

In the Serpent's Coils,

OR

How I Was Saved from Drink.

(A True Story Written for Progress.)

"Did you go to the show last night John?"

"No, I was not there."

"O, but you should have gone; it was great!"

"What was great?"

"O! the panorama—the moving pictures; it is wonderful what they can do these days—Why! they showed an express train speeding along the track, and you could see the flying pistons, the revolving wheels, and the frightened horses rearing and prancing; and the sheep running across the fields; and the blinding glare of light as the fireman threw open the furnace door and the burst of black smoke from the stack as he threw in fresh coal—ever see any of these pictures, John?"

"Yes, before you were born."

"Come off! Old man, they were never heard of then."

"That may be; nevertheless, I was the audience at an entertainment of this kind more than twenty years ago."

"You were the audience! Was there no one there but you?"

"No; that is, I was the only mortal, yet, though I could not see them, I could feel that I had company."

"What are you giving us; couldn't you see the lantern, or the man who operated the slides? Where was the show? Come give us the yarn."

One question at a time, please. No, I could not see any lantern, and the slides were not operated by earthly hands; and the entertainment was in my own room, in a house where I was boarding while working in a factory in a town in Massachusetts.

You can laugh, boys, and call it a yarn if you wish, but what I am going to tell you is the truth—there is hardly a day passes that I do not review that experience and feel the icy chill creeping over me as I gaze upon the scenes, my memory reproduces. I was just twenty years of age at the time it happened. When I was sixteen or seventeen I was just like you boys, I used to go all the places of amusement, and, with the other boys, like you, thought that no time was complete unless each of us had a flask in our pocket to make so merry and witty. I, just like you, scorned the idea that I was in any danger of ever becoming a drunkard.

But, as years went by, the liquor obtained a hold on me and I was craving for it, which I could not resist. I awoke to my danger, I tried to fight against it, but, so weak was I, that I could not withstand the jeers of my companions when I sought to break away from them. I would shun them for a time, but they would watch for me, they knew, only too well, my weak will power, and would place ways to get me to take a drink. When I had taken one, maddened by the knowledge of broken vows, hating myself for my cowardly weakness, desperate and reckless, I would drink glasses after glasses in rapid succession, until they would have to hold me fast and carry me home; a raving maniac—a disgrace to the honorable race whose name I bear. No need to dwell on these things, my people, everybody, lost all faith and confidence in me as I had in myself. I left home. I would go to a town and go to work, and would win the respect of the community. Hope would spring up in my heart, but there would come a day when some friend would say: "Come, take something." And when I would color and stammer, they would smile, and that smile was always my ruin.

I would go to one small town and then another; then avoiding the cities and towns, I would seek employment in country settlements and villages, only to repeat in each of them my previous experiences. This brings me to my story. I had been working in a small manufacturing town on the B. and A. R. R. for nearly a year. I had not tasted liquor during that time. I was well respected by the best families in the place and was invited to all their social gatherings, and belonged to the local dramatic society, taking prominent parts in their entertainments. But the end came. I went one day with a friend to visit some relatives of his in a neighboring town. But I will say, right here, neither my friend, nor his relatives, were aware of my weakness or know aught of my past. They had liquor upon the table. When it was brought on I trembled, but when it was passed around

I had not the courage to refuse it, and, though I merely sipped it, the demon was set loose within me. On the way home, I entered a saloon, and in spite of the entreaties of my friend, I would not go home but drank glass after glass until I lost all consciousness.

They drove me home and got me into bed. It was the middle of the next afternoon that I awoke; though of course I was not aware how long I had been in bed, or in fact, that I was in bed. I tried to turn over but I could not move a muscle except my eyelids. And though I could open and close them, I thought it was night, for I could not see. All was darkness! Never have I experienced darkness one half so black. I tried to call out but could not produce a sound. I felt a curious sensation, as if I was being carried along with a wave-like motion. I was not aware of any feeling throughout my entire body except my face upon which I could feel the air, as if being fanned by the wings of the invisible beings of whose presence I felt aware, and by whom I appeared to be borne along. Soon the forward motion ceased, and we appeared to be floating gently downward, till at length I seemed to rest as on a bed of down. I could feel that I was surrounded by moving mysterious beings, I could feel that some form was standing, one on each side of my head, bending over and gazing into my face, while others were hovering over and about me. I could hear low whisperings, and then I felt a gentle hand pass over my brow, and a finger rested for a moment on each of my eyelids, when they were removed, everything was as dark as before except a zone of clear, pure light about ten feet in diameter and some distance away from me. As I gazed upon it the form of a young man emerged from out the darkness into the centre of the light—it has been asserted by some scientists; "that if a person was thus brought suddenly in contact with an exact counterpart or likeness of themselves, that they would fail to recognize it;" but I knew instantly that the form before me was my own. As he stood, his right arm was extended to full length, his hand was tightly clinched, and his eye fixed upon it.

