

The Special Correspondent

CHAPTER IV.

There are a hundred passengers on board the Astara—a large number of them Caucasians trading with Turkestan, and who will be with us all the way to the eastern provinces of the Celestial Empire.

As I am going to pass the night on deck, I return up the cabin stairs. The American is there just finishing the re- packing of his case.

"May I ask how many teeth you are importing into China in those cases?"

"Eighteen hundred thousand, without counting the wisdom teeth!"

And Ephrinnell began to laugh at the little joke, which he fired off on several other occasions during the voyage. I left him and went on to the bridge between the paddle boxes.

A rather large deal case, covered with a tarpaulin, attracts my attention. It measures about a yard and a half in height and a yard in width and depth. It has been placed here with the care required with these words in Russian, written on the side, "Glass—Fragile—Keep from Damp," and then directions, "Top—Bottom," which have been re- spected. And then there is the address, "Mademoiselle Zinka Klorik, Avenue Cha- Coua, Pekin, Petchili, China."

This Zinka Klorik—her name showed it—ought to be a Roumanian, and she was taking advantage of this through train on the Grand Transasiatic to get glass forward. Was this an article in request at the shops of the Middle King- dom? How otherwise could the fair Celestials admire their almond eyes and their elaborate hair?

The bell rang and announced the 6 o'clock dinner. The dining room is for- ward. Ephrinnell and installed himself nearly in the middle. There was a vacant seat near him; he beckoned to me to occupy it.

Was it by chance? I know not; but the Englishwoman was seated on Ephri- nell's left and talking to him. He in- troduced me.

"Miss Horatia Bluet," he said.

Opposite I saw the French couple con- scientiously studying the bill of fare. At the other end of the table, close to where the food came from, was the German with a ruddy face, fair hair, reddish beard, clumsy hands and a very long nose which reminded one of the proboscis- dean feature of the plautiades.

"He is not late this time," said I to Ephrinnell. "Do you know his name?"

"Baron Weisschnitzdorfer."

"And with that name is he going to Pekin?"

"To Pekin, like that Russian major who is sitting near the captain of the Astara."

I looked at the man indicated. He was about fifty years of age, of true Muscovite type, beard and hair turning gray, face prepossessing.

"You said he was a major, Mr. Ephri- nell?"

"Yes; a doctor in the Russian army and they call him Major Noltitz."

Evidently the American was some dis- tance ahead of me, and yet he was not a reporter by profession. Ephrinnell chatted with Miss Horatia Bluet, and I un- derstood that there was an understand- ing between these two perfectly Anglo- Saxon natures.

In fact, one was a traveler in teeth, and the other was a traveler in hair. Miss Horatia Bluet represented an im- portant firm in London, Messrs. Holmes- Holme, to whom the Celestial Empire annually exports two millions of female heads of hair.

The pitching now becomes very vio- lent. The majority of the company can- not stand it. About thirty of the pas- sengers have left the table for the deck. I hope the fresh air will do them good. We are now only a dozen in the dining room, including the captain, with whom Major Noltitz is quietly conversing. Ephrinnell and Miss Bluet seem to be thor- oughly accustomed to these inevitable in- cidents of navigation. The German bar- on drinks and eats as if he had taken up his quarters in some bier-halle at Munich or Frankfurt.

A little way off are the two Celestials, whom I watch with curiosity. One is a young man of distinguished bearing, about twenty-five years old, of pleasant physiognomy, in spite of his yellow skin and narrow eyes. A few years spent in Europe have evidently Europeanized his manners and even his dress. His mus- tache is silky, his eye is intelligent, his hair is much more French than Chinese.

His companion, on the contrary, whom he always appears to be making fun of, is of the type of the true porcelain doll with the moving head; he is from fifty to fifty-five years old, like a monkey in the face, the top of his head half shav- en, the pigtail down his back, the tradi- tional costume, frock, vest, belt, baggy trousers, many-colored slippers; a China vase of the Green family. He, however, could hold out no longer, and after a tremendous pitch, accompanied by a long rattle of the crockery, he gave up and hurried on deck. And as he did so, the younger Chinaman shouted after him, "Cornaro! Cornaro!" at the same time holding out a little volume he had left on the table.

