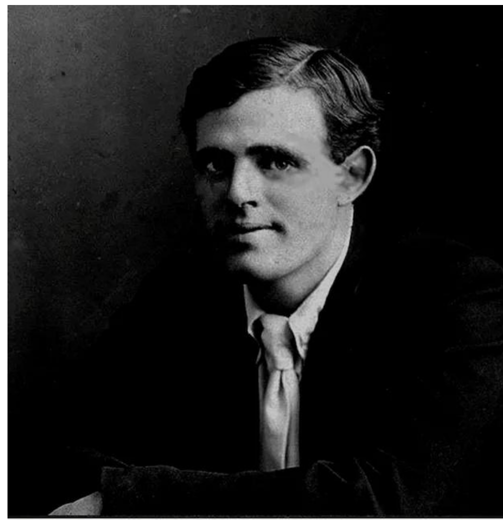
Book of Jack London

Charmian London



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Volume I

Preface

HERE in his own workroom, at his own work-table, which, like himself, is deep-grained, beautiful, unshamming even to its rugged knots and imperfections, I write of the Jack London whom I knew.

"That one of us should go before the other is unthinkable," he often said. Or, "It is beyond my imagining that I should be without you. . . . By rights we should go out together in some bright hazard, gallant shipwreck in a shouting, white gale, or shoulder to shoulder in some forgotten out-land where the red gods have called us." And again, "If I should go first, Mate Woman, it would be for you to write of me if — you dare be honest," always he challenged.

"But you could hardly do it," he would consider. "I fear you'd not want to write of my shortcomings, which you know only too well, and your work would be valueless without them. — Also, neither you nor I, unless it should be when I am very old, and when others are gone past wounding, can write without restraint of the very circumstances and characters that helped to make or mar me. And, anyway, my dear," was his familiar conclusion, "I'm going to live a hundred years, because I want to; and I'm going to beat you to it some day and write my own book of myself, and call it 'Jack Liverpool' — and it's going to make everybody sit up!"

In some such fashion we would speculate, summer afternoons, perhaps riding over the Beauty Ranch, or lying on the slant deck of a ship in the Trades, or tooling our alert four-in-hand across a mountain range.

I warn, therefore, that this book is written only for those sincere and open-minded folk who want to know the real and living facts that I can tell. So unusual a man should be honored with an unusual biography, and mine is bound to be frank beyond the ordinary, since I must approach it with frankness or do a spurious piece of work. I do not minimize the criticism to which I subject myself, but my philosophy is of a sort that transcends fear on this score. For Jack London was my man of men, and because I have answered these many years to his call of "my woman", I am unafraid. I am privileged to speak my mind about him, what of his own desire; and I can but feel that I knew him somewhat, if only because he said so. I am forever enslaved to him for his love, for his teaching, for his infinitely manifested charity and sweetness, and this enslavement is guerdon of my existence, in that it has taught me freedom, and

led to where, within my capacity, I might view and explore the wide spaces of life and thinking.

But only name him, — and forthwith a thousand vivid, trenchant thoughts clamor for delivery. Even more sharply than during his life I now realize how he was eternally whelmed by surging ideas, whenever his embracing mind laid hold of a theme. Often and often I have seen him near despair at the impossibility of capturing and holding, for presentment to his listener, the myriad related thoughts that crowded hard under a single impelling one.

The material at my hand is manifold and priceless. Much of it I shall forego, lest I wound where he hesitated to wound. But, within limitations dictated by like consideration for those he spared, I must in simple justice to him bring to bear all possible illumination. That is my passionate committal of myself and what of himself he lavished upon me.

One book of mine, "Our Hawaii," has been termed by some readers as "too personal," whatever that may signify. But in my sense of the word, "personal" is precisely what that narrative set out to be. And now, suppose that I, of all biographers, assume a conservative, too-proud-to-explain pose concerning this intimate man-soul, who of his admirers misled, or at best puzzled by popular misreport, and desiring more light upon his gripping personality, is to acquire what only I have to offer? Would a woman court happiness with such as Jack London, she needs must learn to regard life broadly. Her reward, if she be wise enough to claim reward, is obvious. What I absorbed of Jack London was by means of throwing wide a willing intelligence toward his nature and mental attitude. And since he went out in the midday of his brave years, I have sensed him in still subtler ways.

I summon the dear ghosts of all he has meant to me, in the largess of his sharing, and always he shared; all heritage from him of unclouded vision, purpose, straightness of speech; whatever I have meant to him; all these I beg to help me in my loving and difficult task. For at the outset I am appalled by what is ahead of me. Almost it looks a vain endeavor, one I would far better abandon, and confine my revelation to the commonplace, if commonplace can be found in such a life, lest I invite failure by reaching too wide and deep.

None but a fool dwells upon the small irks of a journey that has been undertaken all the way and back, for love and service and adventure. It is the long, long run that matters. The big basic considerations, the rudimental integrities, these are the saving things that buoy up life and persuade from us at the end that we "liked it all." And so, in reviewing what was in our long run a rainbow trail round the curve of the world, though I shall try to write from the height of my head, making honest this document, as he would have it, without sainting his humanness, I know I shall find myself most often directed from the depth of my heart toward a bountiful estimate of his abounding lovableness, charm, and variety.

I should be glad if I could believe that he, friend, lover, husband, for a dozen rich years, were now consciously standing over me guiding my pen — his pen, with which

I begin his portrait; glad for my own sake, at the same time decrying the selfishness to stay him one moment from that Field of Ardath that ever, to him, in his fairest hours, meant dreamless rest. But since I cannot even in his loss find hope and faith in what he did not believe for himself, for me, for any one, I can yet know that what of his gift there resides in my being from those long, comprehending years together drives brain and hand to lay what I may of him "cards up on the table," as he fearlessly played his own game of living.

Shortly after his death my already awakened mettle to write of him was spurred by the remark of an American author to a common friend, "Jack London was a far greater man than some of his intimates may let us know." I, at least, shall not merit this curious implication. Jack London gave so greatly to all who could see and hear and feel. Those who gained worse than nothing from the privilege of association with him, neighbor, sharer, young patriarch whose burdens were so nobly borne, I can only designate as the deaf, the dumb, the blind.

This, then, is my goal: to strive to expound him through the evaluations he placed upon himself which untiringly he strove to make clear to me. And to my everlasting joy and benefit, my lamps were always lit that I might less and less blindly gaze into the unfailing wonder which I found him. The vision I cherish rises undimmed, definite, appealing to be revealed as he would declare himself.

Once more, as in other prefaces, I crave indulgence for that I must appear somewhat profusely in my own pages. Verily, in order to make a book about Jack London, I should have to make a book about myself — which indeed would be all about Jack London.

Here I give to the world my Jack London — a virile creature compounded of curiosity and fearlessness, the very texture of fine sensibility, the loving heart and discerning intuitions of a woman, an ardent brain, and a divine belief in himself. And since he was first and foremost his own man, I render, as nearly as may be in the premises, also his own Jack London. If I prove candid to a degree, let it be remembered that he would be first to have it so.

CHARMIAN LONDON

Jack London Ranch,

Glen Ellen, Sonoma County, California

Prologue: And a Meeting

I WISH you'd meet this remarkable boy of mine, this Jack London," my aunt remarked one morning in the spring of 1900, with a laugh in her earnest blue eyes. "I should like to have your opinion of him. The fact is, I have only talked with him once, myself, but already I feel as if he belonged to me."

"Very well," I replied rather absently, pinning on my straw sailor before a diminutive silver-trinketed dressing-table that was my especial pride. For my mind was bent on other matters than this vague young writer whose stories in the Overland Monthly I

had heard the family discussing with fervor for months past. “Very well,” I repeated, “when shall it be?”

“He’s coming here to-morrow afternoon,” she considered, “though too early for you. But in a few days I’m to meet him at the museum in the Ferry Building, to pose him for a picture in Alaskan furs, to illustrate my article. How would this do? — I’ll take you to lunch!”

“Why should you take him to lunch!” I cried, stung to protest.

“My dear child — I know he hasn’t an extra cent to spend. No, I will entertain the pair of you, at half past twelve.”

“I don’t know what you will think of him,” she called after me, in a doubtful tone, as I hurried off for Dwight Way station, which was near our home in Berkeley. “He is not a bit like your college and society friends!” But their afternoon’s interview lasted until six o’clock. My latch-key was already clicking in the lock as Auntie turned the knob for the egress of a rather odd caller, clad in shabby bicycle trousers and dark gray woolen shirt. A nondescript tie, soft bicycle shoes, and a worn cap in one hand, completed his outfit, while the other held fast a copy of Boyd’s Composition, borrowed from his hostess. There was a hasty introduction in the dim hall rainbowed by the sunset through a stained glass window. Then the apparently abashed young fellow ran lightly down the steps, pulling the dingy cap over a mop of brown curls, and rode away on his wheel.

“So that’s your wonderful Jack London,” I chaffed. “You will admit he is not a very elegant afternoon caller!”

“Granted,” Auntie concurred; but added swiftly, “I do not think he missed your hardly concealed critical look, my dear. Nothing escapes that boy. And you must remember,” she admonished gently, “with genius, clothing doesn’t matter. Besides, I doubt if he can afford better.”

“Well,” I retorted, a trifle guiltily, “he is not the only genius amongst your friends, but certainly none of them ever came to our house looking like this one.”

Seeing me really contrite, she told me laughingly how Hannah had come to her with puzzled brow, after answering the door bell:

“‘I do not think this can be the gentleman Mrs. Eames expects. He is only a boy, in rough clothes, and walks like a sailor.’“ Whereupon Hannah had flushingly received a rebuke similar to mine.

On the day set for the lunch, I exchanged noon hours with my pretty assistant. For, in a big San Francisco shipping and commission firm, my shorthand and type writing earned bed and board, party gowns, the services of Hannah, the immaculate Swedish maid, not to mention fodder and stabling for my beautiful saddle mare. For we were not in opulent circumstances. My aunt and foster mother, Ninetta Eames, wrote for the magazines, while her husband acted as business manager of the beloved old Overland Monthly, whose funds were notoriously meager — no one better than Jack London knew how meager. As for myself, I had taken a hand in my own maintenance from my fourteenth year, when I had mastered Uncle Roscoe Eames’s Light Line Shorthand

and assisted him with his classes, on to the year at Mills College, where I worked my way as secretary to its President, Mrs. Susan L. Mills.

Promptly at twelve-thirty I reached the entrance of the restaurant my aunt had named — Young's, I think it was, on Montgomery, not far from Market Street. If I am a shade misty, it must be borne in mind that this was almost six years before the time when the Great Fire, following upon the Great Earthquake, destroyed landmarks in this section of incomparable old San Francisco.

Already they were on the spot, my small, blue-eyed, dark-haired aunt, and beside her the boyish figure of medium height in a sack-coated gray suit, patently ready-made and almost pathetically new. He wore a small black tie, low-cut shoes, and a neat visored gray cap that did not hide a wavy brown forelock. And this was the first and last time we ever saw Jack London arrayed in waistcoat and starched collar.

My clearest vision of this moment when I first looked fairly upon the man who was destined to play such momentous part in my life, is of the cheerful-gray aspect of him; for, under the meeting low line of his brows, the wide-set, very large, direct eyes were as gray as the soft gray cloth, but more blue for the tan of his blond skin.

Another unclouded mental impression that persists across the years, is of the modest quiet of his manner, and, still more distinctly, the beauty of his mouth, full-lipped, not small, with deep, upturned ends that my aunt happily described as "pictured corners" — a designation too lovely for analysis. And there was about this feature a chastity, an untried virginity of expression, that seemed greatly at odds with recalled rumors of the romantic if rather dubious career of this sailor-shouldered, light-stepping man of twenty-four, as gamin, redoubtable member of dread hoodlum gangs in Oakland, bay pirate, vagrant, adventurer in Alaskan gold fields — not to emphasize a smear of actual jail-birding, if truth prevailed. That he was moreover an exceedingly active member of the Socialist Labor Party was no shock to my propriety, albeit his Socialism was of a ruggeder, more militant sort than that with which I was familiar in my own home.

Ever my initial picture of that baffling mouth must hold its own with the great gray eyes, in their almost appealing candor a similar unbelievable childlikeness. "Looking for something he has never known," was the fancy that drifted through my brain, as my own eyes fell from his to the small hand he extended — half-timorously it seemed to me, as I noted an absence of grip.

