the figure, climbing slowly, drew up above their heads. Two or three rungs beneath came a second, a man in helmet and uniform. The clothes of both men, drenched by the bucketers, clung to them, steaming. As the second figure mounted a third appeared, but this was the last, for the ladder was frail and sagged toward the smoking wall with the weight of the three.

The chief, three-fourths of the way to the top, shouted down a stifled command, and a short grappling ladder, fitted at one end with a pair of spiked iron hooks, was passed to him. Then he toiled upward until his feet rested on the third rung from the top. Here he turned, setting his back to the wall, lifted the grappling ladder high over his head so that it rested against the eaves above him and brought it down sharply, fastening the spiked hooks in the roof. As the eaves projected fully three feet, this left the grappling ladder hanging that distance out from the wall, its lowest rung a little above the level of the chief's shoulders.

Miss Betty drew in her breath with a little choked cry. There was a small terraced hill of piled up packing boxes near her, possession of which had been taken by a company of ragamuffin boys, and she found herself standing on the highest box and sharing the summit with these questionable youths, almost without noting her action in mounting thither, so strained was the concentration of her attention upon the figure high up in the rose glow against the warehouse wall. The man, surely, surely, was not going to trust himself to that bit of wooden web hanging from the roof? Where was Miss Barraud that she permitted it? Ah, if Betty had been Fanchon, and mad woman enough to have accepted this madman, she would have compelled him to come down at once, and thereafter would lock him up in the house whenever the bells rang!

But the roof was to be mounted or Robert Carewe's property lost. Already little flames were dancing up from the shingles, where firebrands had fallen, their number increasing with each second. So Vanrevel raised his arms, took a hard grip upon the lowest rung of the grappling ladder and tried it with his weight. The iron hooks bit deeper into the roof; they held. He swung himself out into the air, with nothing beneath him, caught the rung under his knee, and for a moment hung there, while the crowd withheld from breathing. Then a cloud of smoke swirling that way made him the mere ghostly nucleus of itself, blotted him out altogether, and as it rose slowly upward, showed the ladder free and empty, so that at first there was an instant when they thought that he had fallen, but, as the smoke cleared, there was the tall figure on the roof.

It was an agile and a daring thing to do, and the man who did it was mightily applauded. The cheering bothered him, however, for he was trying to make them understand below what would happen to the engine company

intense the water was not sent through the lines directly, and what he said should be done to the engineers included things that would have blanched the cheek of the most inventive Spanish inquisitor that ever lived.

Miss Betty made a gesture as if to a person within whispering distance. "Your coat is on fire," she said in an ordinary conversational tone without knowing she had spoken aloud, and Mr. Vanrevel, more than a hundred feet away, seemed particularly conscious of the pertinence of her remark. He removed the garment with alacrity, and for the lack of the tardy water began to use it as a fall upon the firebrands and little flames about him, the sheer desperate best of a man in a rage doing what he could when others failed him. Showers of sparks fell upon him. The smoke was rising everywhere from the roof and the walls below and, growing denser and denser, shrouded him in heavy veils, so that as he ran lithely and thither, now visible, now unseen, stamping and beating and sweeping away the brands that fell, he seemed but the red and ghostly caricature of a Xerxes ineffectually lashing the sea. They were calling to him imploringly to come down, in heaven's name to come down!

The second man had followed to the top of the ladder against the wall, and there he paused, waiting to pass up the line of hose when the word should come that the force pump had been repaired, but the people thought that he waited because he was afraid to trust himself



He swung himself out into the air to the grappling ladder. He was afraid, exceedingly afraid, though that was not why he waited, and he was still chuckling over the assault of the axes.

His situation had not much the advantage of that of the chief. His red shirt might have been set with orange jewels, so studded it was with the flying sparks, and, a large brand dropping upon his helmet, he threw up his hand to dislodge it and lost the helmet. The great light fell upon his fair hair and smiling face, and it was then that Miss Betty recognized the incredible of her garden.

CHAPTER VI

It was an investigating negro child of tender years who, possessed of a petty sense of cause and effect, brought an illuminative simplicity to bear upon the problem of the force pump, and a multitudinous agitation greeted his discovery that the engineers had forgotten to connect their pipes with the river.

This naive omission was fatal to the second warehouse. The wall burst into flame below Crailley Gray, who clung to the top of the ladder, choking, stifled and dimly fighting the sparks that covered him, yet still clutching the nozzle of the hose line that he passed to him. When the stream at last leaped forth, making the nozzle fight in his grasp, he sent it straight up into the air and let the cataraict fall back upon himself and upon the two men beneath him on the ladder.