What was the meaning of this Italian word in an oriental mouth?

Madame Caterna, arose, very pale, and Monsieur Caterna, a model husband, fol- lowed her on deck.

CHAPTER V.

It is half-past ten when I sit down on one of the seats in the stern of the Astara. But with this increasing wind it is impossible for me to remain there. I rise, therefore, and make my way for- ward. Under the bridge between the paddle boxes, the wind is so strong that I seek shelter among the packages cov- ered by the tarpaulin. Stretched on one of the boxes, wrapped in my rug, with my head resting against the tarpaulin, I shall soon be asleep.

After some time I am awakened by a curious noise. Whence comes this noise? I listen more attentively. It seems as though some one is snoring close to my ear.

"That is some steerage passenger," I think. "He has got under the tarpaulin between the cases, and he will not do so badly in his improvised cabin."

By the light which filters down from

the lower part of the binnacle, I see nothing. I listen again. The noise has ceased. I look about. There is no one on this part of the deck, for the second- class passengers are all forward.

Then I must have been dreaming, and I resume my position, and try again to sleep. This time there is no mistake. The snoring has begun again, and I am sure it is coming from the case against which I am leaning my head.

"Goodness," I say. "There must be an animal in here!"

Now I am off on the trail. It must be a wild animal on its way from some menagerie to some Sultan of Central Asia.

I light a wax vesta, and as I am shel- tered from the wind, the flame keeps upright. By its light what do I read? The case containing the wild beast is the very one with the address:

Mademoiselle Zinka Klorik, Avenue Cha-Coua, Pekin, China.

Fragile, my wild beast! Keep from damp, my lion. Quite so! But for what does Miss Zinka Klorik, this pretty Rou- manian, want a wild beast sent in this way?

My thoughts bewilder me. I have a two-pound weight on each eyelid. I lie down along by the tarpaulin; my rug wraps me more closely, and I fall into a deep sleep. It is not yet daylight when I awake.

I rub my eyes, I rise, I go and lean against the rail. The Astara is not so lively, for the wind has shifted to the northeast.

The night is cold. I warm myself by walking about briskly for half an hour. I think no more of my wild beast. Sud- denly remembrance returns to me.

I look at my watch. It is only 3 o'clock in the morning. I will go back to my place. And I do so with my head against the side of the case. I shut my eyes.

Suddenly there is a new sound. This time I am not mistaken. A half-stifled sneeze shakes the side of the case. Never did an animal sneeze like that!

Is it possible? A human being is hid- den in this case and is being fraudulently carried by the Grand Transasiatic to the pretty Roumanian? But is it a man or a woman? It seems as though the sneeze has a masculine sound about it. The eastern horizon grows brighter. The clouds in the zenith are the first to color. The sun appears at last all wat- ery with the mists of the sea.

I look; it is indeed the case addressed to Pekin. I notice that certain holes are pierced here and here, by which the air inside can be renewed. Perhaps two eyes are looking through these holes, watching what is going on outside.

At breakfast rally all the passengers whom the sea has not affected; the young Chinaman, Major Noltitz, Ephrinnell, Miss Bluet, Monsieur Caterna, the Bar- on Weisschnitzdorfer, and seven or eight other passengers. I am careful not to let the American into the secret of the case.

About noon the land is reported to the eastward, a low, yellowish land, with no rocky margin, but a few sand hills in the neighborhood of Krasnovodsk.

In an hour we are in sight of Uzun Ada, and twenty-seven minutes after- ward set foot in Asia.

CHAPTER VI.

As may be imagined, it hardly takes an hour to see Uzun Ada, the name of which means Long Island. It is almost a town, but a modern town, traced with a square, drawn with a line on a large carpet of yellow sand.

As the train starts at four o'clock this afternoon, I must telegraph to the Twentieth Century, by the Caspian ca- ble, that I am at my post at the Uzun Ada station. That done, I can see if I can pick up anything worth reporting.

