

Mr. Courtney was soon ordered to Florida, and spite of the urgent entreaties of his wife, Miss Ormond, feeling herself too old to bear the transplanting, positively refused to accompany them, and Edith would not leave her, even to go with the darling from whom she had never been separated a day. Soon after Aunt Ormond was seized with a paralysis which deprived her of the use of one side, and so affected her mind that she was incapable even of managing her little affairs, and in many respects childish as to draw largely on Edith's patience and ingenuity for her comfort and amusement. About this time the bankers who held Miss Ormond's little fortune failed, and her income was reduced in consequence to one eighth of what it had been. How were they to live now? They had never had too much, and that which was left them was a mere pittance. Poor Edith! Nobly she bore her burden, bravely she endured her trials, and many a one who saw her with calm brow and firm heart steadily performing her daily duties, wondered at her insensibility, while a few, who understood her better, breathed an earnest prayer that she might be able to prove her right to the estate she claimed.

Meanwhile Mr. James Harding was not inactive; on the contrary, he exerted himself continually to find proofs that Richard Harding had never married, and he so often called Edith an impostor, a deceiver, that very many believed his report and some even among her own acquaintances began to look coldly upon her; nay, even Mr. Weston seemed at times to doubt if there were really any truth in her story after all. But his professional pride was enlisted, and besides his detestation of James Harding, he, like every one else who approached her, felt the spell of Edith's loveliness, and determined to gain her cause if mortal eloquence and ingenuity could do it, he left no means untried to accomplish his purpose.

The ward-room officers of the receiving ship at Carlisle were lingering over their wine with three or four young men, their guests, when one of them exclaimed, "Dreaming again, Elliot? I wish the lady we met in State street this morning had been in old Ireland, or some other bog of a place, before she could away your wits; you are fairly in love, man!"

"Elliot in love! Elliot thinking of a lady?" cried several voices. "Who is she, Walton? Peerless she must be in beauty and grace if Elliot gave her a second look?"

"No," replied Walton, "she did not strike me as particularly beautiful, there was a gentleness and grace in her look and manner, but then we should pronounce her a little *passe*, to say the least."

"Elliot made no reply to the quizzing, only by laughing as lightly as the rest, but when they left the table he linked his arm in that of one of the officers and led him away, saying, by way of apology to the others, 'You know I have many arrangements to make before I return to the West, and Burton and I have not met for many years.'"

When they had walked for some time in silence, Burton said, "Elliot, you seemed annoyed at the quizzing about the lady in State street; was she an old acquaintance, or what caused your emotion at meeting her which provoked Walton's remark?"

"She was no acquaintance; in fact I do not know that I ever saw her before, yet the very transient glimpse I had of her unmannet me for a moment, by recalling a scene long past, in which she could not possibly have borne a part."

Burton looked keenly at him, more wondering than ever, and Elliot continued after a moment's pause; "When I resided with my uncle at Merton rectory, he one day summoned me to attend him to the church, where, he told me as we walked along, he was privately to marry a couple and might need me as a witness. The bride was a Miss Ormond of Halifax, and you may imagine my surprise at seeing the groom hand her and her sister into a carriage immediately after the ceremony, and then ride off himself in another direction. I shall never forget the pale, beautiful face of the bride as she sobbed her farewell, nor the swelling of my own heart, as a shadow of coming sorrow fell upon it; sorrow which, at the moment I felt rather than thought I would have to share with her. It was the same expression of anxious sorrow on the pale face of the lady I met in State street, which, recalling that sad marriage-scene, reminded me of my uncle and of his death which occurred that same night, and made me the dull stupid fellow I was at dinner; but I will shake off this gloom and be no more the slave of presentiment."

Perhaps I should not have thought of these things when I met the pale lady this morning, had I not a moment before left the man who was sexton of Merton church at the time of the marriage, and who had been reminding me of the singular parting at the gate, and for my finding the certificate after they drove off."