There came a moment of blessed relief, and he looked out over the broad, rosy blur of faces in the street, where no one wondered more than he how the water was to reach the roof. Suddenly he started, wiped his eyes with his wet sleeve and peered intently down from under the shading arm. His roving glance crossed the smoke and flame to rest upon a tall, white figure that stood full length above the heads of the people upon a pedestal wrought with the grotesque images of boys, a girl's figure, still as noon, enaït, like the statue of some young goddess for whom were made these sacrificial pyres. Mr. Gray recognized his opportunity.

A blackened and unrecognizable face peered down from the eaves, and the voice belonging to it said angrily: "Why didn't they send up that line before they put the water through it?" "Never mind, Tom," answered Crailley cheerfully, "I'll bring it up." "You can't. I'll come down for it. Don't be every kind of a fool!" "You want a monopoly, do you?" And Crailley, calling to Tappingham Marsh, next below him, to come high-

the writhing nozzles in the latter's possession, swung himself out upon the grappling ladder, imitating the chief's gymnastics, and immediately, one hand grasping the second rung, one knee crooked over the lowest, leaped head down and took the nozzle from Marsh. It was a heavy weight, and, though Marsh supported the line beneath it, the great stream hurtling forth made it a difficult thing to manage, for it wriggled, recoiled and struggled as if it had been alive. Crailley made three attempts to draw himself up, but the strain was too much for his grip, and on the third attempt his fingers melted from the rung, and he swung down fearfully, hanging by his knee, but still clinging to the nozzle.

"Give it up, Crailley. It isn't worth it," Vanrevel called from overhead, not daring the weight of both on the light grappling ladder.

But though Crailley cared no more for the saving of Robert Carewe's property than for a butterfly's wing in China, he could not give up now, any more than as a lad he could have forborne to turn somersaults when the prettiest little girl looked out of the schoolhouse window. He passed the nozzle to Tappingham, caught the second rung with his left hand, and, once more dangling head downward, seized the nozzle; then, with his knee hooked tight, as the gushing water described a huge semicircle upon the smoke and hot vapor, he made a mad lurch through the air, while women shrieked, but he landed upright, half sitting on the lowest rung. He climbed the grappling ladder swiftly, in spite of the weight and contortions of the unmanageable beast he carried with him. Tom leaned far down and took it from him, and Crailley, passing the eaves, fell exhausted upon the roof. Just as he reached this temporary security a lady was borne, fainting, out of the acclaiming crowd. Fanchon was there.

Word had been passed to the gentlemen of the engine company to shut off the water in order to allow the line to be carried up the ladder, and they received the command at the moment Tom lifted the nozzle, so that the stream dried up in his hands. This was the last straw, and the blackened, singed and scarred chief, setting the trumpet to his lips, gave himself entirely to wrath.

It struck Crailley, even as he lay coughing and weeping with smoke, that there was something splendid and large in the other's rage. Vanrevel was ordinarily so steady and cool that this was worth seeing, this berserker gesture; worth hearing, this wonderful profanity, like Washington's one fit of cursing, and Crailley, knowing Tom, knew too, that it had not come upon him because Carewe had a daughter into whose eyes Tom had looked; nor did he rage because he believed that Crailley's life and his were in the greater hazard for the lack of every drop of water that should have issued from the empty nozzle.

Their lungs were burdened with smoke, while the intolerable smarting of throat, eyes and nostrils was like the incision of a thousand needles in the membranes. Their clothes were luminous with glowing circles where the sparks were eating. The blaze widened on the wall beneath them, and Marsh was shouting hoarsely that he could no longer hold his position on the ladder, yet Crailley knew that none of this was in Tom's mind as he stood, scorched, blistered and haggard, on the edge of the roof, shaking his fist at the world. It was because his chance of saving the property of a man he despised was being endangered.

Crailley stretched forth a hand and touched his friend's knee. "Your side of the conversation is a trifle loud, Tom," he said. "Miss Carewe is down there across the street on a pile of boxes."

Tom stopped in the middle of a word, for which he may have received but half a black stroke from the recording angel. He wheeled toward the street and, shielding his inflamed eyes with his hand, gazed downward in a stricken silence. From that moment Mr. Vanrevel's instructions to his followers were of a decorum at which not the meekest Sunday school scholar dare have caviled.