Nothing is more simple. It consists in opening an account with those of my companions with whom I may have to do during the journey. That is my cus- tom. I always find it answer, and while waiting for the unknown, I write down the known in my pocketbook, with a number to distinguish each:

1. Fulk Ephrinnell, American.
2. Miss Horatia Bluet, English.
3. Major Noltitz, Russian.
4. Monsieur Caterna, French.
5. Madame Caterna, French.
6. Baron Weisschnitzdorfer, Ger- man.

As to the Chinese, they will have a number later on when I have made up my mind about them. As to the in- dividual in the box, I intend to enter into communication with him, or her, and to be of assistance in that quarter if I can do so without betraying the secret.

The train is already marshaled in the station. It is composed of first and sec- ond-class cars, a restaurant car and two baggage vans.

Russians will take us up to the fron- tier of Turkestan, and Chinese will take us through China. But there is one rep- resentative of the company who will not leave his post, and that is Popoff, our head guard, a true Russian of soldierly bearing, hairy and bearded, with a fold- ed overcoat and Muscovite cap. I intend to talk a good deal with this gallant fol- low. For ten years he has been on the Transcaspien between Uzun Ada and the Pamirs, and during the last month he has been all along the line to Pekin. I call him No. 7 in my note-book.

It occurs to me to have a look at the mysterious box. Has it not a right to be so called? Yes, certainly. I must really find out where it has been put and how to get at it easily.

The famous box was still on the plat- form. In looking at it closely I observe that air holes have been bored on each of its sides, and that on one side it has two panels, one of which can be made to slide on the other from the inside. And I am led to think that the prisoner has had it made so in order that he can, if necessary, leave his prison—probably during the night.

Just now the porters are beginning to lift the box. I have the satisfaction of seeing that they attend to the direc- tions inscribed on it. It is placed with great care near the entrance to the van, the side with the panels outward, as if it were the door of a cupboard. And it is not the box a cupboard—a cupboard I propose to open?

"There it is all right!" said one of the porters, looking to see that the case was as it should be, top where top should be, and so on.

"There is no fear of its moving," said another porter; "the glass will reach Pekin all right, unless the train runs off the metals."

The American came up to me and took a last look at his stock of incisors, molars and canines.

"You know, Monsieur Bombardier," he said to me, "that the passengers are going to dine at the Hotel du Caar before the departure of the train. It is time now. Will you come with me?"

"I follow you."

The dinner ends ten minutes before the time fixed for our departure. The bell rings and we all make a move for the train, the engine of which is blowing off steam.

The Baron Weisschnitzdorfer is not behind hand this time. On the contrary, it is the train this time which is five minutes late in starting; and the German has begun to complain, to chafe and to threaten to sue the company for dam- ages. Ten thousand roubles—not a penny less—if it causes him to fail. Fall in what, considering that he is go- ing to Pekin?

At length the last shriek of the whistle cleaves the air; the cars begin to move, and a loud cheer salutes the de- parture of the Grand Transasiatic ex- press.

For fifteen years our guard had been in the Transcaspien service. He knows the country up to the Chinese frontier, and five or six times already he has been over the whole line known as the Grand Transasiatic.

I asked him if he knew anything of our fellow travelers. I meant those who were going through to China, and in the first place of Major Noltitz.

"The major," said Popoff, "has lived a long time in the Turkestan provinces, and he is going to Pekin to organize the staff of a hospital for our compatriots, with the permission of the Czar, of course."

"I like this Major Noltitz," I said, "and I hope to make his acquaintance very soon. And these two Chinese, do you know them?"

"Not in the least, Monsieur Bombardier; all I know is the name on the lug- gage."

"What is that?"

"The younger man's name is Pan- Chao, the elder's is Tio-King. Probably they have been traveling in Europe for some years. As to saying where they come from, I cannot. I imagine that Pan-Chao belongs to some rich family, for he is accompanied by his doctor."

"And the two French people, that couple so affectionate," I asked. "Who are they?"

"Stage people who are going to a the- ater in Shanghai, where they have an engagement at the French theater."