"Jack London is the gentlest man I have ever known," I once heard an old woman say. And that is what also comes down to me from this early contact with a personality that made its thoroughgoing masculinity only slightly felt through an alight repose of demeanor, an expectant passivity, which very little advertised vibrant nerves and quick underlying dominance. That is it — sitting across the table in the buzzing, bustling café, I seemed to sense that he was expecting something, something we two women had for him of our personalities, our ideas, our good will. In those long-lashed eyes that had mirrored much of life's most unbeautiful presentments, there was a waiting, a continual asking, and their own response was swift and sweet toward any gift of frank idea or fellowship. He displayed interest in the fact that I was self-supporting;

and once, when my Aunt had addressed me, he raised that full gray look to mine and slowly pronounced, as if listening to the sound of his own pleased voice:

"Charmian . . . Charmian . . .What a beautiful name!"

I have little recollection of the conversation that lasted out the meal, nor of what Jack London ordered. It is safe to say that, "barring his half-fed tramp days, or some outlandish delicacy temporarily in favor, few privileged to contact with him remember him for his appetite. The morning's visit to the museum came up, along with his delight in once more seeing the familiar Klondike habiliments. Then, while my Aunt drew him out concerning himself, Rudyard Kipling's name was mentioned, and Jack's whole face lighted as he exclaimed: "Oh, have you read The Brushwood Boy? — There is no end to Kipling, simply no end. Gone was that half-deferential diffidence; remained only his kindling enthusiasm for the work of his British idol, treasured possession of which without delay he would share with responsive companions.

It had proved inevitable, upon the appearance of young London's "Odyssey of the North" in the Atlantic Monthly for January just past, that this new writer's revolutionary method of presenting the primal, raw, frigid life of the savage North should call forth comparison with Kipling. I felt at a disadvantage in that I had missed reading this tale and the other eight that had been running in the Overland, beginning with "To the Man on Trail" in the January 1899 issue, and ending with "The Wisdom of the Trail" in December. The entire nine I learned were by now in the hands of Houghton, Mifflin & Company for book publication, under the title of "The Son of the Wolf" — the Arctic Indian's name for the conquering white man. Simultaneously with the Atlantic Monthly, he had broken into two other eastern publications, with an article, "The Economics of the Klondike," in The Review of Reviews, and a story, "Pluck and Pertinacity," in The Youth's Companion. "Charmian," Mrs. Eames was suddenly struck with the idea, "why can't you review 'The Son of the Wolf' — perhaps in the same number of the Overland with my article on Mr. London?"

For as has been seen, at this period we were closely associated with the old magazine of the Golden West, that had cradled the first born of Bret Harte's genius; even I, urged on by my family, had dabbled sporadically and unambitiously at certain unimportant book reviewings. Besides, had not my maiden position, after leaving Mills College, been as assistant sub-scissors in the Overland sanctum? But far more than with literary leanings was I occupied, outside my office hours, with University of California "hops," and "proms," and "senior balls," to say nothing of week-end yachting on San Francisco Bay, horseback rides, and youth's joy of living generally.

Jack beamed upon me from under his marked, mobile brows that just touched over the square bridge of a precisely not-too-short nose:

"Is it a go, Miss Kittredge? — I'll hold you to that! And I'll send you my duplicate proof-sheets soon, so you won't have to wait for the book."

When we parted he asked, meanwhile rolling and lighting a cigarette with quick, definite motions of his tapering fingers:

"Mrs. Eames, may I bring a friend to see you! His name is Herman Whitaker, Jim we call him, and he can give you lots of points about me that I can't think of, for your article."

An early night was determined upon, and the engagement was fulfilled, shortly followed by a second. While my aunt's interviews with Mr. Whitaker were in progress, it devolved upon me to entertain their subject.

Of these occasions, nothing consecutive lives in memory, and only two incidents stand out: one, that I complied with my aunt's request to play on the piano for Mr. London, she having discovered his intense fondness for music; the other, that I introduced him to my "den" where, among other cherished objects, were my books, reproductions of my favorite marbles and paintings, and an absurdly elaborate little tea-table. I had the feeling that he was brightly aware of the feminine individuality of the room; and he showed interest in my various girlish activities, whether in music, or drawing, riding, even dancing. Years afterward that rosy little apartment, Venus Crouched and all, figured as Dede Mason's, in "Burning Daylight."

"I never danced a step in my life," he regretted bashfully. "Never seemed to have time to learn those soft, lovely ways of young people. But I like to see dancing."

For the music and the books he was almost equally hungry. Fled beyond recall is the memory of what I played, except that he asked if I had the de Koven "Recessional" — Kipling's verses; and he told me he sometimes bicycled to San Jose to visit friends, and there he had heard the song. It happened that I was able to gratify him, since I possessed quite a repertory of vocal music; for although no singer, I played accompaniments unprofessionally in the Bay region concerts.

Together we several times hummed through the stately invocation, and Jack was all alight with emotion, his great eyes shining, while he begged for it over and over. He had no apparent singing voice, although to a pleasanter, more expressive speaking tone I had never listened, especially when he descanted upon Kipling.

But more vividly than any other picture of him at that time, he rises standing by my side at the tall book-case in my den. His glowing eyes ranged rapidly over the volumes, and he seemed in a fine fervor, murmuring titles and authors or touching the backs with his small hands. Soon we were talking very fast, discussing works we had both read, and he urged me not to neglect Thomas Hardy's "Jude the Obscure." "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" had not come his way. This I lent him, together with Maurice Hewlett's "The Forest Lovers" and "Flood Tide," by Sallie P. McLean Green.

And once, turning toward him, I met a pair of fathomless sea-blue eyes, and experienced a sudden and unexpected impact of his mental and physical vitality; felt at-one with him for a high instant, knew his spiritual dignity, recognized him for the warm, human creature that he was. The moment passed quickly, and he was assuring me, unasked, that he had "a conscience about books," and would take the best care of mine. Through the irony of chance, some one spilled a bottle of ink over the cover of "Flood Tide," to Jack London's undying indignation and remorse. To this day I treasure the stained thing.

Often in later years, he and I wondered, had we been further thrown together, if we should have come to care the whole way for each other. And we usually agreed that the hour was not then. "You came in my great need," he would muse. That early my great need had not developed, or else I did not recognize it."

The second of these calls occurred, I think, in the week of March 26. I aim to be thus explicit, because of headlong happenings in the succeeding week. Of what led to our making an appointment I am not sure; most likely he was sketching his college career for me, which, owing to responsibilities and lack of money, had been limited to half his Freshman year. Be this as it may, there was to me some unfamiliar purlieu of the staid university town that he thought would be of interest. With mutual amusement over the gaiety that would be added to the academic precincts by spectacle of man a-wheel and woman a-horse, we decided upon Saturday afternoon, April the seventh.

Meanwhile, one Saturday there had arrived the promised proof-sheets of "The Son of the Wolf," and when I returned home early for my long ride, on the tiny dresser I found waiting the long, printed slips. While unpinning my hat I started to read. I neither rose nor finished removing the sailor, until my streaming eyes had lifted from the last word of the last tale.

For before the first few sheets had been turned down, I had become thrall to the wonder and wisdom and artistry of "The White Silence," profoundly aware of the awareness of this young protagonist of nature's primordial forces, his apperception of the world in which he lived, and of the heart of man and beast, aye, and of woman — all human and fallible, but shot through with the fineness and courage of the spirit of nobility. This story, one of his first, contains some of the most masterly of the passages which set him amongst the young lords of language. In Mason's parting words are shown Jack's love of his own race, and for children. Indeed, he let us in upon nearly all of himself in that story. In most of the stories I noticed that he never seemed to be far from the consideration of death. His artistry lingered caressingly about the final destiny of man and animal.

Throughout the long afternoon, thrilled alike with the splendid repose and the crackling action of the work, shaken with its power, there blended with spiritual emotion the conviction that I had no business with the reviewing or criticizing of such brain-stuff as Jack London's. For asmuch as I was intellectually indolent, I even felt no incitement to bestir myself. I would not touch the thing, I declared first to the four walls of the den, later to my aunt, who stood petrified before this breakdown of my accustomed certitude.

In after years, many were the times Jack London half seriously if laughingly charged that my unalterable decision was due, in the last analysis, to occurrences of the ensuing week. But I plead, now as always, complete innocence. Aside from my being more or less absorbed in another and very different person, the man Jack London dwelt in my consciousness little more tenaciously than an unusual book or play.

On Wednesday evening, April fourth, I found a type written note awaiting me at home. This must have been tossed into the waste basket, for I have not seen it since.

But it was worded something like this he never lost many hours weeding out formal titles:

"Dear Charmian:

"It will be impossible for me to keep that engagement next Saturday. My letter to your aunt by this mail will explain. Some time in the future, maybe.

"Sincerely yours,

"Jack London."

As I finished reading, Auntie came in, real distress in her face, for she had grown truly fond of her lovable friend, an affection which he reciprocated. In her hand was a similarly typed missive, covering a page and a half. "Listen to this," she said in a dead voice, and read to me the unexpected contents, which were Jack's vindication for the suddenness of his proceeding. I copy:

"1130 East 15th St.,

"Oakland, Calif.,

"April 3, 1900.

"My dear Mrs. Eames:

"Must confess you have the advantage of me. I have not yet seen my book, nor can I possibly imagine what it looks like. Nor can you possibly imagine why I am going to beg off from going out to your place next Saturday. You know I do things quickly. Sunday morning, last, I had not the slightest intention of doing what I am going to do. I came down and looked over the house I was to move into that fathered the thought. I made up my mind. Sunday evening I opened transactions for a wife; by Monday evening had the affair well under way; and next Saturday morning I shall marry a Bessie Maddern, cousin to Minnie Maddern Fiske. Also, on said Saturday, as soon as the thing is over with we jump out on our wheels for a three days trip, and then back and to work. "'The rash boy,' I hear you say. Divers deep considerations have led me to do this thing; but I shall over-ride just one objection — that of being tied. I am already tied. Though single, I have had to support a household just the same. Should I wish to go to China the household would have to be provided for whether I had a wife or not.

"As it is, I shall be steadied, and can be able to devote more time to my work. One only has one life, you know, after all, and why not live it? Besides, my heart is large, and I shall be a cleaner, wholesomer man because of a restraint being laid upon me in place of being free to drift wheresoever I listed. I am sure you will understand.

"I thank you for your kind word concerning the appearance of 'The Son of the Wolf.' I shall let you know when I am coming out, and now, being located, want you and yours to come and see me and mine. Will settle that when I get back. Wedding is to be private.

"Send announcement later.

"Very sincerely yours,

"Jack London."

“Heavens and earth!” wailed my aunt. “Think what the boy is doing! A sensible, considered marriage for a love-man like that! Only one life . . . and why not live it? — The boy must be crazy to dream that marrying in cold blood is living life!”

“No, not crazy, but perhaps super-sane — or thinks he is,” I commented, and went down to dinner, probably marveling how “God’s own mad lover” may sometimes direct his madness into quite practical channels.

One bitter cold morning in New York City, in the winter of 1918, I was called over the telephone by Jack’s longtime friend, Cloudesley Johns:

“Oh, Charmian — I’ve been looking over those 1899 and 1900 letters of Jack’s I promised for your use, and find this, dated March 10, 1900. Listen:

“‘Have just finished reading “Forest Lovers” by Maurice Hewlett. Read it by all means. . . . Have made the acquaintance of Charmian Kittredge, a charming girl who writes book reviews, and who possesses a pretty little library wherein I have found all these late books which the public libraries are afraid to have circulated.’“

Thus, Jack London, who always decried puns on my given name, was himself not guiltless in this reference to our passing acquaintance of 1900.

Except for one occasion, when he brought his wife, the pair on bicycles, to call upon us, Jack London dropped out of my sphere of interest, save insofar as I desultorily followed his work. My aunt’s article duly appeared in the 1900 May Overland, while their friendship grew apace, until he came to address her in letters as Mother Mine. Later in the year I sold a piece of Berkeley land in which she had long since wisely overborne me to invest my savings, and a portion of the sum realized I spent on a fifteen months vacation in the eastern states and Europe. One icy morning, away up in Mt. Desert Island, opening an Oakland, California, paper, I stumbled upon this item:

“LONDON In this city, January 15, 1901, to the wife of Jack London, a daughter.”