His face wore a confident smile, and as I looked I saw that he was holding a tiny green snake, its head and tail merely protruding above and beneath his hand. I could see its tiny bright eyes, and its little forked tongue, which it kept darting out toward him, so rapidly, that it seemed like tongues of fire, and I heard a voice whisper; "Crush it, John." But he only laughed. Raising his left hand and holding a finger but an inch or so in front of its darting tongue, which was emitting countless venomous spurks, he continued to play with it. I saw that it was continually growing larger, its head and tail now protruded several inches, its eyes were glued upon him, and its head kept up a mesmerizing motion fascinating to look upon. Suddenly it drew up its body, and its tail encircled his wrist. Another coil, and it is above his elbow—and again comes the whisper, louder than before; "Crush it, John, crush it." He laughs as before, but he ceases to play with it, or to taunt it with his finger. He tightens the grip of his hand as if to choke it, but finds it has grown too powerful to be killed so easily. He gives utterance to a nervous laugh, and endeavors to shake it from off his arm but cannot do so. The smile fades from his face, and with his left hand he tries to tear the coils from about his arm, for they have now extended to his shoulder; but again he fails. Closing his lips firmly with a stern determined look, he grasps the snake's body with his other hand. The Serpent's head by this time was as large as a cup and its body eight inches thick. As it keeps up its symmetrical swing, its head comes within a foot of the young man's eyes. He works his hands upward, until he has grasped it just below the head. He stops its fascinating motion. He pushes it at arms length from his face. He removes his gaze from the mesmerizing power of its eyes. He puts his whole strength into the grip of his hands. The serpent uncoils its folds from about his arm and hangs swinging and twisting about. He places a foot upon its tail, and once again, and louder, comes the whisper, full of tender entreaty; "Crush it, John. Cast

it from you. Grind it beneath your heel. Don't play with it any longer. Look not upon it. Now is your only hope. Crush it now, or it will crush you." But his face had resumed the confident look, and a smile of triumph lights up his face and he turns to look at the conquered snake.

As he gazes, the head begins its peculiar, charming motion, faintly at first, increasing gradually, almost imperceptibly. The young man's face again wears the fixed, charmed look. The swing grows larger, and larger, till at length the serpent's head is but a few inches in front of his eyes. His face grows ashen pale, and he tries to push it back. The tail twists from beneath his foot, and instantly encircles both his arms and his body in its coils, quickly it grows now, coil after coil enfolds him, his legs, his ankles, while the head moves to and fro before his eyes, which he cannot remove from its power. He realizes that he is lost but he cannot move a muscle.

The only way I can describe my feelings while viewing this scene, is to say, that I felt every sensation that I would have felt had I in reality been within the power of the serpent; all the peculiar pleasure, the fascinating charm of the serpent's eyes and its mesmeric motions; an exquisite happiness through sensible that I was being wooed to death. I felt the ever increasing weight of its folds, felt them growing more powerful, felt my body and limbs being crushed, and now, as the serpent's head became still for a brief moment, right before the young man's eyes, and then was drawn slowly back, and stood poised as if to strike; its sharp bright eye glued upon those of its victim, my mother's form appeared in the light, with extended hands. She looked upon me—or my counterpart—O! so sorrowful so yearningly! "O John," she said, "I have come to you so often, and warned you of your great danger; often have I whispered to you, to crush your terrible enemy, but you would not heed me." As she faded from the light, I saw the swift descent of the serpent's head as it struck, I heard a terrible wail of despair and knew no more.

When again I opened my eyes they were putting wet cloths upon my head. They said they had heard "my" scream and found me unconscious.

ALIEN.

Pale and Languid.

THE CONDITIONS OF VERY MANY YOUNG GIRLS IN CANADA.

They are Subject to Headache, Heart Trouble, and an Indisposition to Excitation—Parents Should Act Promptly in Such Cases.