That is capital. I will talk about the theater, and behind the scenes, and such matters, and I shall soon make the ac- quaintance of the cheery comedian and his charming wife.

As to a certain scornful gentleman aboard, our guide knew nothing beyond that his luggage bore the label in full: Sir Francis Trevelyan, Trevelyan Hall, Trevelyanshire.

A gentleman who does not answer when he is spoken to," added Popoff.

"Now we get to the German," said I. "Baron Weisschnitzdorfer?"

"He is on a trip round the world."

"A trip round the world?"

"In thirty-nine days."

And so after Mrs. Bisland, who did the famous tour in seventy-three days, and Citizen George Francis Train, who did it in seventy, this German was at- tempting to do it in thirty-nine!

"He will never do it!" I exclaimed.

"Why not?" asked Popoff.

"Because he is always late."

(To be continued.)

"PET" AVERSIONS.

Most Folk Have Unreasonable Dis- likes.

"We are all born with an aversion to something, and this aversion is a thing we can no more direct than we can fly by merely beating on the at- mosphere with our hands," George Mc- Pherson informs me.

"History is rich in the account of such instances. There is Vincent, the painter, who would faint if the odor of a rose was wafted to his nostrils, and the great German sportsman, Vaughelm, would become positively ill if he even saw a bit of roast pig."

These aversions, often so entirely un- accountable, are curious things to study. I became somewhat interested in the subject a year or so ago, and have since that time been quietly adding to my store of information on this somewhat unusual topic by per- sonal inquiries among my friends and acquaintances.

"Not one of them did I find without his pet aversion, for the existence of which he could give no good reason. Generally the aversion was toward some kind of food, but not always. One hated the color of blue, and noth- ing depressed him more than being in the company of people who wore, for the most part, garbed in clothes of this hue. Another couldn't listen to the music of a harp without becoming irritated, while a third detested lilacs to such a degree that he couldn't re- main in the room where there was one."

"None of the men who had these aversions understood why he had them. One man told me he couldn't touch a drop of milk or cream without becoming sick, yet he thought nothing looked quite so appetizing as a glass of good rich cream. Often he had tried to partake of it, but without success. Parental influence will, of course, be urged as the reason for these aver- sions, but in the case of the man who couldn't touch milk or cream his mother and father were both very fond of milk, and another friend of mine who couldn't eat a strawberry had parents who simply loved them."

—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Trying to Hedge.

Wife—John, I'd like to have a short talk with you after breakfast.

Husband—It's no use, Mary. I'm short myself.

WICKLY'S WOODS

By H. W. TAYLOR

CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued.)

"What is it, Mr. Dikes? Not a million of dollars bid upon any of this land?" Lizzy cries, in great amazement, and with a jumping of something in her throat.

"Hush! Shot up! Lemmy lissun!" But Mr. Riler turns away and looks at the crestfallen gentlemen who represent the S. & N. W., and who are now upon their feet, and walking out of the door.

"Huntley, I suppose you'd run that coal-ground up to two millions rather than lose it! Joy of your bargain! Hope you won't lose more than a million on that purchase. There are other good coal lands besides the Wickly plat."

Then there is such a roar of shouts and cries in which "Lizzy Wickly, Lizzy Wickly," and "Huntley, Huntley, Huntley" are the audible words.

"Gilt up an show yourself at the win- dower. List! Gilt up!" and the greatly excited young Dikes raises her by the arm, and raises her to her feet, whereupon, loud as was the clamor of voices before, it is nothing to the mighty sputter of yells that rise like the whirring wings of a vast covey of birds pierc- ing and rending the very air above them.

When this has gone down there are cries of "Huntley! Huntley! Huntley!" that grow in volume and importance, till they are no longer to be resisted. Then Con- rood Redden steps to the carriage, throws back the top, and taking Mr. Mason by the hand, raises him up.