A comment read:

“Jack London, the brilliant young author and essayist, is receiving congratulations upon the advent of a daughter. Mr. London is satisfied that he has a real live subject for the study of psychology and other phenomena in which he is so much interested.”

In this wise the young adventurer, who has been dubbed “the most picturesque figure in American literature,” pursued the law-abiding domesticity he had calculated so nicely as his duty to himself, his work, and society; while I, like Masefield’s “Young April on a bloodhorse with a roving eye,” rode merrily upon my own dutiful, dancing, musical way that seemed all-sufficient to my needs, unheedful of the future.

The Stuff of Stars

VOLUME I — CHAPTER I

ALL in all, it is a happy fate that places in one’s keeping the rudimental material, blood-drift and magical spirit-stuff, that went into the syntheses of this resultant entity whom men knew as Jack London; who in his time was loved or hated as they reacted

to his spacious nature with its varying levels of humannesses, its winging heights, its drowning depths.

In sifting and assembling the details bearing upon Jack London's origin, the keen enjoyment of serving his readers joins with a keener zest in singing his pride of race; in sounding the pean, manifest throughout his work, of his very own Anglo-Saxon breed, upon which he gambled his faith. And the pleasure increases as additional verification is uncovered bearing upon his direct British ancestry.

From the heart of the city of London there sprang two large families that bore the city's name, one of which branches was from Semitic seed, as witness Meyer London, erstwhile Socialist congressman at Washington, D. C., and many another in America; while in England one of my correspondents is a Jewess whom I address as "Mrs. Jack London."

The Gentile group, it seems, owned the land of which Chatham Square is now part. One of the early Londons had a sister Elizabeth, who married a Wellington, and lived at Chatham. When Jack London's sister Eliza was a child, she heard her father say, referring to politics in his part of Pennsylvania: "If the Wellingtons and McLoughlins stood together, they'd carry the elections!" In Jack's direct ancestry, the first person in my available record is Sir William London, who foreswore allegiance to Great Britain and betook himself to America. Here, under General George Washington, he fought valiantly for his ideals, thereby sacrificing no mean estates in the tight little island; for these were promptly confiscated by the jealous Crown, and thereafter figured in the mill of Chancery. I can remember Jack London saying: "One of my childhood recollections is of mysterious sessions held by my mother and father, from which I gathered that he had been approached across the water by the London heirs to lend a hand in fighting for his great-grandfather's seized properties."

But a letter from one Mary London Wilson, seventy years old, writing from Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, in 1904, gives the following: That nearly thirty years before, an advertisement had been run in the papers, calling for information of London heirs in America. For Lord Russell London had died in England, the last of his line, leaving a half million for the American heirs if they could be located. From this letter one learns that none of the Londons knew of this advertisement for nearly two years; when a Charley London, with a lawyer, voyaged overseas, only to find that the estate had gone from Chancery to the Crown.

Sir William London's son William named his son Manley. Manley London married Sarah Hess, and became the sire of eight: Mary, Sarah, Rebecca, George, Martha, Eliza, Joseph, and John London, with whom the direct life-story of Jack London begins. And these Londons, one and all, from the redoubtable knight down to and including his great-grandson John, took part in each and every warlike uprising for American liberty. It would not be out of place here to add that the last of the paternal line, nephews of Jack London, namely, Irving Shepard and John Miller, did their part on sea and land in this twentieth century greatest of all struggles.

John London, great-grandson of Sir William, first saw the light in Springfield County, Pennsylvania, on January 11, 1828. He grew up on a farm, receiving the education attainable in small rural schools nearly a century ago, while he learned the hard, empirical way of agriculture at that early date.

He comes next into view at the age of nineteen, as boss of a section gang in the construction of a great railroad system through Pennsylvania. One day, John reported at the big farm residence of an official of the road, one Hugh Cavett, The latter being absent, his daughter Anna Jane took the message. Eyes and hands struck fire, and in two weeks the pair were married; for John London was a bonnie lad, six feet in his homespun socks, square-shouldered, well-limbed, fine-skinned, with comely hands and feet, and a wealth of soft, wavy brown hair — one of Jack London's own physical characteristics. "Finest head of hair I ever barbered!" old Barber Smith of San Francisco declared of John's luxuriant mane thirty years later. And, like Jack's, John's wide-set, gray-blue, dancing eyes and sweeping ways were not to be resisted by mortal woman. What mattered it to him, when kind called to kind, that Anna Jane's father was his employer and a rich man! He was the owner of profitable farmlands, not only in Westmorel, but in Township Patton, Alleghany County; a stockholder in the Wheeling Bridge property in Virginia, and an investor in various other lucrative schemes that were bringing fortunes to foreseeing men of Hugh Cavett's type. Besides, over and above the love that drew the man and maid so quickly together, was not the comely girl John's very ideal of a capable country-house mistress?

After the wedding John London came to live for a time in the big house, where he began the founding of his own line — a generous contribution of eleven olive branches, some sprouting twin-buds, to the family tree. He was absent frequently, sent out, I gather, by his father-in-law on business connected with the railroad. If the other man was at all put out by the forthright methods of the young couple in matters matrimonial, evidently he made the best of the situation and advanced the unexpected son-in-law in line with his abilities. Moreover, the sedately arriving yearly babies, beginning with Tom and Mary, could not have failed to erase any last vestige of their grandfather's pique.

John London's life-long gallantry is illustrated by a little incident that took place upon his homecoming from one of these trips. Finding his bride over-strained by the housewifely labor of entertaining for weeks a full complement of relatives, he expressed his solicitude by dismiss ing the whole tribe, stating his reasons. He then turned to and helped Anna Jane clear up after them. In quite another setting, half a century later, Jack London said to me:

"When we are married, much as I love an open house, if I cannot afford servants, we'll live in tents so there can't be any entertaining! No domestic drudgery for wife of mine. It's your life and my life, first. Our need of each other lies in different ways than circumscribed domesticity."

Very congenial seem to have been John and Anna Jane. "No one ever saw Jane angry or disagreeable," reads the yellowed fragment of a letter, "nor John London

cross or harsh. He was always protecting some one." A roving spirit characterized the London strain, and Anna Jane appears to have been in no wise backward in aiding and abetting its development in her spouse. From the fact that she is not mentioned in Hugh Cavett's will, and by other data, one is led to conclude that he had settled her portion upon her before she and John presently went adventuring up through Wisconsin, with an eye for an abiding-place, thence drifting down to Illinois, where John's mother, a remarkable woman, managed her own stockfarm. Five sons she gave to the Civil War, meanwhile she continued to develop her holdings.

When John London enlisted in the War of the Rebellion, it was from a Missouri farm, and he left behind Anna Jane with seven children. At the close of the war, with one lung out of action as the result of a combined siege of pneumonia and smallpox, he lived with his family in the town of Moscow, Muscatine County, Iowa, in a two-story white house on the town square. Here Eliza was born. On the opposite side of the square stood the flourmill, and John, among other building work, superintended the construction of a bridge across Cedar Eiver, the stream that furnished power to the mill. Eliza remembers well the close proximity of the watercourse. Priscilla was washing and getting dinner, and asked her wee sister to run and see if papa was coming. Eliza toddled to the bench on which she was wont to climb to the window, and pulled over upon herself the steaming tub of clothing big sister had set there. She never forgot how quickly papa, returning from his bridge-building, answered the summons to aid his scalded baby. Later, they migrated to a quarter section of government land outside of Moscow. When his wife was discovered with consumption, John arranged affairs so that he could devote himself to her, and it fell in with their mutual dreams to play at gipsying. For two years they moved over the prairies in a "schooner," and during this time John came into pleasant contact with the Pawnees, by whom he swore stoutly to his dying day. "Play fair with an Indian," he held, "and you can trust him with anything, anywhere. It's wrong treatment that's made sly devils of 'em."

With the redskins this born out-doors man hunted and trapped raccoons and other prairie game; and, in bee-hunting, proved of keener sight than the aborigines in following to its honey store the flight of a homing worker. Later, when the Indians were camping near the farm, John branded his stock, and, unlike some of his neighbors, never lost a single head to any marauder. Play the game squarely, was his philosophy, and you stand to win.

That Anna Jane did not entirely subscribe to this whole sale confidence in the original American crops out in an amusing anecdote, often told by her husband. He, despite the railing of his familiars, had blithely loaned to an old brave fifty cents and a musket, but forgot to mention the little transaction to his wife. It happened that she was alone when the chief came to redeem his obligations, and being very ill, she was badly frightened when his gaunt frame filled the doorway. In round terms she ordered him away; but the Indian, when she refused to touch the fifty cents, strode furiously in a grandly threw the coins into the middle of the floor, and stood the well-cleaned gun carefully in its corner. Stalking as furiously forth, he met his benefactor coming

home, to whom he clipped out that the whiteface squaw was no good — too foolish even to take money or guns offered her.

Early in the seventies, John London found himself bereft of his mate, and with an exceptionally large family to consider. One of the sons, Charles, had been injured playing our national game, a ball catching him in the chest. His father conceived a plan whereby he might leave the remaining youngest folk — three of the eleven had died — temporarily with the older sisters and willing neighbors, while he struck out farther West in the hope of benefiting the ailing boy. All was satisfactorily worked out, when John weakened to the wailing of Eliza and Ida, hardly more than babies. At the last moment a rearrangement was effected that included the pair, as well as two friends, Mr. and Mrs. Chase. They, in return for their expenses to California, were to assume the care of Charles and his two little sisters. John never again saw Iowa. Charles grew rapidly worse, and died eleven days after he looked upon his first ocean. The widower disposed of the farm, and with the proceeds established himself in a contracting business in San Francisco. Meantime he placed Eliza and Ida in the Protestant Orphan Asylum on Haight Street, paying for their living and tuition. Eliza London has always averred that the period spent in the quaint, moss-grown stone home was the happiest of her life, and with the tenaciousness of a devoted nature, she had soon fastened her shy affection upon one of the teachers. Next she came to nourish a fond hope that her beloved papa would share her own adoration for teacher, and bring to his girls a new mother. But she was doomed to secret sorrow and tears, for papa, although never blind to a pretty face and womanly traits, was even then under the influence of wholly a different person.

Many a smart beau of that winsome light-opera star of the long ago, Kate Castleton, will smile with awakened memories to learn that a sweet friendship existed between the lovable young singer and the big, quiet, long-bearded man from the Middle West who had such a way with him. But it was not she — and another ardent desire of the wee Eliza, who still wore a ring her idol had sent her, went glimmering with the first. For the lady of her father's second choice in life was not beautiful. And Eliza, who did not consider lovely her own small, expressive face with its deep-blue, black-lashed London eyes, worshiped beauty, and little considered other possible attractiveness in herself or those about her.

Now the widower, ever alert to new impressions from the world's limitless abundance, never convinced but there was something better for him just over the mutely summoning horizon, and with the death of two dear ones still quick in his consciousness, had strayed from his more or less strict Methodist outlook and observances and had become enamored of the doctrines of a spiritualistic cult. Amongst the devout sisters of this group of seekers after truth he met Flora Wellman, a tiny, fair woman in her early thirties, hailing from Massillon, Ohio. Once more in the London fashion, John wasted no moment in binding to him his desire.

The next visiting day at the orphanage, on which he had planned to escort the betrothed to meet his daughters, found him ill; and when the unsuspecting Eliza and

Ida were bidden to the stiff reception-room, imagine their astonish ment to see an unknown woman, hardly above their own height, rise and announce that she was to be their new mother.

In Jack London's inheritance through his mother, again the blood of Great Britain predominates, for Flora Wellman's ancestry leads back to England and Wales, and in cludes strains of French and Dutch. The family traces its American residence to pre-Bevolution days. Flora's father, Marshall Daniel Wellman, was born in Augusta, Oneida County, New York, in 1800, son of Betsy Baker and Joel Wellman, both of British stock. Joel was a cooper, plying his trade in the Syracuse District Salt Wells. When Betsy died, he married a second wife who in turn left him a widower. Whereupon, while Marshall and a brother were yet boys, Joel journeyed to the headwaters of the Allegheny Eiver, where the three built and launched a wondrous house boat, called a bateau, and made the voyage to Pittsburgh. Thence the bateau floated them on down to old Beavertown, where Joel had heard there was a demand for pork and whisky-barrels. In his palmy days, Marshall Wellman loved to boast that he had earned a reputation of turning out the best tight oaken barrels ever seen in the region of Beavertown.