The three men now on the long ladder—Marsh, Eugene Madrilion and Will Cummings—found their position untenable, for the flames, reaching all along the wall, were licking at the ladder itself between Marsh and Eugene. "I can't stand this any longer," gasped Tappingham, "but I can't leave those two up there either."

"Not alone," shouted Cummings from beneath Madrilion. "Let's go up." Thus it happened that when the water came again and Vanrevel let it fall in a grateful cascade upon Crailley and himself three manly voices were heard singing as three men toiled through the billows of rosy gray below the beleaguered pair:

"Oh, the noble Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men;
He marched them up the side of a house
And marched them down again!"

A head appeared above the eaves, and Marsh, then Eugene, then Cummings, came crawling over the cornice in turn to join their comrades. They were a gallant band, those young gentlemen of Rouen, and they came with the ironical song on their lips and, looking at one another, ragged and scarified, burst into hoarse but indomitable laughter.

Two others made an attempt to follow and would not be restrained. It was noticed that parts of the lower ladder had been charring, and the ladder men were preparing to remove it to a less dangerous point when old General Trumble and young Jefferson Barraud made a rush to mount it and were well upon their upward way before the ladder, weakened at the middle, sagged, splintered and broke, Trumble and Barraud falling with it. And there was the grappling ladder

swung, forty feet above the ground, and there were the five upon the roof.

The department had no other ladder of more than half the length of the shattered one. Not only the department, but every soul in Rouen, knew that, and there rose the thick, low sigh of a multitude, a sound frightful to hear. It became a groan, then swelled into a deep cry of alarm and lamentation.

And now almost simultaneously the west wall of the building and the south wall and all the southwestern portions of the roof covered themselves with voluminous mantles of flame, which increased so hugely and with such savage rapidity that the one stream on the roof was seen to be but a ridiculous and useless opposition.

Everybody began to shout advice to his neighbor, and nobody listened even to himself. The firemen were in as great a turmoil as was the crowd, while women covered their eyes. Young Frank Chenoweth was sobbing curses upon the bruised and shaking Trumble and Jefferson Barraud, who could only stand remorseful, impotently groaning, and made no answer.

The walls of the southernmost warehouse followed the roof, crashing in one after the other, a sacrifice pyre with its purpose consummated, and in the seeth and flare of its passing Tom Vanrevel again shaded his eyes with his hand and looked down across the upturned faces. The pedestal with the grotesque carvings was still there, but the crowning figure had disappeared—the young goddess was gone. For she, of all that throng, had an idea in her head, and, after screaming it to every man within reach, only to discover the impossibility of making herself understood in that babel, she was struggling to make her way toward the second warehouse, through the swaying jam of people. It was a difficult task, as the farther in she managed to go the denser became the press and the more tightly she found the people wedged, until she received involuntary aid from the firemen. In turning their second stream to play ineffectually upon the lower strata of flame they accidentally deflected it toward the crowd, who separated wildly, leaving a big gap, of which Miss Betty, took instant advantage. She darted across, and the next moment, unnoticed, had entered the building through the door which Crailley Gray had opened.

The five young men on the roof were well aware that there was little to do but to wait, and soon they would see which was to win, they or the fire, so they shifted their line of hose to the eastern front of the building, out of harm's way for a time at least, and held the muzzle steady, watching its work. And in truth it was not long before they understood which would conquer. The southern and western portions of the building had hung out great flames that fluttered and flared on the breeze like titanic flags, and steadily, slowly at first, then faster as the seconds flew, the five were driven backward, up the low slope of the roof toward the gable ridge. Tom Vanrevel held the first joint of the nozzle, and he retreated with a sulkily face, lifting his foot grudgingly at each step. They were all silent now, and no one spoke until Will Cummings faltered:

"Surely they'll get a rope up to us some way?"

Will knew as well as did the others that there was no way, but his speech struck the sullen heart of the chief with remorse. He turned. "I hope you'll all forgive me for getting you up here." A sound, half chuck, half giggle, came from the parched lips of Eugene Madrilion as he patted Tom on the shoulder without speaking, and Crailley nodded quietly, then left the group and went to the eastern edge of the roof and looked out upon the crowd. Cummings dropped the line and sat down, burying his hot face in his arms, for they all saw that Vanrevel thought "it was no use," but a question of a few minutes, and they would retreat across the gable and either jump or go down with the roof.