"Feller farmers!" shouts the mighty-voiced Conrood Redden, "h-yur's the man at's saved your lan' fur your families! This is Mr. W. Mason Huntley. You've seed him before, un' knowed 'im, un' talked to 'im, un' h-yur him talk, un—"

But the very climax of prolonged and sound-exhausting cheering drowns every attempt to say an audible word. Mr. Mason Huntley stands with his hat off, and smiling. The roar of cheering and yelling rises and swells, and sinks and rises—but does not cease. Suddenly it gets a great impetus, as the carriage with Conrood Redden and Mr. W. Mason Huntley standing on the back seat, is raised straight up into the air, and with scores of these big, long-limbed, brawny, excited, enthusiastic, hero-worshipping Hoosiers, under it and holding it high above their heads, is changed into a tri- umphal car, that, leaving the trembling horses securely tied to the fence, proceeds all around the square, and up and down every road that leads into Sandtown, and finally down the Overcoat road to Con- rood Redden's, followed, flanked and pre- ceded by a great broad tide of men, boys and women, horses, wagons and dogs, and all conspiring and combining to make the most deafening vocal clamor that ever shook the wild-hemp and jimson leaves along the unfenced sides of the Overcoat road.

"Well, by gum! of that haint one way to hounsen up a feller," said the young Doc, drawing a long breath. "Come awn, Lizzy! I'll tek yuh home, I reckon. Then I'll light out fur Conrood's. They'll be some big speakun un' han' shakin down thar, thurrockly! They'll want you thar, too! One million th'ee hunderd un eighty-four thousand dollars fur the Wickly Woods! By gum! you're the richest young women in Indyanry. At's a shore then!"

Another night, in which Lizzy Wickly is in a tumult, a brain-whirl of excite- ment that shuts out of her mind any of all the thoughts and feelings of her or- dinary everyday life.

That wealth is not even the least of the elements of happiness she demon- strated effectually in her own self-con- templation. The first flash of excitement had been that feeling, perhaps, which in the gambler makes him tremble with un- utterable eagerness over a heavy stake, which, when he has won, is of no further value in his eyes than is given it by its power to reproduce that same state of expectation. This she recognized as that inherent love of peril, that disposition to brave dangers, that in some degree and in some form exists in every human or- ganization. The feeling of gratification had been as transient as the fitting mo- ment in which the event had been in abeyance. She had at once settled back into the groove of her ordinary thought.

For now she fully recognized the fact that it never had been Huntley, the in- visible professor of geology; Huntley, the man of straw; Huntley, the principal and employer, that she had loved. She did not doubt now that had a real Huntley appeared—such a real Huntley as Mr. Mason Huntley had imposed upon her—she would have decided between them at once, upon their simultaneous presenta- tion before her. And that decision, she now knew, would, at any moment of all the time in which she had known the genuine Huntley, have been against any other man in all the world.

Early in the evening she had dressed herself in one of those prettiest of all pretty summer dresses—a white Swiss muslin—with an unlimited number of ruffles and tucks in the skirt, and with little knots of blue ribbon here and there, and a bunch of the purplish, sweet-smell- ing wild flowers pinned upon her shape- ly left shoulder. She had gone backward and forward before the little mirror, in the middle of the room, with her face turned first over this shoulder and then over that, to see if the skirts hung ex- actly right, and to see how well she really looked in the glass, as even the best and most sensible girls in the world will do, in spite of all the jeering and sar- castic remarks about them for their vanity and self-love. She had taken out of its velvet receptacle a strand of little pearl and gold beads, that looked very becom- ing against the linen collar here, and over the looped knot of narrow blue rib- bon there, at opposite sides of her shape- ly throat, whose winter-whiteness had taken on a little of that rich, warm tint that our intermontane valley climate so plentifully bestows upon all sojourners, and which in unhealthy people we call "sallow," while in the more robust it goes by the unobjectionable title of "ruddy."

Then, with her new, bright "patent leather" slippers, showing a very little band of white stocking about her shape- ly ankles, when she sat down and crossed the very neat little left foot over the

right, she was as pretty a picture as ever a little mirror exhibited in any little plain middle-room in all Christendom—the white pond lily of Reelfoot Prairie, as could be proved by every admiring Hoosier from the mouth of Big Rattle- snake Creek on the north, to the very rush-thatched limit of Reelfoot Pond on the south.