A year afterward they moved farther West, this time to Wooster, Ohio. There, from the ashes of timber burned in clearing this new country, Joel and his sons manufactured "pot ash," which they had learned was one of the few products that sold for cash in Pittsburgh. When he was an old man, Marshall remembered well the mountain of stacked ash we piled up south of the town, Wooster, near the Robinson place." Once a sister came all the way from New York to see their land of promise; but she became homesick and Marshall escorted her, the couple on horses, back to New York. While still under twenty-one, he took a contract for building a section of the Allegheny Canal in Pennsylvania; and subsequently Marshall Wellman rose to be the wealthiest citizen of Massillon, Ohio, as wealth was accounted in those days.

Flora Wellman, born August 17, 1843, was the youngest child of Marshall Wellman's family of five, the others being Mary Marcia, Hiram B., Susan, and Louisa. Her mother, Eleanor Garrett Jones, born in 1810 at Brookfield, Trumbull County, Ohio, had married Marshall in 1852. Her father, a devout circuit-rider of Welsh extraction, called "Priest" Jones, well beloved and valued adviser to the countryside, had been a pioneer settler and upbuilder of Ohio when that state was thought of as the whole West. He passed away an honored member of Wooster's society, full of good works, and incidentally leaving a comfortable fortune to his heirs.

The mother died shortly following Flora's birth, and Wellman remarried when she was four years of age. His bride was Julia Frederica Hurxthal, the Hurxthals being another of the pioneer Massillon families that had amassed riches.

The little girl was nurtured in an atmosphere of luxury and culture, her clothes and her hats and her boots, her books, and her teachers, all especially ordered and delivered from New York City; and she has told me that she possessed distinct talents in music and elocution. That no due family observance might be neglected, Marshall

Wellman even summoned a portrait painter from New York, who immortalized all the members of the household on his canvases.

"Few mothers of great men have been happy women," some one has written, and Flora Wellman seems to have been no exception. Capacity for happiness may have been a part of her heritage, but fate was extraordinarily cruel. Somewhere around her thirteenth year, I have it from her, she fell victim to a fever that physically stunted her, and probably accounted for her short sparse hair and for certain melancholic tendencies. "I cannot remember the day when my mother was not old," Jack London more than once declared, while relatives, and friends of long standing, have asserted in her advanced years, "She has always been very much as you see her now." It would seem that the fever almost entirely robbed the unfortunate young soul of youth and gladness. Her eyes were ever fixed upon decline and dissolution, or peering into the hereafter of her spiritualistic faith.

Birth

VOLUME I — CHAPTER II

JACK LONDON was born in San Francisco, California, on January 12, 1876. At two o'clock of the afternoon came her woman's hour, that is the most lonely of all hours known to the human, and Flora London's voice was joined by the cry of her first and only child. He weighed nine pounds, which was one-tenth of his mother's weight. She called him John Griffith, — the middle name being in memory of Griffith Everhard, a favorite nephew. Flora and John London, having no formal church affiliations, the infant was never christened, and answered to "Johnnie" until the day when deliberately he selected, and made splendidly his own, the terse British name that has girdled the world wherever books and adventure, and abundant life are known.

The house in which he first expanded his fine young chest and made himself audible, was at Third and Bryant streets, occupied by the Slocums, friends of Flora, the master of the home being a prosperous member of a well-known printing establishment. Contrary to the more or less general belief that Jack London was born in a shanty on a sand-lot, the dwelling was a large and not inelegant one. For this had been a fashionable neighborhood in the changing fortunes of the gay western metropolis, and had not yet lapsed into the subsequent "south of Market" social disfavor.

Unluckily, Flora was unable long to nourish her lusty babe, and he speedily grew thin and blue. John London looked about and discovered among the men working for him one whose wife had lost her latest born and who was willing to become wet-nurse to the white child. Mrs. Prentiss was a full-blooded negress, and proud of it. Many a time Jack London has told how she was bartered on the block for a high price, while her mother was sold down the river. Now she became "Mammy Jenny" to an appreciative foster-son whose faithful and affectionate care years afterward she was until his death;

since then, I have as naturally assumed the trust, over and above the provisions of his last will and testament.

It was a veritable cherub that the black woman under took to mother in her essential capacity, white as snow, exquisitely modeled, with dimpled hands and feet surprisingly small for his firm, plump torso. He soon became pink-cheeked, with eyes of violet, his seraphic face haloed in white-gold ringlets too fragile-fine to seem real to the worshiping African, the devotion of whose deprived heart was instant and abiding toward the "teenty, helpless angel." In the Cloudesley Johns correspondence I find this from Jack: "Hair was black when I was born, then came out during an infantile sickness and returned positively white — so white that my negress nurse called me cotton ball."

When the baby was returned to his family they had moved to a cottage on Bernal Heights. And now upon the maternal Eliza devolved most of the rearing of her half-brother, indoors and out, in the energetic year spent in the cottage. The perambulator containing the baby boy, wheeled by a no less azure-eyed girl-child, became a familiar object of an afternoon on the hilly streets.

John London, man of the open field, with clinging conservative principles in money matters, was no match for the swift Western commercial spirit. But he recognized his inability in time to avert disaster, closed his contracting office, and accepted a position with the J. M. Flaven Company's famous IXL Emporium. In his canvassing about the spreading city, built upon its many hills, he was further enlightened of this Farthest West expansive atmosphere. His bubbling sense of humor unavoidably entered into many a conflict with a fading Methodist viewpoint — as one day, on a steep cobbled declivity of Telegraph Hill, when he paused to rest his benevolent, well-shaped hand upon the towseled pate of the handsomest of a group of urchins playing in the street. "What's your name, sonny?" he asked kindly. In later years, one of the best yarns of this indefatigable story-teller wound up with the shock he had sustained from this pure, sweet little child: "'What t'e hell business is it of yourn what's my name? — an' I ain't your sonny, neither!'"

The next on the list of baby Johnnie's unremembered homes was a new six-room flat opposite the old Plaza on Folsom Street, owned by a family of Cohens who dwelt in the lower apartments. John London had steadily bettered his income, and was now employed by the Singer Sewing Machine Company, as general agent and collector. To this day one might find a few of the decayed mansions of the section's past grandeur. In one of these, even then long since converted into a boarding house, I once went to take piano lessons. My teacher dwelt in the inexhaustible fragrance of old cedar paneling, and once surreptitiously led me down a maze of marble staircases into the nether regions of the imposing pile. There my ravished eyes roved about dismantled dining halls of maple and gilt, and a fabulous, echoing ballroom walled in mirrors like Versailles; and the ceiling, I verily believe, was a copy of Rubens' plump charmers and cherubs in Queen Wilhelmina's House in the Wood, near the Hague.

But Flora, never content for long in any spot, found a home she liked better, this time at the blind end of Natoma Street. Here it seemed as if they had come upon the

nearest that San Francisco ever conceded to their desire. For the two-storied roomy house was set in a sort of court shaped by the abrupt, vine-fenced termination of the thor-oughfare. It was a blossomy oasis in the engulfing metropolitan life of the ambitious city, through tacit agreement kept neat by the dwellers therein, who carefully tended their window pots and flowering strips of garden soil.

Not to restlessness, however, but to an epidemic of diphtheria was due the subsequent exodus of the Londons from San Francisco. The baby fell a victim, followed by his shadow, Eliza, agonizing doubly on his account. The terrified mother turned to and heroically nursed the pair of them — as when a girl she had with deathly fear courageously brought through smallpox her sister Mary's son, Harry Everhard. To this day Eliza holds that a certain mortuary suggestion from her stepmother whipped her to consciousness and a winning fight for life. Both she and Johnnie were lying in what the doctor pronounced a condition bordering upon dissolution. The exhausted but thrifty Flora asked him if it would be feasible to bury them in the same coffin, when the aroused girl opened horrified eyes and feebly, but unmistakably, protested.

The physician, having proved a poor judge of their resistance, dropped back upon the time-honored recommendations of a sojourn in the country. But business had to be business to the paternal provider, and with his agricultural intentions dear as ever to his heart, this change was regarded from the viewpoint of an enduring rural residence. The first lap toward this end was merely to the large San Francisco suburb of Oakland, to the east across the bay, that wide expanse of capricious waters that set in Jack London's eyes the far away look of the Argonaut. Thus Oakland, in the County of Alameda, for him came to be the center to which he always referred as his home town, from which he fared forth to the adventures in which he recaptured the spirit of romance for a growingly blasé civilization.

Boyhood

VOLUME I — CHAPTER III (Oakland, Alameda, San Mateo)

MY father was the best man I have ever known, "Jack London was wont to say," too intrinsically good to get ahead in the soulless scramble for a living that a man must cope with if he would survive in our anarchical capitalist system."

John London once more plunged into business for himself, working toward his pastoral goal. His savings were applied to the leasing and cultivating of a tract of land adjoining the race track at Emeryville, suburb of Oakland near the eastern bay shore, and hard by Shell Mound Park, described in Martin Eden. "With the produce, a green goods store was opened at Seventh and Campbell Streets. This junction was known as The Point by Oaklanders of that day. Here the local and main line trains left terra firma and proceeded out upon a fearsome, teredo-incrusted trestle far into the bay to where the largest ferry steamers in the world conveyed passengers to and from San Francisco. I recall an occasion, in girlhood, when I paddled in the tiny gray-green surf

at The Point, and then went indoors for a salt tubbing in water pumped from the bay and heated.

Into this fresh venture John put his savings and his faith, and, despite a rigorous honesty that ranged the most luscious of his justly famed tomatoes at the lowest tiers of the boxes — the "culls" went to less fortunate — neighbors he might have prospered had he let well enough alone. But to his bosom he took a shifty partner, one Stowell, in whose slippery hands he placed the thriving little shop while he traveled in outlying districts. These absences were for the purpose of taking orders and introducing his fruit and vegetables, which were the best Oakland ever enjoyed; and also for buying, at the Stone and the Meek orchards between San Leandro and Haywards, to fill the demand of his own enlarging trade.

One week-end, arriving back unsuspecting from a trip, he discovered that he had been figuratively thrown out, sold out, cleaned out, by his partner. Stowell must have been a clever crook and known his man well, for John was quite unequal to the tangle in which he found himself when he appealed to the law. Fight he did, and manfully; only a pitiful few dollars remained to him at the end of a legal battle.

But with the recurrent youthful optimism that was his chiefest personal charm, he shook those broad spare shoulders free of the sordid morass, threw back his curly poll, and turned toward the race track garden, from which he began supplying the firm of Porter Brothers, commission merchants, who sold his fast augmenting product.

Four successive homes the family occupied during this phase in their fortunes — one at Twelfth and Wood Streets, another on Seventh near Center and Peralta, And then they essayed to cheer the premises known as the Haunted House, the rumor being that a man had hanged himself from a beam therein. Nothing daunted, Mrs. London pitched in and established a kindergarten, in business relations with a Mrs. Kegler. Flora's knowledge of music assisted capitally in this connection, and she taught a few outside pupils as well. Although Eliza and Jack both received piano instructions from her in childhood, they have always united in declaring that they never saw her play. Her method seemed based upon the mechanics of the process, with no attempt to induce the harmonies by personal example. Jack's own memories reached to this house, mainly because it was the stage of his début in trousers — albeit hidden by a jumper. But his infantile pride for once soared above shrinking self-consciousness, and rebelled at the ignominy of this concealment. He was wont, in the most public places, to lift said jumper, that all men might bear witness to the uniform of his sturdy sex. An adorable little man he must have been. Eliza found there was hardly any possession her schoolgirl friends would not part with or lend in exchange for the privilege of taking care of him, or having him sit with them at their desks. He went to the highest bidder, of course; and his sister munched many an otherwise unattainable apple or bun, or pleasured in a borrowed ring or bracelet.

Matters began to mend, and from a subsequent home on Twelfth Street near Castro, they moved upon fifteen acres of the Davenport property in Alameda, where now looms the Clark Pottery Company's factory. So full of strange happenings are our lives, it was

in this selfsame Pottery the red Spanish tiling was fashioned to crown Jack London's "Wolf House" on Sonoma Mountain — futile dream-house, three years building, that in a single midnight puffed out in flame and smoke!