Burton who had been intently listening to his friend's words, now exclaimed, "Why, Elliot, the lady has sent you home just in time, and I will henceforth believe in presentiments and special providences as devoutly as yourself or G. A. Thornburn. It was only yesterday I heard Weston say his father would give his right arm to find Miss Ormond's marriage certificate, or one credible witness of the time, for which it seems he has been seeking these five years. I don't understand the matter, but it seems that if her marriage could be proved within a specified time, which has now almost expired, Miss Ormond was to enjoy a fortune, which otherwise

would go to a near relative of her husband, to whom, for some reason or other, old Weston, who has it in trust, is most unwilling to deliver it."

"Where is Mr. Weston? Can I see him immediately?" said Elliot, excited beyond control by Burton's account.

"We will go directly to his rooms, for he is now in the city," replied Burton, and a few minutes' walk brought them to Mr. Weston's door, and a few more sufficed to acquaint the lawyer with their errand.

Having listened eagerly to the story, he asked Elliot, rather peremptorily, "Are you willing to appear in court next week and repeat this story on oath? and can you tell me where the sexton you speak of may be found and above all things can you produce that certificate?"

"I cannot tell any thing of the certificate; I remember my uncle's telling me to place it in his prayer book, and that I must record it on the morrow, before morning he was a corpse, and I so overwhelmed by my first sorrow that I have no distinct recollection of any thing that occurred until after I left Merton."

"But his books!" said Mr. Weston, "what became of his books?"

"His library was not extensive; and when I left the rectory I placed all the books, carefully packed, with a friend, and they have remained unopened; undoubtedly, until now."

"By your good leave, sir, they will remain no longer unopened, for we will send suitable persons to search them, and mayhap this long missing certificate, on which so much depends, will be brought to light."

Elliot assented of course, for why should he refuse? Mr. Weston had deeply interested him in his fair client, whom he represented as bearing up nobly under poverty, anxiety, and cares which would have crushed a less energetic spirit to the earth. The old lawyer grew enthusiastic as he talked of her, who had been so delicately reared and was in every way so fitted to adorn the proudest station, now calmly and patiently earning by the labor of her hands, not only her own daily bread, but comforts for her infirm aunt and for her sister, now a spirit broken widow, and her two destitute children.

"Good-bye, Elliot," said the lively Burton, about six months after the interview above recorded. "I shall never again doubt the truth of presentiments."

"Good-bye, Burton," replied Elliot, almost as gaily, "yet I wish you would stay one week longer to see how you enact the Benedict? No, no, excuse me there, Bob; the certificate is found, the fortune secured, the lady persuaded, and the omen fulfilled; so without a fear for your future happiness, I again repeat my adieu."

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From Graham's Magazine.

#### A PRAYER

Thou God supreme, who from thy throne,

On mankind dost thy blessings shower,

Knowing all things, thyself unknown;

Content to show thy heavenly care,

(Oh bold presumption let me show),

And be this still my only prayer,

Thy will be done.

I feel I'm weak, I know I'm blind,

And evil prone to ask for good,

Enlighten thou my darkened mind,

My faith in thee be still renewed;

Teach me, just God, to trust in thee,

(Oh bold presumption let me show),

A mortal's prayer should only be,

Thy will be done.

Thou wilt not change thy just decrees,

Always, eternal God, the same,

If with thy will my prayer agrees,

I need not then implore thy name;

But should my heart with folly pray,

(Oh bold presumption let me show),

Kind Father teach my soul to say,

Thy will be done.

From Hunt's Merchants' Magazine.

#### THE UNION OF THE ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC OCEANS.

In order fully to avail ourselves of all the sources of trade which have been thrown open to us by our conquests on the western coast of America, it is indispensable that a canal or railroad should be constructed across the Isthmus of Darien.

So much has been written upon the subject since Baron Humboldt first drew public attention to its feasibility, and the advantages that would result from its accomplishment, that we are astonished at the delay of selecting the route, and putting into execution a project of such vast consequence. In the settlement of California alone, the advantages of such communication cannot be over-estimated. Our rapidly increasing commercial relations with the East Indies, China, Australia, the Pelee and Polynesian Islands, and South America, call loudly for its commencement; to say nothing of our immense whaling interest in the Pacific. We have reason to fear that one of the two great European States which have so long had the work in contemplation, will sub-

ject us to the mortification of receiving at its hands, the facilities which are so necessary for the advancement of our political as well as commercial interests.