She was in her gayest and most teasing mood, too. She couldn't help it. She would think of her father, and his mis- fortune, for a moment, and feel that it was perfectly shocking in her to be so demonstratively, boisterously merry as she was. But she couldn't help it. She could not repress her buoyant animal spirits. She flew about the house from room to room, with her stiff-starched under- skirts rustling like the fluttering wings of the wild pigeons now feeding their young up in the dark thickets of Wickly's Woods. She sang little bits of song in the sweetest voice that ever led a class of young Hoosier hoodlums in a public school. She picked up her guitar off the balcloth sofa, and slipping its sling ribbon over her left shoulder, went about the rooms playing pretty and mel- low old romances in a way that she had never played them before.

She made short little flights out to the front gate of the narrow little hollyhock- ed and morning-glory yard, and back again. She stopped at least twenty times in her delightful little flutterings here and there about the house to kiss her mother on the cheek, or to pat her on the shoulder reassuringly and lovingly, out of the very enthusiasm of her mood. In fact, she had hundreds and hundreds of foolish little things that she was per- fectly aware a mature young woman school teacher shouldn't permit herself to do. But she couldn't help it. And, what's more, she didn't try.

In any one of the little, rustling, white- dove flights to the front gate she could hear the sounds of shouting, clapping hands and multitudinous laughter of a delighted audience. And she could al- most see and hear Mr. Huntley in the merry humor of his new character that he had shown of late, exchanging humor- ous repartee with his audience as is now, and always has been, the custom and the delight of the Hoosier audience and the Hoosier orator. Perhaps, after supper was over, she would walk with her mother down to Conrood Redden's. She would be heartily welcome. She needed no invitation. For such is the broad and simple hospitality of the native Hoosier people to-day, that to "be acquainted" constitutes a perpetual and unlimited in- vitation to come when you please and be sure of a hearty welcome.

But after the supper was over Lizzy could not fully make up her mind to start. He had not been long enough in Hoosierdom to thoroughly understand that informal freedom of manner which sanctioned the unpremeditated gathering of neighbors at each other's houses at any and all seasons of the year.

True, she remembered that he had very readily conformed himself to the prevail- ing customs in Sandtown society. But he had always exhibited much more of reserve, even to the point of diffidence, than was quite agreeable.

"A little mite backward. A little mite backward," Conrood Redden had said of him at first. "But I don't think the feller means any harm by it. He haint yusen to ar ways yit. He's been raised whar people haint got nuthin to do but git acquainted. Un they kin tek as much time to ut as they want to. Un they ginirly tek a plenty, I low. We haint got time fur no sich foolishness as that out h-yur en Indyanry. Feller comes h-yur we want to know right away whurher he's fitin fur a neighbor or nut. Ef he haint, we want to houn- 'im up, ar git 'im out, jist quick's we kin, by gum!"

She knew that Mr. W. Mason Huntley had ostensibly subscribed to this doctrine which Conrood Redden had not failed to enunciate on all fitting occasions. But had that subscribing been more than a piece of amiability on his part? She had thought that in the case of a man having only the humble and subordinate place of "assistant," it was not at all to be ex- pected that he would not readily fall into the ways of the Sandtown people as easily as he had fallen into the sandy wind- ings of the Overcoat road.

So she hesitated about starting, in the secret hope that he would make that un- necessary by coming to her "soon," as he had said. But if he did not come within an hour, she would go. She felt that she must see him. She could not content her- self with the thought of remaining away until after twilight. She would go down in the twilight at the very first.

So when the young Doc Dikes came over presently, to get Mrs. Wickly to come and stay half an hour with his aunt and her sick little boy, she felt that it would be a way of occupying the inter- val of time. And so she went along, talking care to look back once in every twenty yards to see if he were coming.