Miss Alma Gauthier, daughter of Mr. Adelard Gauthier, proprietor of a well known hotel at Three Rivers, Que., enjoys a wide popularity among her young friends and they have recently had occasion to rejoice at her restoration to health after a serious illness. When a reporter called to ascertain the facts of the case Miss Gauthier was out of the city on a visit, but her father very gladly consented to give the story of her cure. He said:—"I believe that had it not been for Dr. Williams' Pink Pills my daughter Alma might now have been in her grave, and I would be ungrateful indeed if I did not at all times say a kind word in favor of the medicine that restored her to health. My daughter's health first began to give way several years ago. At first the trouble did not appear to be serious, and we thought she would soon regain her accustomed health. As time went on, however, this proved not to be the case. She grew weaker, was troubled with headaches, poor appetite, dizziness and a feeling of almost constant languor. She was treated by a good doctor, but still there was no improvement. She seemed to be gradually fading away. If she walked up stairs she would have to stop several times to rest on the way. She lost all her color and her face was as white as chalk. Her trouble was clearly that which afflicts so many young women entering womanhood, and we feared it would develop into consumption. One day a friend of the family urged her to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and she consented, and procured a couple of boxes. Before they were quite gone there was a slight improvement in her appetite and we looked upon this as a hopeful sign. Another half-dozen boxes were procured, and under their use she day by day acquired new strength and new interest in life. She is now as healthy a girl as there is in Three Rivers, with every trace of her pallor and languor gone. This is entirely due to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I am rejoiced to be able to say so publicly."

The case of Miss Gauthier certainly carries with it a lesson to other parents, whose daughters may be pale, languid, easily tired, or subject to headaches, or the other distressing symptoms that mark the onward progress of anemia. In cases of this kind Dr. Williams' Pink Pills will give more certain and speedy results than any other medicine. They act promptly and directly, making new, rich red blood, and strengthening the nerves, and correct all the irregularities incident to this critical period.

Sold by all dealers or sent post paid at 50c a box or six boxes for \$2.50 by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont. Do not be persuaded to take some substitute.

He kept his word.

A letter has just been received by a

friend in England from an officer besieged in Ladysmith. The "Dick" referred to is an officer of Gloucestershires captured at Nicholson's Nek.

"I want you," the officer writes to his English friend, "to release me from a promise Dick and I, individually and collectively, made you. You will remember that we undertook to be in Pretoria for Christmas. I find I can't by any possibility get there quite in time, so am obliged to ask you to release me from my part of the bargain. Dick, however, as you know, was always a beggar to keep his word. He has managed to get to Pretoria like the good officer he is, and at the head of his men. By the way, if you are thinking of sending me a turkey for Christmas, please pick out one that is strong on the wing and good for a fifteen mile burst of speed, and have the pigeon post people fling it in the air at Colenso. Kindly tell the bird that if its ambition is to be dined off by one of Her Most Gracious Majesty's officers it had better fly high."

Lord Charles Beresford's New Billet

Lord Charles Beresford has got a most important command at length. He has been appointed second in command of the Mediterranean Squadron, perhaps Britain's heaviest fighting force. The Channel Squadron is undoubtedly the "swell" fleet, but it is recognized here that when the gun begins to thunder in a European war the Mediterranean Squadron is the one which will come in for the first and heaviest crash. So although the world does not hear so much of the Mediterranean as of the Channel fleet, it is, nevertheless, the grimmest, most hardworking fleet in the world. It is never idle, and it carries no lame ducks on its register. Lord Charles has now the opportunity of his life. If he has any new ideas in his head, any points on manoeuvring or plans of battle he will get a chance to work them out and prove their utility. The greatest attention will be paid to any suggestion he makes. Lord Charles is a hail-fellow-well-met with the London newspaper men, and attends all their big dinners when he is in town. He invariably finds himself called upon for a speech, and as invariably delivers a rattling, uproarious one in which the British naval flag floats high above the rest of Europe combined. At the finish of his latest outburst of patriotism he jumped the chairman and sang out, "Now is the moment ripe for Mr. Ward to sing us Sullivan's the Sailor's Grave. Let us hear of at least one dead sailor." A grin, none too comfortable, stole over the broad features of the fight-lord, every one laughed, and the glorious song was sung.

Printed the Wrong Portrait.

After Honorable Foster M. Voorhees was elected Governor of New Jersey the usual portraits of him were published in the newspapers. They made an interesting variety. In one instance an enterprising journal drew upon its cabinet and used a cut of the president of a small Western university, showing a young man with his hair carefully parted and curled, and with eyeglasses that stood forth prominently in the picture. He looked about twenty years of age and the face was smooth and smiling. The Governor had a good laugh over this particular picture as well as over some of the other interesting variations of his countenance. He is not an old man by any means, being only forty-three, but he has the look of a serious student and man of affairs. His home is in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Harvard Defeated by a Bluff.

Joseph M. Proskauer, of Mobile, Alabama, now a brilliant young lawyer of New York, was a notable figure in the undergraduate life of Columbia University several years ago. He was a member of the debating teams that defeated the teams of Harvard and Chicago Universities, and is at present the coach of the Columbia debaters. He found that the necessity for quick thought in the face of surprise in debating made his debut into court practice comparatively easy.