Since the world began idle and industrious philosophers have speculated much upon the thoughts of men about to die, yet it cannot be too ingenious to believe that such thoughts vary as the men, their characters and conditions of life vary. Nevertheless, pursuant with the traditions of minstrelsy and romance, it is conceivable that young unmarried men called upon to face desperate situations might, at the crucial moment, rush to a common experience of summoning the vision, each of his heart's desire, and to meet, each his doom, with her name upon his lips.

An extraordinary thing occurred in the present instance, for, by means of some fragmentary remarks fell at the time and afterward recalled, such as Tappingham Marsh's gasping, "At least it will be on her father's roof!" and from other things later overheard, an inevitable deduction has been reached that four of the five gentlemen in the perilous case herein described were occupied with the vision of the same person, to wit, Miss Elizabeth Carewe, "the last, the prettiest, to come to town."

Crailley Gray, alone, spoke not at all, but why did he strain and strain his eyes toward that empty pedestal with the grotesque carvings? Did he seek Fanchon there, or was Miss Carewe the last sweet apparition in the fancies of all five of the unhappy young men?

The coincidence of the actual appearance of the lady among them therefore seemed the more miraculous when, wan and hopeless, staggering desperately backward to the gable ridge, they heard a clear contralto voice behind them:

"Haven't you better all come down now?" it said. "The stairway will be on fire before long."

Only one thing could have been more shockingly unexpected to the five than that there should be a sixth person on

the roof, and this was that the sixth person should be Miss Betty Carewe.

They turned, aghast, aghape, chopped with astonishment, stunned and incredulous.

She stood just behind the gable ridge, smiling amiably, a most incon-



"Haven't you better all come down now?"

gruous little pink fan in her hand, the smoke wreaths partly obscuring her and curling between the five and her white dress, like mists floating across the new moon.

Was it but a kindly phantasm of the brain? Was it the incarnation of the last vision of the lost volunteers? Was it a Valkyrie assuming that lovely likeness to perch upon this eyrie, waiting to bear their heroic souls to Valhalla, or was it Miss Betty Carewe?

To the chief she spoke—all of them agreed to that afterward—but it was Crailley who answered, while Tom could only stare and stand wagging his head at the lovely phantom like a mandarin on a shelf.

"My mother in heaven!" gasped Crailley. "How did you come up here?"

"There's a trap in the roof on the other side of the ridge," she said, and she began to fan herself with the pink fan. "A stairway runs all the way down—old Nelson showed me through these buildings yesterday—and that side isn't on fire yet. I'm so sorry I didn't think of it until a moment ago, because you could have brought the water up that way. But don't you think you'd better come down now?"

CHAPTER VII

NOT savage Hun nor "barbarous Vandike" nor demon Apache could wish to dwell upon the state of mind of the chief of the Rouen volunteer fire department; therefore let the curtain of mercy descend. Without a word he turned and dragged the nozzle to the eastern eaves, whence, after a warning gesture to those below, he dropped it to the ground, and, out of compassion, it should be little more than hinted that the gesture of warning was very slight.

When the rescued band reached the foot of the last flight of stairs they beheld the open doorway as a frame for a great press of intent and contorted faces, every eye straining to watch the roof, none of the harrowed spectators comprehending the appearance of the girl's figure there, nor able to see whether she had led the five young men, until Tappingham Marsh raised a shout as he leaped out of the door and danced upon the solid earth again.

Then, indeed, there was a mighty uproar. Cheer after cheer ascended to the red vault of heaven. Women wept, men whooped and the people rushed for the heroes with wide open, welcoming arms. Jefferson Barraud and Frank Chenoweth and General Trumble dashed at Tom Vanrevel with incoherent cries of thanksgiving, shaking his hands and beating him hysterically upon the back. He greeted them with bitter laughter.

"Help get the water into the next warehouse. This one is beyond control, but we can save the other two. Take the lines in—through the door!" He brushed the rejoicing friends off abruptly, and went on in a queer, hollow voice: "There are stairs—and I'm so sorry I didn't think of it until a moment ago, because you could have brought the water up that way!"