John's success led him to spread operations to other convenient locations, one of which was the later site of the Smith Borax Works. Still other fruitful acres branched out from both sides of the old "Narrow Gauge" trans-bay railway on the Alameda flats. Through commission merchants his produce, ever maintaining its standard of super-excellence, now found ready market in San Francisco. Long after his death, Eliza's ear one day was caught by a familiar note, caroled by a street hawker. She asked if the words he was singing, "J. L. Corn," meant anything to him. Needless to say, to his bucolic intelligence, they signified nothing more nor less than mere corn. And it pleased Eliza to inform the man that her father had been, so to speak, the father of his wares.

Like a bad dream, the little Jack always remembered his first intoxication, which took place, at the tender age of five, just after he came to Alameda. It was his task to toddle at noonday with a tin lard-pail of beer out into the fields where John London mopped his brow amidst his springing green creations. One day, the frothy contents overrunning and biting into the scratches on his chubby legs, the small man was seized with a desire to taste the stuff that so refreshed his elders. It was not the first time that out of a vast latent curiosity he had fallen for the temptation to test forbidden choice morsels intended for older folk, which up to now he had found good. Also, the pail was too full, and his calves smarted. Into the crackly foam he buried his hot little face to the eyes, hoping the taste would improve when he reached the yellow liquid. It did not improve; but driven by that persistence that all through his career forced him to complete what he had begun, the doughty youngling drained what was to his tiny paunch a mighty draught. Sorely that same thirsty organ must have been crowded, for alarm spread in him to see how the beer had receded. With a stick, remembering how stale brew was made to effervesce, he stirred what was left, and was rewarded by a crop of white bubbles that would deceive the onlooker. John London, sweating prodigiously and eager to complete his furrow, unnoticing poured the liquor down his dry throat and started up the team, his small son trotting alongside.

The next the inebriated baby knew, he was coming to in the shade of a tree, in his fuzzy brain a crushing terror of flashing steel blades and great shining hooves of plunging horses. Then his eyes, dark with fear, looked up into a reassuring bearded face that bent over him, its solicitude and relief struggling with a mirth it could not quite control. Poor little wayfarer in the fields of chance — he had reeled and fallen between a plowshare and the hind feet of the beasts, and only the plowman's instant halting of the outfit had preserved the baby from being cloven and turned under with the soil.

Another vividly remembered if lesser childish tragedy on Alameda ground was connected with his building instincts, and it came about in this way: Myself a contemporary child in Oakland, transplanted from the indolent Spanish air of Southern Califor-

nia, I remember my aunt and uncle and the neighbors on Thirty-fifth Street discussing the wonder-operetta Satanella which they had attended in the Tivoli Opera House, forbidden pleasure to one so young as I. A magical performance it was, if my excited imagining was correct, of inexplicable appearings and vanishings of sulphurous deities, with all the glamour of intermixed Fairyland and Heaven arrayed against black-and-red but enchanting Sin. Whilst I was drinking in my elders' reminiscent snatches of libretto and score, Johnnie London actually, with his own rounded orbs, beheld the absorbing spectacle. Incited thereby, after a night of fire-illumined nightmare, he undertook to build a little hell of his own under the apple tree by the side of the house. He was assisted wonderingly by his chum, Theodore Crittenden, who, as co-creator, was to be constituted only second in importance to his superior's own Satanic Majesty. But swifter hell than had been anticipated broke loose when the Vice-Devil's assiduous spade accidentally split open the prospective Majesty's chubby nose, and Johnnie's lurid dream collapsed in gore and tears on sister Eliza's clean pinafore.

When Jack London turned sadly from the disappointing soil of human society at large, to solve some of its economic problems in the undisappointing if wearied land that he so patiently reclaimed, he sorrowed from year to year, while his terraced hillsides increased their yield, that John London could not be there to behold and rejoice:

"My one greatest regret, always, is that my father could not live to share my prosperity, he would say. Think of the lasting joy if the two dear old soldiers, your father and mine, could have lived here on the Ranch and watched my blades of grass come up out of the rejuvenated soil — two blades or more where but one grew when I came upon it!" Alas the years are many since that pair of stalwart, childhearted real Americans, born in the same year, laid themselves down untimely.

The three London young folk, Eliza, Ida, and Johnnie, attended the West End School, Alameda, on Pacific Avenue below Webster Street. Eliza was just being graduated from grammar grades when Johnnie entered his first schoolroom to study. Here the bashful but trusting little chap recited his first "piece" when he was about six, and with no more liking for public speaking than was his in adult life:

"Christmas is coming, it soon will be here,
The very best time in all of the year.
I am counting each day on my fingers and thumbs
The weeks that must pass before Santa Claus comes.
No hard words to spell, no writing, no sums;
There's nothing but playtime when Santa Claus comes."

To employ his own words, he had "no recollection of being taught to read or write," and "could do both at the age of five." Eliza remembers him as forever with a book in his hands; and, it not being a bookish household, he must have read and reread from the days when she had "read the pictures" to him out of a printed linen Mother Goose. In this manner she had beguiled him to slumber on lonely evenings in San Francisco, when Mr. and Mrs. London were out, probably with their spiritualist friends. In the ten years that the girl constantly companioned her half-brother, she found him intensely

alive to impressions, quick to grasp meanings but half explained, and early to make use of his available vocabulary. Of large words he heard few; but out of his simple store he sought and applied the precise best ones adapted to express his thought.

But his glorious endowment of normality was pervaded by a sensitiveness that comported with the delicate skin, the aristocratic hands and feet and small-boned frame that never, in adolescence, bore up unharmed under the demands of contradictory sturdy muscles of shoulder and trunk and limb. This timidity, or shyness, that masked a hunger for sympathy and understanding from moment to moment, was more often expressed by the laying of a dimpled fist into Eliza's ever-receptive clasp. Deep feelings were not habitually demonstrated in the household. "I do not remember ever receiving a caress from my mother when I was young," Jack has said; "but I was at long intervals cheered by my father's comprehending hand laid upon my head, and his kind, 'There, there, sonny!' when things went wrong." Thus Eliza and the boy, both of intensely loving nature, were impelled together in a lasting relation of confidence.

One grateful spot in Alameda memories was the spic and span cottage of Mammy Jenny Prentiss near Willow Street Station. Her bright-eyed foster-baby often ran away to the crooning embrace of the colored woman whose greatest pride was her own untarnished blood, and who always was tastefully and pridefully dressed. There her spoiled white child was sure of welcome and wondrous pastry, dispensed with adoration and a lavish hand, and there "Will and Annie were like cousins." Flora Wellman's own stiff pride of race had already made its mark on Johnnie's subjective operations; but that it had not become a recognized form is shown by his ignorance of the fact that his half-white playmates were other than like himself. One day, Will Prentiss, aged six, was at the house, getting some of the "culls" of fruit and vegetables with which John London so generously favored his friends. Little Johnnie in an uproarious tomato-fight plastered a ripe red one upon the perfect nose Will had inherited from his mother, and cried out with innocent cruelty, to Will's weeping shame: "Oh, gee! Willy! I've made your nose as flat as a nigger's!"

As the savings accumulated, Flora's ambition for the Just Beyond urged her husband toward his unforgotten mecca, and they presently returned to the other side of the Bay. This time they leased a seventy-five acre farm, likely the Tobin Ranch, on the "Peninsula" south of San Francisco, in San Mateo County, and near what now shows on the map as Moss Beach. In level sandy loam not far from the ocean, John concentrated upon the perfecting of the finest potatoes in the San Francisco market — his principal triumph on that farm.

Where the money went, over and above necessities, after the expenses of moving had been squared, was a lifelong puzzle to Jack and Eliza. Jack designated himself as a "meat-eater." While there was always enough to eat in the house, flesh-food may at times have been scarce, or delayed in delivery, and he craved it perhaps out of proportion to his need, as children will. Note the following quotation from a letter, written in a fit of blank despondency, to the sweetheart of his early twenties. In view

of a possible future with him, she had urged him to for sake writing and cease not from hunting a steady salary.

"Why, as you have laid down my duty in your letter, if I had followed it what would I have been to-day? I would be a laborer, and by that I mean I would be fitted for nothing else than labor. Do you know my childhood? When I was seven years old at the country school of San Pedro, this happened. Meat, I was that hungry for it I once opened a girl's basket and stole a piece of meat — a little piece the size of my two fingers. I ate it but I never repeated it. In those days, like Esau, I would have literally sold my birthright for a mess of pottage, a piece of meat. Great God! when those youngsters threw chunks of meat on the ground because of surfeit, I could have dragged it from the dirt and eaten it; but I did not. Just imagine the development of my mind, my soul, under such material conditions. This meat incident is an epitome of my whole life."

Now, from the foregoing and some other quotations, the reader is likely to gather that Jack was at times given to hyperbole when, driven and discouraged, he reviewed his thorny path. I may be forgiven, considering many years of intimate observation, if I comment upon a tendency he evinced toward self-concentration when overdone by thinking, or work, or trouble. This is a delicate matter upon which to disagree, since he is not here to argue the point. But as I see it, his excessive sensibilities, despite formidable endurance, caused him to suffer more acutely, mentally and physically, than the average run of human beings. Since his increasing ambitions to do and be, goaded him ever to superactivity, his case was hopeless, in that he must undergo weariness of heart and brain. He could not rest, therefore he did not rest. Hence, I occasionally found him prone to exaggerate, not the thing itself, but the enormity of the thing treated. Take that matter of going hungry in childhood. Once, looking up from a volume she was reading, I overheard his mother say to Eliza:

"Here Jack has written that he didn't have enough to eat. And I've heard him say the only time he ever took anything that didn't belong to him, was some meat out of another boy's lunch basket at school. Do you remember any time when we did not set a good table? I can't. He didn't go hungry in our house! He surely must mean when he was off goose-chasing on the creek, or out all night on the streets, or something of that sort. Why, you know, his father always had vegetables, and if meat was ever scarce, there were plenty of chickens."

And Eliza was equally put to it to recall slim fare.

From Jack London's recollection of this phase in his peripatetic life, he drew the rather bleak and depressing coast line, too often muffled in dreary fogs, the scarcity of English-speaking society, his mother's vaunt that she and hers were "old American stock" and not "dagoes" nor immigrant Irish — and the red brand on his gray substance of a second bout with alcohol. It would seem that from his earliest conscious observation of a beckoning world, turn where he would, alcohol appeared as playing a mysterious part in the pleasures of the god-like, enviably unshackled grown-up, and in the romance, pleasant and otherwise, but still the romance, of manly, reckless, invincible youth. His

father, in no wise a "drinking-man," found smacking satisfaction in a quart-pail of mild beer; nor was his mother averse to the cooling cup. Even the incompetent who reigned supreme in the little box of a schoolhouse enjoyed ill-hidden libations behind his desk, and afterward a one-sided thrill in "licking" the pupils who were too small to retaliate, as the larger sometimes did.

At the long desk with his class, Johnnie had not sat without meditating, no matter to how little purpose, over the very evident pleasurable action upon the grown-ups of beverages other than water. For so precocious a child in book-learning, he was peculiarly and adorably a hero-worshiper of those in authority, whose opinions he accepted as inspired. Until partial disillusionment in late boyhood, this open-souled trustfulness was always a-battle with an intellectual development out of keeping with his age.

And now, the guileless little man came to grips with hitherto unknown breeds of humans upon a temperamental day of mingled Italian and Irish joviality, largely induced by heavy red grape of California, there was literally thrust upon him his second stunning brush with an ambushed enemy he had no wisdom nor preparation for with standing.

The Week of the Holy Ghost was nigh, and an invitation to unlimited hospitality for seven days and nights to the countryside dwellers of whatsoever nationality or religion, was sent out by an Italian ranchman, "old man Margo. Now, the Signor Margo had married an English woman who had given him a fair-haired, blue-eyed son, Dominic, whom it was the father's fond ambition to waste no time in marrying to the right American girl. The trim looks and competent ways of Eliza London, in her earliest teens, had attracted many an approving glance from the old man, and an exceptionally pressing bid was made for the company of her family at his house. The elders declined, but allowed the children to go.

So it came about that on Sunday the three young Londons trudged six miles to the Margo ranch, where a typical Irish-Italian merrymaking was in full blast. By this time the small brother's searching mind had begun to lead him out of his timorousness, and the tanned little fists were more often by his sides or occupied otherwise than in feeling for his elder sister's protecting hand. Life was commencing to wave her royal-colored emblems before his awakening eyes, and more and more was he lost in contemplation of her pageantry, to a growing oblivion of the old self–consciousness. But he was an infant at heart, unknowing of evil, and the occurrences of this Sabbath day were burned inerasably on the malleable stuff of his reactive brain.