He was on the debating team of Columbia which advocated the popular election of United States Senators, against Harvard. Each side agreed that the reelection of Senators was often beneficial to the nation at large, but the Cambridge debaters claimed that popular elections would not accomplish this end. Columbia denied this, and brought to its support that particular form of sophistry called "statistics" to the effect that members of the House were as often reelected as Senators.

The next Harvard speaker controverted this statement with more statistics, showing that governors of states were seldom reelected, and claiming that governors and senators would share the same fate if their elections were conducted the same way.

Mr. Proskauer followed, and his reply not only won the debate, but fixed his status forever in the affections of the

Columbians. With an assurance born of daring he answered:

"The comparison of the opposition is worthless, because so many governors, by reason of state constitutions, are debarred from reelection."

The Harvard men were stunned. This was a view they had never taken. They had no statistics to cover this point, and therefore they ignored it, and the debate went against them.

This is where they were foolish, for Mr. Proskauer knew no more about state constitutions in fact than they did. It flashed across his mind that one or two Northwestern states did prohibit reelection of governors. How many more he did not know, and does not know even to this day.

It was simply a bluff, but it won.

Mr. Campbell's Legal Adventure.

Robert J. Campbell, of New York, had an odd and even awkward experience the other day which illustrates forcibly a peculiar phase in the practice of law in the metropolis. Returning home late at night, he was attacked and severely beaten by a drunken stranger. To allay the apprehension of his family Mr. Campbell explained that he had been struck by a street car. He was put to bed, and a maid sent out for liniment and bandages. She returned with a strange doctor who proceeded at once to make a minute examination.

The examination disclosed that the patient was suffering countless injuries, most of them incurable, to his spine, knees, thighs, shoulders and arms. Mr. Campbell, who knew how little he was hurt, was even alarmed by the result, and his family were thrown into almost senseless fear. The following day the doctor returned and announced that he was not a physician at all, but an "accident" lawyer—that is one who sues corporations for damages resulting from physical injuries. He also brought with him several alleged witnesses to the street car accident, all of whom were willing to swear to anything for a consideration.

Mr. Campbell was in double distress. He didn't know how to shut the lawyer off without disclosing his own well meant duplicity. The next day, however, friends of the railroad company that had been mentioned called on him and persuaded him to drop the matter.

He did not settle so easily, however, with the lawyer, who had heard of the accident from the maid in the drug store and had taken up the case as a speculation.

Best Remedy in the World For Catarrh.

Miss Bessie McK. Kennedy, of Kingston, N. B., says: "I have used Catarrhazone for Catarrh and think it is the best remedy in the world for that disease." Catarrhazone is a new scientific treatment that cures Catarrh, Asthma, Bronchitis, and irritable throat. Very pleasant and effective to use, contains no deleterious drugs. Catarrhazone is for sale by all reliable druggists. Trial outfit sent for 10c. in stamps by N. C. POLSON & CO., Kingston, Ont., Proprietors.

Aquatic Cats.

A sportsman returning from his winter's outing in the South tells the following traveler's yarn:

"I read a description the other day of the retrieving cat owned by a sportsman on Metairie Ridge. It is eclipsed, in my opinion, by a family of swimming cats owned by Captain Bosco of Tarpon Island. He is the kingpin fisherman of Bay Adams, and as quaint and original a character as you could find on the whole coast. His swimming cats, about which I started to tell you, belong to a feline tribe that has lived at the captain's place from time out of mind. There are at present, perhaps, a dozen all told, and they have apparently lost every vestige of the natural antipathy of their species for water. They will wade unhesitatingly through the shallows on the beach, hunting for small fish, and three or four will actually swim out to nearby luggers to get oysters. I shouldn't wonder if they should develop web feet in time."

"Why, colonel, I didn't know you wore colored shirts and collars!"

"I don't ordinarily," answered Col. Stillwell. "But I'm going back to my old Kentucky home. And if any scurrilous occurs, I don't want my political opponents to be misled into the impression that I am waving any flag of truce."

Dr. Von Steen's Pinesapple Tablets—Cure Sour Stomach, Distress after Eating, Weight in the Stomach, Wind on the Stomach, Loss of Appetite, Dizziness, Nausea, Poor Blood, Catarrh of the Stomach, Sick Headache and every other disorder traceable to bad digestion. One tablet gives almost instant relief—they're nature's positive and delightful cure—60 Tablets in a box for 35 cents.

"I see England is sending her nobility to the front now as targets for the Boers," remarked the man with bushy whiskers. "Which," replied the man with the monocle, "merely carries out my statement that England hasn't really begun to fight yet. She's only just putting up her dukes now."

A kit—How did you get such a fine thermometer so cheaply?

Tellit—Bought it during the cold wave. It was way down then.