A remarkable case of desertion had occurred the previous instant under his eyes. As the party emerged from the warehouse into the street Tom heard Crailley say hurriedly to Miss Carewe: "Let me get you away—come quickly!" saw him suddenly seize her hand and, eluding the onrushing crowd, run with her round the corner of the building. And somehow, through what inspiration or through what knowledge of his partner's temperament, heaven knows, the prophetic soul of the chief was unhappily assured that Crailley would offer himself as escort to her home and find acceptance. But why not? Was it Crailley who had publicly called his fellow man fool, idiot, imbecile, at the top of his lungs only to find himself the proven nunsull of the universe? Tom stood for a moment staring after the vanishing pair, while over his face stole the strangest expression that ever man saw there; then, with meekly bowed shoulders, he turned again to his work.

At the corner of the warehouse Miss Carewe detached her hand from Crailley's, yet still followed him as he made a quick detour round the next building. A minute or two later they found themselves, undetected, upon Main street in the rear of the crowd. There Crailley paused.

"Forgive me," he said breathlessly, "for taking your hand. I thought you would like to get away."

She regarded him gravely, so that he found it difficult to read her look, except that it was seriously questioning.

but whether the interrogation was addressed to him or to herself he could not determine. After a silence she said:

"I don't know why I followed you. I believe it must have been because you didn't give me time to think."

This, of course, made him even quicker with her than before. "It's all over," he said briskly. "The first warehouse is gone, the second will go, but they'll save the others easily enough now that you have pointed out that the lines may be utilized otherwise than as adjuncts of performances on the high trapeze." They were standing by a picket fence, and he leaned against it, overcome by mirth in which she did not join. Her gravity reacted upon him at once, and his laughter was stopped short. "Will you not accept me as an escort to your home?" he said formally.

"I do not know," she returned simply, the sort of honest trouble in her glance that is seen only in very young eyes.

"What reason in the world?" he returned, with a crafty sharpness of astonishment.

She continued to gaze upon him thoughtfully, while he tried to look into her eyes, but he baffled because the radiant beams from the lady's orbs, as the elder Chenoweth might have said, rested somewhere dangerously near his chin, which worried him, for, though his chin made no retreat and was far from ill looking, it was nevertheless that feature which he most distrusted. "Won't you tell me why not?" he repeated uneasily.

"Because," she answered at last, speaking hesitatingly—"because it isn't so easy a matter for me as you seem to think. You have not been introduced to me, and I know you never will be, and that what you told me was true."

"Which part of what I told you?" The question escaped from him instantly.

"That the others might come when they liked, but that you could not."

"Oh, yes, yes," his expression altered to a sincere dejection, his shoulders drooped and his voice indicated supreme annoyance. "I might have known some one would tell you. Who was it? Did they say why I?"

"On account of your quarrel with my father."

"My quarrel with your father?" he exclaimed, and his face lit with an elated surprise. His shoulders straightened. He took a step nearer her and asked eagerly, "Who told you that?"

"My father himself. He spoke of a Mr. Vanrevel whom he disliked and whom I must not meet, and, remembering what you had said, of course I knew that you were he."

"Oh!" Crailley's lips began to form a smile of such appealing and inimitable sweetness that Voltaire would have trusted him, a smile altogether rose leaves. "Then I lose you," he said, "for my only chance to know you was in keeping it hidden from you. And now you understand."

"No," she answered gravely, "I don't understand. That is what troubles me. If I did and believed you had the right of the difference I could believe it no sin that you should speak to me, should take me home now. I think it is wrong not to act from your own understanding of things."

The young man set his expression as one indomitably fixed upon the course of honor, cost what it might, and in the very action his lurking pleasure in doing it hopped out in the flicker of a twinkle in his eyes and as instantly sought cover again—the flea in the rose jar.

"Then you must ask some other," he said firmly. "A disinterested person should tell you. The difference was political in the beginning, but became personal afterward, and it is now a quarrel which can never be patched up, though, for my part, I wish that it could be. I can say no more, because a party to it should not speak."

She met his level look squarely at last, and no man ever had a more truthful pair of eyes than Crailley Gray, for it was his great accomplishment that he could adjust his emotion, his reason and something that might be called his faith to fit any situation in any character.

"You may take me home," she answered. "I may be wrong and even disloyal, but I do not feel it so now. You did a very brave thing tonight to save him from loss, and I think that you what you have said was just what you should have said."

So they went down the street, the hubbub and confusion of the fire growing more and more indistinct behind them. They walked slowly, and for a time neither spoke, yet the silence was of a kind which the adept rejoiced to have produced thus soon—their second meeting. He waited until they passed into the shadows of the deserted Carewe street before he spoke. There he stopped abruptly, at which she turned, astonished.

"Now that you have saved my life," he said in a low, tremulous tone, "what are you going to do with it?"