From the Margo kitchen the strange clamor of a culminating situation, begun with the free drinking of the previous night, only whetted the half-fearful inquisitiveness of our trio, which drew them irresistibly into the reeking dim room. Small Johnnie's big eyes must have nearly burst their expansive spheres at this sudden introduction into a scene where the gamut of human passions was either sounded or indicated. To woman's hysteria he was no stranger — his adult aversion to such uncontrol amounted almost to a hysteria in itself; but the girls screams, frightened or loudly skittish, at the rough

or drink-addled per-formances of the men with them or with one another, curdled his tender blood and nerves. He sat in a daze. His sense of proportion was all awry. Never, even under tantrums, had he beheld humans acting so illogically — flying tooth and nail at one another's throats one minute, the next clumping to ungainly embraces of forgiveness and reeling good fellowship; while yet others, too sodden to fight, mouthed their tongue-tangled approval or criticism of the changing humors of stronger-headed brethren.

The seven-year-old child, soon fascinated beyond vestige of alarm, sensed the increasing tide of lawlessness as the men poured an incessant stream of liquid down their straightened necks. He saw the now worried girls melt out of the doorways, as the clumsy brawling doubled and trebled among the rough aliens of hot and unruly bloods, until some impetus sent the whole mad company lurching down the sandy road to another ranch.

And the diminutive Jack London here put into practice the first evidence of that tactful sixth sense of fitness that early rendered him, the indomitable, fine one, into the very genius of Mixers. In a few years this intuitive faculty was to earn him the proudest title ever bestowed upon him by the sycophant earth — Prince of the Oyster Pirates. For now a wee Irish lassie, only other child of his age in the maudlin crowd, walked by his side. Like many another gay blade, he never was able to recall the name of his sweet maiden; but the favor in her blue, blue eyes commanded a chivalrous instinct to emulate her older sister's swain, walking just ahead, in all but his gait. Around her plump waist went his dutiful, sympathetic if timid arm, and they bumped along in blissful discomfort for the half of an uneven sandy mile — after which, guided by her consenting eyes, they clasped hands instead.

Turn about, the Irish ranch hilariously welcomed the partially sobered pilgrims, who "tanked up" afresh, till afresh swelled and roared the fun. A hospitable Italian offered Johnnie wine. He declined with thanks, and later a second proffer. And here renewed apprehension quickened his heart-beats, for there loomed suddenly the oft-voiced prejudice of his blonde mother toward all black-eyed men and women, as being actuated by deceitful motives, if nothing more deadly. As for Latins, "dagoes" as they were known to her confiding offspring, their ways were associated in his mind with keen-flashing knives called daggers.

When Italian Pete, with humorous diablerie unguessed by the alarmed boy, clouded his black brows over the lightning of blacker, snapping eyes, in fiery disapproval of this insult to red, red wine, Johnnie's nerves already made him feel the thrusted two-edged metal turning between his ribs. In that semi-autobiography "John Barleycorn," thirty years later he wrote: "I have faced real death since in my life, but never have I known the fear of death as I knew it then." Nevertheless he steeled himself and put his dimpled hands about the heavy glass, which he lifted and drained to the nauseating bitter dregs — and dregs they were, for this was the cheap "red paint" made from the leavings of great vats after the best vintage had been casked.

Poor little lad! One's heart wells and there is a catch in the throat to picture him sitting there in his linen jumper, dusty small feet dangling above the floor he could not reach, and, for once alone and unadvised, facing with wide, brave eyes the very certainty of violent extinction from an existence he had but lately begun to appraise and value. "One will do anything to live," he goes on in what he called his "alcoholic memoirs." The little chap downed a second and what seemed countless succeeding draughts of liquid fire to his unaccustomed membranes, for the loudly amused Pete had called his friends one and all to witness the valiant infant. Little the boy recked that he was inviting strangling death otherwise than from the assassin's knife. That he did not smother, then or in the following hours, is the everlasting marvel. Out of the house and on the heavy gray road again, with his own girl like the other sweethearts sober and solicitous of him, in a tottering haze he solemnly imitated the antics of the wild Irish and Italians in the zigzagging procession that wound among the sandhills. And finally, still imitating, he brought up in a roadside ditch, although he had not intended to overstep its dizzy edge. Out of what might have been his open grave, his sisters and several badly scared older girls fished him, and like one roused from his last sleep in the snow, they tried to keep him walking, walking, those in terminable miles home. But when Mrs. London opened the door, it was from their arms she received her raving, unconscious son.

"It is a wonder that I did not burst my heart or brain that night," he says in "John Barleycorn," detailing the experience in such way as the searing horror made possible at so long range of time. And in spite of the heroic reputation his prowess gave him amongst the aliens roundabout, very clear was his "resolution never to touch alcohol again." "No mad dog was ever more afraid of water," and "I didn't like the damned stuff," he recalls his subsequent childish perspective, for there was not much living language in the neighborhood that did not enter into the processes of his pliant, growing brain.

Before he was eight, this sweetly gullible boy with his remarkable contrasting outlook had somehow come into possession of an incomplete copy of Ouida's "Signa," which his mind absorbed like an unspotted, depthless blotter. In the spring of 1912, Jack London, one day browsing in a dingy second-hand shop in Harlem for books to add to our traveling library on a voyage around Cape Horn, came across a cheap reprint of "Signa." Home to our Morningside apartment he carried the small-typed story which, he had all his life declared, had had more in-fluence in the shaping of his carrer than any other, not even excepting Herbert Spencer's "Philosophy of Style." Upon the lurching poop-deck of the big four-master "Dirigo," off the unseen coast of Brazil, I listened, not always with dry eyes, to the rhythmic, caressing voice as Jack reread the loved romance which had opened to his groping intelligence the gates to unsurmised beauty.

"He was only a little lad," was Signa, the warm-souled Italian peasant child who attained to heights of fame. With these very words the roseate tale commenced. And so was he, schoolboy Johnnie London, only a little lad. Therefore he speedily constituted himself a peasant likewise, in whom there might reside untold marvel of genius, even

if imprisoned within a gray landscape that required closed eyes and concentration to clothe with the splendor that was Signa's Italy.

"Reading the story," the grown man gazed down his years, "my narrow hill-horizon was pushed back, and all the world made possible if I would dare it. And he dared, at least to contemplate greatness for himself. Like the tawny, golden-eyed bambino, he would become a musician, and a superlative one; only, his mother's unforgotten lessons led him to think music in terms of ivory keys and certain not unpleasing harmonies he had stumbled upon. There was no piano in the farm house, and the breathy strains in dance-measure, from accordions manipulated by tipsy volunteers on that shuddering Sunday of Holy Week, were the sole music he had heard for nearly two years.

Eliza's budding practical foresight had not hitherto made toward planning artistic achievement for her dreamy half-brother. But when he had coaxed her to read his book, with mutual infatuation they discussed it upon every possible occasion — while he dried the dishes, or they helped papa sack his smooth-coated, regularly symmetrical potatoes, or in quiet corners where she helped him with his examples. Ouida herself would doubtlessly have regretted the established denouement of her own novel, could she have listened to the hazards these two made concerning the missing last quarter of it. However, they did come to share it in the long run of their futures.

Livermore Valley

VOLUME I — CHAPTER IV Ages 8 to 10

LIVERMORE VALLEY, where lay the last of the string of farms in John London's diminishing fate, never glowed in Jack London's memory any more rosily than the preceding San Mateo countryside. A fertile enough district it was, and undeniably torrid in midsummer, as I can attest; for here, again, our paths crossed when I as a child camped in the low hills not far from this same farm. "Livermore Valley was very flat," was his retrospect, "and even the hills around were then, to me, devoid of interest. . . . They and their valleys were eyesores and aching pits, and I never loved them till I left them."

"Signa," pored over for numberless hours here, from his eighth to tenth year, and still lacking the forty tragic final pages, had ruined him for the commonplace. "Even then there were whispers, art-promptings; my mind inclined to things beautiful." Life on a ranch became to his awakened ambition "the dullest possible existence," while every day he "thought of going out beyond the skyline to see the world." He was on his bright way to a soaring idealism, which later, combined with an enduring practicality, made of him an extraordinary entity both as Doer and Thinker.

Despite the dreary image of it which he henceforth carried, the eighty-acre Livermore holding was really the liveliest and most promising of all — and further distinguished as the first California land John London had been able to call his own. As a grown citizen, Jack would have been charmed by the fact that it was portion of an old

Spanish estate, and thus bound indissolubly with the glamorous 'forties. As it was, the farm could not have been actually unattractive. There was a nine-acre orchard in full bearing, and what boy does not welcome an orchard? And pigs there were, chickens, and cooing pigeons galore — to say nothing of remunerative rabbits, fluffy, snow-white, pink jewel-eyed bunnies that could not but stir the boy's animal loving bosom as well as his innate sense of beauty; while the proud cocks and their harems were of no mean breeds. The farm house was comfortably large for all needs of family and the extra men hired in harvest time.

To be sure, everybody worked — Flora and her husband here and there and everywhere. Eliza, barely fifteen, cooked for the whole hungry establishment, and besides aided her papa with the rabbits and pigeons and the three incubators in the brooding houses — John was right up to the minute in modern appliances, — not to speak of her work in the vegetable areas. As with Jack London, there was never anything small or restricted in John's projection of an ultimate achievement. It was in judgment of character, and of investments for his hard-gained money, that he seemed wanting. He had failed to discover in civilized society the undeviating honor shown to honor by the otherwise crafty aborigine of the Middle States. Perhaps, too, he was leniently weak in the matter of capitulating to counsel even less prudent than his own. Just when he might be considering a halt in expenditures, his wife's vehemently expressed insights would make appeal, or, listening to her exposition of the way out of a difficulty, he would be overborne. Thus a mortgage was laid upon the Livermore land in order to erect a twenty-five-hundred dollar barn for his Blackhawk and Morgan horses; and proud as he was of this handsome feature of the farm, he was not content under the burden of debt. And yet, just as he had gambled on new scenes in his youth, this fresh risk was not without its allurement; and the pair of them took other long chances poorly handled investments, irresistible lottery tickets, and God knows what else.

John's aspirations were far-seeing and clean. It was more than a decade after the good man was laid to rest that Jack London's own agricultural experimentation began to open out. And he grieved for the broken dream and endeavor of this honorable, straight-aiming spirit. John's best satisfaction, even at toll of grinding labor, lay in pursuing an ideal which the younger man, guided by his cumulative data, came to regard as unerring and incalculable in its economic benefit toward humanity.

Sometimes their mysterious affairs caused Mr. and Mrs. London to drive up to San Francisco. And he, reins taut over the polished backs of the best trotting-blood in America, probably was happier then than at any other time in his middle life. Later, the beautiful Blackhawk stallion, with his mares as well as the Morgans, went to liquidate the livery stable bills incurred on these trips. Once they had remained away for two months, leaving Eliza in sole charge. She must have pondered, young thing that she was, while she worked indoors and in field, grasping what little social fun there was to be had in the sparse neighborhood, if life were all of a workaday piece. Her half-brother pondered, too, when he trudged home from school and found her hard at it, in season and out, and himself called to help at chores. Yes, everybody had to labor, it seemed,

women and all. There must be some way out. And while he performed his day-long task of watching for the bees to swarm, he registered the vow that when he became a man, no women-folk of his should toil like this.

How they got into the house he never knew, but one day he came upon a "Life of Garfield," also a worn copy of "Paul du Chaillu's African Travels," in which he retained belief and admiration all his life. The school teacher lent him Washington Irving a "Alhambra," which he proceeded to bolt whole, and reread and digest for the period spent on the Livermore farm. Once again, always the Builder, he started to build, not a little Inferno as in Alameda, but an Alhambra on the plans of Washington Irving. From the mellow-red bricks of a fallen chimney he reared its towers and laid out terraces and arcades, labeling with his school chalk its various sections. All the while he existed in a world of his own making, that outstripped the humdrum existence of the hot little ranch a world so real that he could not comprehend why every one, at home or in school, did not share in the wonder of his creation. He seemed set aloof from the beginning, by means of the uncommon knowledge he acquired.