Then there were presently so many of the Sandtown women dropping in at Mrs. Dikes' to see how little Jimmy was, and to ask Lizzy Wickly about her great fortune and take note of how she looked and talked, and whether she had begun to be stuck up, and proud and exclusive, as rich people very foolishly do. And perhaps with the thought of making it very prominent that she had not begun to be a bit stuck up, and perhaps be- cause she still felt the very unusual ex- citation of her naturally buoyant spirits strong upon her, Lizzy did her best to convince her neighbors, the former Argues of Sandtown, that she was suf- ficiently sensible and well-groomed in the simple democratic doctrines and prac- tices of Sandtown not to be made giddy, even when suddenly elevated to the great height of an inconceivable fortune like the one which Wickly's Woods had brought her.

CHAPTER XXI.

It was quite dark when Lizzy finally reached home, after getting up to start half a dozen times, and being stopped as often by a fresh incursion of congrat- ulating Argues.

There was a light in the middle room that they certainly had not lit before

starting upon their enforced visit to the sick. Some one familiar with the house was there. And who so familiar as the man she had been waiting and watching for, all this evening?

Instinctively she drew back a little, and permitted her mother to precede her, so that she would have time to hide her real feeling, so far as not to appear ridi- culously sentimental in the presence of others. When they should be alone she could pour out the wealth of her heart to him. She was rich now! And no selfish motive could be imputed to her in spite of what she had said to him on that stormy night in the edge of the woods, near the Overcoat road, she now knew that she loved no imaginary man, no image of straw, but the veritable Mason Huntley, and she was ready, willing and even anxious to make this confession.

It was a confession due to him. It was a confession without which she must remain an enigma to him. It was one she would make that very evening, and just so soon as they were fairly alone together.

Even in that brief space of time in which she had seen the light in the middle room, and had slackened her quick, springy, school-day walk, timing her steps to reach the front door when her mother should get so far as the middle door, she had thought over what recompense of maidenly carress was due him.

She remembered how he had held her to his heart in the center of that dread- ful cyclone, and the dangers and destruc- tion that encompassed them. She thought of that too brief and vivid tingling part- ing near the clump of shadowy, long, arching black raspberry vines. She could repay him, clasp for clasp, kiss for kiss! She would not remain his debtor in any token of love. And her red lips parted and her brown eyes sparkled in the gleam of the lamp as she put her dainty slip- pered foot lightly across the threshold, thinking only of him and for him.

She was certain that she saw him sit- ting there, beyond the little stand-table on which the lamp was blazing. So oc- cupied was she with the certainty of meeting him that not until Congressman Billy Biler arose to meet her and she heard a cry of surprise and delight from her mother's lips could she see that Billy Biler was standing there smiling very pleasantly, while beyond him were her mother and her father locked in each other's arms.

"There's nuthin like good luck, Miss Wickly, to bring people out of sickness, and fetch un round generally. H-yur's your father, now—as soon as he got to hear that you were a millionaire he found himself completely cured, and started home at once. He knew it before you did, too. He's sharpened up a bit by his short stay at the hospital, you see. But while they're talkin to thurselves, Miss Lizzy, I want to try to persuade you to intercede for me with Ole Con Redden. The ole man's terribly out with me, 'bout this railroad sale business. I'm not to blame. I took a few from the San'town un Northwestern folks, uv course. I didn't do it as a Congressman, nor as a citizen of San'town. I done ut as a lawyer. Uv course, they's lots a things that, as a lawyer, you can do that you wouldn't want to do as a Congressman, nor as a citizen, nor as the friend uv the adverse party. Now, h-yur, fur instinche, Conrood Redden, he telegraphs fur me to come home un see that all these h-yur San'town supporters uv mine has thur rights in this mortgage business. Well, I had already taken a fee from the S. & N. W. folks, as I said. But I done that as a lawyer, yunnerstand. Un I tote Redden I'd see that the railroad didn't steal nuthin from any uv yur. Un they didn't. Did they? Iant he's on his high horse. Un he says I shant have the delegation from this county. Un I've got to have ut."

(To be continued.)

HE RECOGNIZED TALENT.

Anecdotes call forth anecdotes. A little story told herein not long ago, about a country postoffice official's interest in his clients' correspondence, moved a woman who is the mother of a daughter at college