Boastings as well we may, of a canal such as the world never saw, commenced and completed by a single State, can we doubt the ability of the United States to accomplish a work of far less magnitude, although of much greater importance? Will not the attention of Congress be attracted to it, and measures at once adopted for the furtherance of this great object?

For the following information we are partly indebted to a highly distinguished functionary of a foreign power, long a resident of Central America, whose anxiety is, that when the enterprise shall be taken in hand—and it certainly must be, at no distant day—its success may be secured by a judicious selection of locality.

He considers that a line from the height of the Mandingo bay, (in the country of the San Blas Indians) to the Pacific coast, near Panama is the best route. The isthmus here is much narrower than at any other points, being only eight leagues across. Besides the mountains of the central range, which elsewhere offer a serious barrier, having here gradually dwindled, so as to give striking evidence to those who view them from the bay, that this is the right point for the transition to be made. It is common for the Indians to transport their canoes from one ocean to the other, by taking them up the River Mandingo (that has a long course from the southward), hauling them over a narrow neck of land, and then descending the course of another stream, into the Pacific, not far to the eastward of Panama.

This locality possesses the advantage over all other, of a salubrious climate; and while Chagress and Porto Bello are, from misma and constant rains, rendered the most deadly ports to which a foreigner can resort, the climate around the Mandingo is perfectly healthy at all seasons. This spacious bay, with its deep channels among innumerable islands, possesses unrivalled accommodations for the navies of the whole world, in an anchorage or in mooring to the islands. Even Porto Bello, whose name indicates the character of its haven, must yield the plan to Mandingo.

The coast of San Blas is said to be more dry and salubrious than even the shores of the Mosquia, which have been considered healthy to a proverb; and its soil, even under the wretched cultivation of a demi-savage population, teems with more produce than the Indians can consume. The surplus, beyond what is required for the shipping, is used for fattening swine and poultry, which are reserved for supplying the trading vessels—it being considered by the Indians, disgraceful for them to consume these domestic animals, while the forests yield so abundantly of wild ones, and the bays and rivers an ample supply of fish and turtle.

Of the other contemplated routes, that between the river Guisacular, which flows into the Gulf of Mexico, and the Bay of Tehuantepec, in the Pacific, is the least likely to be adopted. Another is that ascending the river and lake of St. John de Nicaragua, on the Mosquitine shore and descending from the latter by the course of a small stream, in the Gulf Papagayo, and a third route, by connecting the source of the river Atrato, which flows into the Gulf of Darien, with the river St. John, that flows into the Pacific. This connection was effected in the latter part of the last century, and the use of it forbidden on pain of death, through jealous fears of Spanish Government. Of late these lines have been abandoned in favor of a fourth, viz: that of Porto Bello to Panama. The soil or rather climate of Porto Bello is so unpropitious to agriculture, that the scanty and scanty population find it difficult to procure the means of subsistence. Upon examining two Spanish maps, published at Madrid in 1809 and 1817, one gives the distance across the isthmus, from Mandingo Bay, as about five leagues, and the other eight while the distance at Porto Bello is given as upwards of fourteen.

It is in comparison with this route from Porto Bello particularly that we would draw the attention of the public to that of the Mandingo; the testimony of all the traders along the coast, of many years experience has been given in favor of the latter. The superiority of this locality admitted, and there remains nothing to prevent its having put in competition with the others, but the well founded report that the San Blas Indians will not permit such an enterprise to be commenced in their territory—a territory which the Spanish monarch and his republican successors have claimed as theirs, prescribing vexatious restrictions on the trade of the coast. As for the acquiescence of the Republic of New Grenada, which claims sovereignty over the San Blas country, a plea of heretage, though they never had possession, there is little doubt it could be obtained by purchase.

The San Blas Indians are naturally jealous of what is likely to endanger their independence—a guarantee of which must be given before any route for trade, through their country, will be permitted. If the business is rightly set about, there is no doubt that the repugnance of these Indians can be overcome, and the use of their country permitted for the construction of a work which cannot fail greatly to enhance its value. The British government has long extended its protection over the Mosquia Indians, in whose territory they have a Consul General, and as the character of San Blas is quite as proverbial for industry, courage, and integrity, a like attention from

our Government might secure for us commercial advantages of great value. Their only trade at present is with Jamaica, and such is the patriarchal character of their government, that it has preserved them hitherto from the effect of that contact which has ruined most of the North American tribes. A course of trade through their country might introduce intemperance among them, therefore it would be necessary for us to establish such regulations as have been long in use in our Indian frontier, to preserve the red man from the demoralization, which has too often resulted from his contact with the white.