"My other reading matter," he surveyed that portion of his childhood," consisted mainly of dime novels, borrowed from the hired man, and newspapers in which they gloated over the adventures of poor but virtuous shopgirls." Through reading such trash, he goes on, his out look became ridiculously conventional; and so, when a stranger arrived from the city, very proper as to manner and boots, with fine clothes and stylish hat, the famished idealist conceived this to be the manner of man who would know all about the Alhambra and be able to discuss the enchanting subject. He possessed himself of the visitor's unwilling hand, led him to where the little red-brick Alhambra lifted its proud turrets, then stood looking up with shining expectation of an oracular approval. None was forthcoming nothing — but a laughing sneer; and the pitiful small seeker, abashed and comfortless, fell back upon the inevitable if perplexing conclusion that there must be but two clever persons in the whole desolate scheme of things — himself and Washington Irving. This "gentleman" guest from the city, heaven knows why, deliberately and with malice stole and hid the hallowed volume far underneath the house, in company with a cherished rubber ball. I have seen Jack almost weep when reviewing the tragedy it was to his trusting little self, puzzled, blameless of offense — for he was not a boisterous or troublesome child. None but a creature of distorted impulses could have tortured a young thing for days and nights as this one was tortured. Superacute as pain always was to his body, never did he suffer as keenly from physical as from mental hurt. Only an inherent normality preserved him from spiritual ruination by his non-understanding environment. I cannot recall distinctly how he recovered the book, but have a dim impression that he told me the tormenter finally guided him to the point whence he had thrown it under the house, and laughed mockingly at the scrambling bare legs of the youngster as he dived unafraid among cobwebs and ordinarily dreaded crawly things, in eagerness to clasp his treasure.

Johnnie's first acquaintance with death came during this phase in his undirected development, and furnished matter for exercise of his speculative trend. He was helping

his father reset some pasture fence posts that the cows had bent down. Digging deep, John London unearthed a corpse that had not altogether returned to dust. The boy remembered it as a fearsome mess that had lain a long time. They never learned how it came there.

That he was beginning to formulate some sort of logical sequence out of the chaotic mass of observations which bivouacked in his brain, and suspect a different and improved existence, is evidenced by a well-ordered plan he outlined to Eliza for their common future. They were to live in a large dwelling almost entirely filled with books. He would not marry until he was forty and his mind stored with the knowledge he craved; for matrimony did not present itself as conducive to studious repose. Meantime Eliza would make a home for them both, and more especially stand between him and the annoying people he yearned to avoid.

It may be that I have Eliza to thank that this became my own devoted task, instead of hers. At the age of sixteen she exchanged one life of unrelieved care for another, by uniting herself to a widowed veteran of the Civil War, one Captain James H. Shepard, nearly thirty years her senior and with several children, the eldest about Johnnie's age. Captain Shepard, desiring to place his motherless brood in a country home, had written to a friend in San Francisco, who in turn inquired of Flora London if she could accommodate them. Some correspondence passed, and through misunderstanding Captain Shepard arrived at the farm with the children when John and Flora were away. Eliza drove to the station to meet the guests, and entertained them to the best of her conspicuous ability, captivating the middle-aged ex-soldier as much as anything else by her maternal ways. In three months her little brother's dream was smashed and he left desolate, for she married and went to live in Oakland. Her devotion to the stepchildren was provocative of much good-natured raillery amongst the neighbors, to the effect that she had fallen in love with and married the children.

Through a combination of disastrous investments, and poor management, things had been going from bad to worse. A few months after Eliza's departure the farm was abandoned and as much realized as possible from the sacrifice of improvements. John and his wife with their boy and Ida removed to Oakland, where they put what was left from the farm proceeds into an eight-roomed house at East Seventeenth Street between Twenty-second and Twenty-third Avenues, near where Eliza lived. Not far off dwelt Mammy Jenny Prentiss, whose joy it was to spoil more passionately than ever her "white child," for his foster-sister and-brother were both underground by now. When Prentiss died some years later, Jenny sustained herself a long time by nursing and a slight income from a bit of inherited "property" she always proudly referred to. Chided for working so hard, when she might rest upon her foster-son's bounty, she would indignantly snap: "They think I'm in my dotey (dotage), and can't take care of my self alone! This pride cost the adult Jack more trouble than her "property" was ever worth, for she looked to him to make it pay. He often advised her to sell her lots and spend the money on herself — "Buy silk dresses and theater tickets with it, Mammy Jenny," he would implore. "You know I'm never going to see you in need, now and

forever, whether I live or die; and I want you to quit worrying and have a good time with your money while you can" — all the while appreciating her desire for economic independence.

In his eleventh year, the dreaming lad awakening to the gripping, harsh realties, began to perceive the under side of things. He was enrolled as one of the first pupils of the four-roomed Garfield School on Twenty-third Avenue, between Sixteenth and Seventeenth Streets, and soon progressed to the Franklin School at Eleventh Avenue and Fifteenth, where he came abruptly upon his first radical clash with another's personality. The teacher did not understand him nor even try. He, phenomenally quick in mastering lessons, which gave him more time for the ever-handy story book, could not learn from her, and failed of promotion. More than once his perturbed mother was obliged to call at the schoolhouse to straighten out alleged insubordination. He was an eminently teachable creature, but from the very first he seemed to gather that teachers were not placed on a rostrum to think, but merely to teach. Whenever he tried to elicit reasoned opinions upon his vivid ideas and their relations one to another, he faced a stone wall, and was thrown, as in the Alhambra incident, back upon himself and his lonely particular ego. Evidently the system was such that a child could not learn to the extent he was able, but must limit his most divine searchings to a gray curriculum that was, for him, only too readily compassed. He did not represent the difficulty in just this way, but clearly grasped that he was embarrassingly different from the patterned children around him, and that his gropings and probings were interpreted as impertinences. He had not yet happened upon the felicitous word "mush" to describe the interior substance of certain persons possessed or unpossessed of teachers certificates.

But what he did or did not gain from association with so blind a treatment, drove him, as did his first and very brief university education, to the ramshackle public library that leaned against the old City Hall on Fourteenth Street, for collateral reading. The little boy, hunched over the worn library table, so long deprived of all literature except the four books at Livermore, devoured print until his eyemuscles twitched and burned and he saw black spots every where; while his almost prostrated nerves jumped into the preliminary stages of St. Vitus dance. He became so irascible and rickety that he would cry out when spoken to or touched, "Don't bother me — go away, you make me nervous!" Somewhere he writes: "I filled an application blank [with "The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle"], and the librarian handed me the collected and entirely unexpurgated works of Smollett in one huge volume. I read everything, but principally history and adventure, and all the old travels and voyages. I read mornings, afternoons, and nights. I read in bed, I read at table, I read as I walked to and from school, and I read at recess while the other boys were playing." It was at the ripe age of twelve that he came to read Wilkie Collins's "The New Magdalen," and greatly shocked a nice young lady by trying to discuss it.

Presently he attracted the notice of the head librarian, Miss Ina Coolbrith, and fell shyly in love with this to him new type of womanhood — so lady-fine, and a true

poetess. Hers was the first intellectual guidance under which he benefited, and he never ceased from his loving gratitude and admiration.

Straightway the boy's two families, his mother's and Eliza Shepard's, must apply for library cards, which he kept so busy that he crossed and recrossed the library threshold more often than any other subscriber. It was from this same public library that, when he joined the Klondike Rush, he calmly walked off with two volumes, upon Eliza's pledge that she would reimburse the library — a pledge which she kept, whether or not she approved of the somewhat irregular transaction. "The fact that he wanted it done, was enough," she tersely comments upon the incident.

Luckily for physical well-being, Johnnie soon realized that he must bestir himself toward his own up-keep, and the first move was on the street, selling newspapers. Home life was soon a thing forgotten, if ever it had been a normal one for this spiritually lonely creature. His mother had now determined that a boarding-house for the Scotch women-workers at the California Cotton Mills near by would recover her shrunken fortunes. At times when a cook was unobtainable, Eliza came over and helped out as a matter of course. With the boarding-house earnings in hand, Flora's project spread into a lot next door, which she mortgaged so that she might erect a rooming-house upon it. Her idea was Utopian, for was it not a fine thing for these factory women each to have her own private apartment? But her altruism did not go hand in hand with ability to see it through, and scheme as she and her good husband might, in the end both properties were forfeited to the mortgage.

Jack London's tenderest and most sympathetic memories of his father centered about occasions when the two went boating and fishing on the "Creek," an estuary lying between Oakland and Alameda. His unchained, mobile imagination had begun to take hold upon the dull tragedy of this man with the merciful lips and hands who had asked so little of a perverse destiny which had withheld success from him in even that little. He made no outcry; but from under the thoughtful heavy brows the kind gray eyes gazed forlornly enough across the green water-way to the low ground that was once blessed with his rows of corn and potato hills and succulent resetted lettuces, and the coral stalks of rhubarb that had been Eliza's especial care and pride. The minds of John London's few acquaintances who still live, are tinged by the lifeless impression carried from those years when the merry-hearted one had become a broken thing, hiding an aching sense of failure beneath his fine reticence. It is but a spiritless image of the warm and lovable character that they can reconstruct.

The average man or woman does not easily learn to search beneath the restrained exterior, the bearded visage, for the tender mouth; or behind the quiet, retrospective eye, for the gentle strength and humor — qualities that were more and more hidden as the elder London bowed to disillusionment. But Jack, being Jack, was by now able to extract more knowledge of his goodness and personal charm than at any time in their years of daily intercourse. This was enhanced by the semi-adventurous experiences they shared on that attractive body of tide water which washed the keels of idle whalers and the ornate sterns of vessels of all rigs and builds from all the world, laid up at the edge

of the Alameda flats. Most of them never budged until the Great War required them. Whether digging clams in the oily, cool blue mud, or fishing for flounders and rock cod and "shiner" from wharves or anchored skiff or the old sea-wall that bounded the Creek on the north, or rowing and sailing curiously amongst those painted hulls that had thrilled to the onslaught of the Seven Seas — it was all of a fabric of romance with the books. And in those rare days of quiet communion or interesting hap and mishap, the two came to love each other in true comradely, unquestioning fashion, as they had never before loved any one. Only their eyes, blue to blue under California's blue sky, spoke the deep and holy sentiment that stirred them. Each was better and happier, back in the clattering boarding-house, for these comprehending hours out upon the waters.

Here, tugging at anchor in flood or ebb, or at the oars plunging bow-on to the glossy gray-green rollers cast by John L. Davie's big side-wheel ferry steamers, or yet learning the why and wherefore of eating into the wind under a tiny sail, the little born seaman's heart was claimed by the wave. In all his vivid life, never was he so at rest in spirit as upon the water — be it deep sea or inland stretch.

A railroad accident to John at about this juncture, which laid him up with several fractured ribs, did not improve the prospect; and the succeeding house where the growing boy passed his sleeping hours — for home to him had become a place where one slept and ate — was a small one in the "West End," on Pine Street below Seventh, near the familiar "Point." This man Davie, who had established the new five-cent ferry route to San Francisco from where Broadway ended in the estuary, cutting the octopean Southern Pacific's rate two-thirds, gave the recuperating John London a job as night watchman. In the daytime he added to his slender means by canvassing and collecting. Presently, when John L. Davie rose in Oakland politics, he appointed his dependable friend as a special officer on the Police Force. It was the same Davie, at this writing, Mayor of Oakland for the third time, who, backed by the City Council, in 1917 transplanted from Mosswood Park a seventeen-year-old oak, twenty-four feet high, to the City Hall Park, where it was dedicated to the memory of Jack London, son of his old friend. Only a few yards from this thriving young denizen of the open, now towers the impressive building that superseded the old City Hall and public library where Jack London opened the books and began the omniverous reading he pursued unabated for the thirty years that followed. Under Officer London's protection the newsboy was convoyed about in the "tenderloin" night life of the town, and new and lurid were the reflections that flitted across his expansile mental mirror. In such conditions the two resumed their ever sweet if fragmentary companionship. Squeezed behind the door-keepers of public dance-halls, or of dives, the boy strained his eyes upon the curious performances of the under-world, as well as those of the relaxing working classes. Here again, he could not but be struck by the fool-making effects of too much alcohol; and when these effects exceeded foolishness, and drinkers were jangled off to jail in "hurry-up wagons," he was confused by the fact that drinking was a licensed pastime for the young as well as the matured, and not frowned upon by the men who sat in the high

places. On the contrary, in saloons he actually beheld such exalted personages also imbibing the potent drafts, little recking that their joviality was often but a cloak for ills that drove them to the inhibitions of alcohol.