Her eyes opened almost as widely as they had at her first sight of him in her garden. There was a long pause before she replied, and when she did it was to his considerable surprise.

"I have never seen a play except the funny little ones we acted at the convent," she said. "But isn't that the way they speak on the stage?"

true, as you will rightly—
She mused upon this, then, as a whimsical indulgence to an important date:

"Well, tell me what you mean when you say I saved your life."
"You came alone," he began hastily, "to stand upon that burning roof."
"Whence all but him had fled?" the laughter rang out, interrupting him. "My room was on the fourth floor at St. Mary's, and I didn't mind climbing three flights this evening."

Crailley's good nature was always perfect. "You mock me, and you mock me!" he cried, and made her laughter but part of a gay duet. "I know I have gone too far, have said things I should have waited to say, but, ah, remember the small chance I have against the others who can see you when they like. Don't flout me because I try to make the most of a rare, stolen moment with you."

"Do!" she exclaimed, grave upon the instant. "Do make the most of it! I have nothing but inexperience. Make the most by treating me seriously, won't you? I know you can, and I—I—"

She faltered to a full stop. She was earnest and quiet, and there had been something in her tone, too, as very often there was, that showed how young she was. "Oh," she began again, turning to him impulsively, "I have thought about you since that evening in the garden, and I have wished I could know you. I can't be quite clear how it happened, but even those few minutes left a number of strong impressions about you. And the strongest was that you were one with whom I could talk of a great many things, if you would only be real with me. I believe, though I'm not sure why I do, that it is very difficult for you to be real. Perhaps because you are so different at different times that you aren't sure yourself which the real you is. But the person that you are beginning to be for my benefit must be the most trifling of all your selves, lighter and easier to put on than the little mask you carried the other night. If there were nothing better underneath the mask, I might play too."

"Did you learn this at the convent?" gasped Crailley.

"There was a world there in miniature," she answered, speaking very quickly. "I think all people are made of the same materials, only in such different proportions. I think a little world might hold as much as the largest, if you thought it all out hard enough, and your experience might be just as broad and deep in a small corner of the earth as anywhere else, but I don't know! I want to understand! I want to understand everything! I read books, and there are people, but no one who tells me what I want—"

"Stop!" He lifted his hand. A singular exaltation rose in him, together with the reckless impulse to speak from the mood her vehement confidence had inspired. He gave way to it. "I know, I know," he said huskily. "I understand all you mean, all you feel, all you wish. It is allaching here and here and here!" He touched his breast, his eyes and his forehead with the fingers of his long and slender hand. "We sigh and strain our eyes and stretch out our arms in the dark, groping always for the strange blessing that is just beyond our grasp, seeking for the precious unknown that lies just over the horizon! It's what they mean by the pot of gold where the rainbow ends—only, it may be there, after all!"

They stopped unconsciously and remained standing at the lower end of the Carewe hedge. The western glow had faded, and she was gazing at him through the darkness, leaning forward, never dreaming that her tight grasp had broken the sticks of the little pink fan.

"Yes," she whispered eagerly. "You are right; you understand!" He went on, the words coming faster and faster: "We are haunted, you and I, by the wish to know all things, and by the question that lies under every thought we have, the agonizing Whit-er? Isn't it like that? It is really death that makes us think."

She shivered slightly, but her steadfast eyes did not shift from him. He threw back his head, and his face, uplifted to the jeweled sky of the moonless night, was beatific in its peacefulness as he continued in an altered tone, gentle and low:

"I think all questions are answered there. The stars tell it all. When you look at them you know. Do you see the constellations swinging above us, such unimaginable vastnesses, not resting or crashing through the limitless at haphazard, but moving in a rhythmic measure and to a finer rhythm than the most delicate clockwork man ever made? Ah, when you wonder look above you—look above you in the night, I say, he cried, his hand upraised like his transfigured face. "Look above you and you will never fear that a snarling full could go on!"

Continued Next Week

Notice to Hop Pickers

Any hop picker in the city wishing to be taken to and from the yards of Hall, Sr., will be furnished transportation free by notice at Hall & Son's store.

GEO. T. HALL & SON.

Hop pickers wanted at the Bruce Vitus yard on the old Rodney road, place, on the McKenzie, and a half miles from Springfield. New camping ground. Plenty of good water. Wood furnished free. Begin picking September 10.

CASTORIA

The Kind You Have Never Bought

Beats the