Our enterprising countryman, William Wheelwright, Esq., (who has been many years engaged in establishing steam-packet routes about the Pacific,) in a paper read before the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain, states that Chagress is the only river of any magnitude, to be found between the Gulf of Darien and the river San Juan de Nicaragua, which, after receiving several confluent streams, discharges its waters into the Atlantic ocean; while the rivers Chavera and Grande, immediately opposite and falling into the Pacific, have their sources interlocked with those of the Chagress and its tributaries. These leading features seem to afford almost conclusive evidence that the level here is most complete and that the natural advantages, for connecting the two oceans, are much greater than at any other part of the isthmus. Mr. Lloyd's report and maps are the only scientific evidences we can obtain in relation to this matter. It does not appear that he traversed the line he laid down, but he doubtless observed it from the elevations which he ascended. His levels were undertaken with the view ascertaining the comparative height of the two oceans. His statements, containing his observations and calculations, are deposited among the archives of the Royal Society.

In tracing the route between the rivers Chagress and Panama or Chavera, it is necessary that we commence by examining the bar of Chagress and the adjacent coast. Mr. Lloyd proposed that a canal should connect this river and Lemon Bay, and thus avoid the bar. It is certainly capable of being made an excellent outlet. A nearly level line exists in this part of the isthmus, and there is no height of consequence to be overcome, in effecting a communication here, between the two oceans, either by a railroad or canal. Before so vast an undertaking as the opening of a great ship-canal can be commenced, it is necessary that a road be made as near the level line as possible, both with a view to ulterior labors, which such a road would greatly facilitate, and for the immediate establishment of an intercourse between the two oceans.

The canal must be sufficiently wide for ships of the largest size to pass each other freely in its channel. It must not be cramped with questions of expense, but laid out on a scale commensurate with its importance, and the age in which it is effected.

If we are not decided, the level is so complete that it would only necessary to have looks at either end, while its total length would not exceed thirty miles. The Chagress could be made its feeder, but the elevation of the Pacific (134 feet) above the Atlantic, would probably render the canal independent of any tributary streams.

No really scientific research has as yet been made towards the realization of the object in view—an object which when attained, will produce some of the most extraordinary results that the combined intelligence, wisdom, science, and energy of man are capable of effecting.

#### FASTING GOOD BOTH FOR MIND AND BODY.

A degree of abstinence, as is by all reasonable persons, allowed to be favourable to mental effort, but an occasional fast is also found, in certain constitutions, to invigorate both mind and body. It seems to give time to the functions to complete their work, and then to rest for a while. Fasting, for a moderate period, diminishes the carbon in the blood, and thus prevents drowsiness, while promoting a circulation of highly vitalized blood through the brain, and as on this kind of supply the ready power of the mind depends, a clearness and rapidity of perception may reasonably be expected under such circumstances, provided the muscles are not much in demand.

Those who by mental habit can take advantage of this state may then attain the highest ecstasy of meditative abstraction. Probably the greater number of persons who have themselves morbidly and physically in health, would find how greatly they are mistaken, if they could but be induced to bring their appetites more into subjection, and wait for some thing like an urgent demand for nourishment, before they indulged in eating. Instead of submitting to ennui, and regularly resorting to the table three or four times a day for the mere gratification of the palate, the wise plan would be sometimes completely to break through the habit, and enjoy the quickening powers of a rational will triumphing over animal appetite. This health of body and mental fortitude, which together constitute the best assurance of intellectual power, may be frequently promoted.—*The Body in relation to the Mind, by G. Moore. M.D.*

#### SCANDAL CONFUTED.

A gentleman was expatiating rather severely on the alleged inopportune fragility of Lord Chancellors Edon, and observed that he was so very parsimonious he never hardly gave a bottle of wine to a friend. "I beg your pardon," said another, "but I have seen Lord Chancellors Edon give a bottle of wine to a friend."