Another circumstance that throws light upon his mental strife was the recurrent enigma as to where the dollars went that his father and mother earned. He knew roughly what constituted living expenses; but where disappeared the surplus, and his own little hoardings? For Jack's inner hurt, at the time, I have recourse again to his letter to the sweetheart of his early twenties:

"I was eight years old when I put on my first undershirt made at or bought at a store. Duty! — at ten years I was on the street selling newspapers. Every cent was turned over to my people, and I went to school in constant shame of the hats, shoes, clothes I wore. Duty — from then on, I had no childhood. Up at three o'clock in the morning to carry papers. When that was finished I did not go home but continued on to school. School over, my evening papers. Saturday I worked on an ice wagon; Sunday I went to a bowling alley and set up pins for drunken Dutchmen. Duty — I turned over every cent and went dressed like a scarecrow." Delivering the afternoon paper led him into queer places and deeper bewilderment. In Temescal, at that time the "tough" northern boundary of the city, when he handed the "Enquirer" to Josie Harper, mistress of a road house at Thirty-ninth Street and Telegraph Avenue, he marveled that so immense and unladylike a female should be less forbidding in her manner than certain more refined subscribers. He could not help liking her rough-and-ready jollity, and one day when she asked the barkeeper to pour a glass of wine for him, he was powerless to refuse the honor. But it tasted no better than the "red paint" of Italian Pete, and in future he tried to pass the paper to the barkeeper rather than to that dignitary's hospitable employer.

One happening in his news-purveying always stood forth sharply if laughably in memory, an additional item that gave him pause with regard to the strangeness of human destiny. An appetizing odor of coffee drifted through the doorway of a squalid hallway where he had just shot the hard-folded morning sheet out of his dexterous hand. Now Jack was at all times a lover of coffee, and nothing would do but he must follow his twitching nose the length of the narrow passage, and stick that same nose into a kitchen to the right.

"Good morning," he remarked pleasantly, with no idea that his friendly mood would be met otherwise than friendlily; for there was about him a naturally engaging expectancy of fair treatment that neither the buffeting of childhood nor maturity could quench from his spirit.

A grizzled slattern, prey of God knows what ill-usage and despair, whirled from the hot stove, butcher-knife in hand, and made one leap for him as his foot was raised to step inside. Only the genius for keeping one jump ahead of all sentient life on his familiar planet saved his face, literally speaking, not to mention his skull. But one correlation deserted him — or was it that she beat him to the outer egress? He found himself blocked from the street entrance, with no avenue but an uninviting stairway at

the rear of the hall. Up this he tore three steps at a time, barely escaping the slashing blade wielded by the crazed, panting harridan.

Doubling back along the parallel upper hallway, he broke through the door in which it ended, into a room where an unoffending elderly couple flew awake at his abrupt entry. Before they could protest, he had swept off their entire bedcovering, and faced right-about to meet the onrush of the raging bedlamite, who had been halted but an instant by the door he had not forgotten to shut. Flinging over her head the smother of blankets, he tripped and laid her impotently struggling on the floor, and made good his escape; and sweet music to his ears were her muffled shrieks.

Ida London had married. From this union was born Jack's nephew, John Miller. So, Jack's family had dwindled to three. In the little Pine Street cottage, for some cause that was justified in his mother's mind, he received his first, and last, whipping from her reluctant husband. John rebelled, but finally submitted. He and Jack, the latter far more concerned for his father than for himself, went where they could earnestly discuss the punishment from every angle. Each tried to hide from the other his own belief in the joint disaster that was to befall them, but agreed that in all the circumstances it would better be gone through and done with. And when the onerous duty had been performed, man and boy, they abolished habitual reserve and wept unashamed in each other's arms.

"But what possessed her, do you suppose?" he wound up. "Whom do you think I must have reminded her of — what dark vengeance did I suggest? — I'll never be satisfied until I know, and I'll never know!"

Jack London always retained the conviction that his original impetus toward literary leanings was supplied by a teacher under whom he sat during the last of his grammar school education, in the Cole School at Twelfth and Alice Streets. Jack had the gift of a pure and musical voice, and the spinster in authority "flatted" abominably. Ergo, Jack presently demonstrated his mettle by firmly declining to join in the offending discord, stating his reasons when asked. The lady, by nature incapable of admitting her failure, wrestled with the obdurate pupil, but was finally obliged to send him to the principal. Mr. Garlick, instead of thrashing the lad, and so trying to force him toward the destruction of a notably true sense of pitch, listened attentively to his reasoning, and talked over the question at some length. Being what he proved during many years in the Oakland halls of learning, both judicial and commendably politic, Mr. Garlick delved into the predispositions of the young brain, informed himself where the student stood highest, and returned him with a note to the school mistress. Therein she was tactfully instructed, under the guise of advice, to command Jack to occupy the vocal periods in writing compositions. And thus he, who dearly loved music and singing, was deprived of one outlet only to pour another talent upon paper, which he did with considerable gusto and resultant good, if grudged, marks.

It was upon his entry into the Cole School that he made his stand for the simple and effective name of Jack London. "Your name?" the teacher asked. "Jack London." "No," she admonished, "you mean John London." "No, ma'am," respectfully but with

finality, "my name is Jack London." Some further discussion ensued, but the name Jack London went upon the roll intact, as it has stood upon a greater roll this many a year.

There were other boys in the Cole School at the same time with Jack London, who made successful names for themselves — James Hopper, first as foot-ball "giant" at the University of California, later story-writer and war correspondent; Elmer Harris, well known playwright; and Ed Boreen, since illustrator and artist. But, as "Jimmie" Hopper once said, they were "pretty tough kids, I think, who would have shied a brick at any long-nose who might have suggested we write or draw."

Another situation Mr. Garlick worked out in this manner: Jack and a classmate, balked mid-battle in a soaring exhibition of fisticuffs, were called upon the carpet. An interrogation satisfied the Principal that Jack had had cause for starting the row, but he fancied chancing an experiment. He left it to the pair of flushed and itching combatants to continue the engagement to a finish, then and there in his office, or, calmly, like "little gentlemen," to consider all sides, and kiss and make up. "I will," promptly offered the other boy, who had tasted the bitter impact of Jack's small, agile fists. The latter, not wholly unscarred, though not relishing such caress from one whom he was sure he could lick in fair fight, hesitated but a moment. Then, with heaven knows what correlations of pride, defeat, consideration for his admired superior, and his latent sense of humor, all flashing across his subjectivity, with a half-abashed grin he stuck out a grimy paw and met his late enemy's lips.

John London, once summoned to stop a fray in which his son was successively taking on the members of an entire family of brothers, each one taller than the latest vanquished, inquired as he strode to the scene: "Is my boy fighting fair? — if he is, I guess there ain't any call for me to interfere." And he puffed his pipe with earnest appreciation sitting in his eyes, until the biggest of all the brothers of the smitten line tried to deliver a foul blow to the infuriated bantam, when John called a halt. He insisted only that his boy, playing the game in clean sporting fashion, should be met by sporting methods, even by one twice his adversary's size.

Who can overestimate the blessing of the influence upon Jack London, exerted in their different fields by men like Mr. Garlick and John London? It endured as a prominent factor in the youth's wisely-timed emergence from the vicious environment that presently claimed him, and that would in short order have destroyed him as it destroyed many of his companions. The effect of these two was priceless in the expanding mental operations of the boy, as he evolved a working philosophy that enabled him to deal intelligently with boys and men of strange breeds and outlandish practices. And terribly soon it was to be almost solely from associates physically his seniors that he was to learn "the worst too young."

Boyhood to Youth: Oakland Estuary, Sailoring, Etc.

VOLUME I — CHAPTER V

WITH an inherent aristocracy of both mental and physical being, sometimes Jack London indulged in speculation upon the effect, had this significant term been passed under cultured and leisured conditions. "I should most likely have become a poet," he would reflect, "or a composer. As it was, an equal urge came to me later from both poetry and music. Somewhat of an exquisite, I'm afraid, if only from my excessive physical sensibilities — but I am surely not a sissy!" with a whimsical look at me. "If I had turned to sociology at all, it would have been merely in an intellectual, impersonal way, not because I felt kinship with the submerged. Curiosity, rather than sympathy, would have led me to investigate here and there out of my elect caste. You know how I love to prowl anyway — no interval is long enough to make me for get the lure of it." And to Cloudesley Johns in March, 1899. he wrote: "It is well you appreciate the virtue in lack of wealth, and you seem to be all the better for it. Here's what wealth would have done for me: it would have turned me into a prince of good fellows, and, barring accident, would have killed me of strong drink before I was thirty."

By nature a leader, a master, Jack would probably have grown up elegantly autocratic, even despotic in a benevolent way, had the conditions during his adolescence been more sympathetic. As it was, there was implanted in him a second nature of protest and rebellion. However, except in so far as he bludgeoned with that puissant intellect, there was no cruelty in him. Once, and once only, in childhood, he had tortured an animal, a frog — the only assignable motive being curiosity. He never forgot this, nor ever forgave himself. In the year of his death, I happened to be present when a young fellow related humorously, and with apparent relish, how in boyhood he had suspended a puppy by its paws and enjoyed its yapping when he struck it. From the phenomenon of his face I glanced at Jack's, which moved no muscle, yet recoiled with every nerve, while his eyes became welling pools of darkness. He had liked this man.

By land and variant waterways I have travelled with Jack London: by steamer — tramp and liner; windjammer, sampan, pleasure craft of all sorts; in railroad trains of many countries; by automobile, bicycle, saddle, and horse-drawn vehicle, from cart to tallyho; even on foot, which was least to our mutual liking; and we but awaited opportunity to take to the blue together — this chance coming to me alone after he had gone beyond that blue. But it was upon the liquid two-thirds of earth's surface that I saw him the most blissfully content. Dawn or twilight, he loved the way of a boat upon the sea. His bright inquisitive spirit might have sailed to its human birthing, so native was he to the world's watery spaces. The sea nurtured a gallant and adventurous spirit that made us all watch his banner. His influence was felt like a great vitalizing breath from the West — wide land of red-veined men — in which he lived and died. "Seamen have at all times been a people apart," curiously so, from the rest of their kind; and

the sailor Jack London was a man apart from the rest of himself. Imagination, nerves, work, pleasure, all ran in smoother grooves when his feet stood between the moving surface and the blowing sky, his own intelligence the equalizing force amidst unstable elements. Seldom in waking hours without books or spoken argument exerting upon his wheeling brain, yet at the helm of his boat, braced for day-long hours, he would stand rapt in healthful ecstasy of sheer being, lord of life and the harnessed powers of nature, unheedful of physical strain, his own hand directing fate.

Graduation from grammar school came at about his thirteenth year. Pathetically enough, the poor boy did not appear at the graduation exercises, because he was ashamed of his shabby clothes. It may interest the harsh critic of Jack London's chosen careless attire, to learn that he was once slave of convention in the matter of clothing. I have heard him laugh softly, with a dimness in his eyes, at the pathos of the shrinking little figure he had cut in earliest schooling days, when his mother resolutely clad him in some garment he thought different from his schoolmates clothes, and he died a thousand deaths of shame.

It had come to the ears of busy Eliza that her brother intended to forego being class historian at the ceremonial, to which honor he had been elected. She made an effort to locate him, that she might buy him a new outfit, and left word for him to come to her. But for some cause her plans miscarried.

School finished, what play-time remained after "hustling" newspapers and performing odd jobs was spent in a fourteen-foot, decked-over skiff, equipped with center-board and flimsy sail. Questing a new world beyond the tide-ripped mouth of the estuary, out upon the treacherous water of the bay proper he ventured to Goat Island, more formally Yerba Buena, now conspicuous in all the array of a naval training station. The fish he bore home gave him economic sanction for his favorite recreation. Very important he felt with those still dimpled fists closed about the rickety little tiller — captain of his ship and soul, salt spray upon his parted lips, and the free west wind sweeping through his young lungs, that came, unlike other blessings, without price. Sitting high on the windward rail, sheet in hand, feeling out the strength of the breeze, with wistful eyes he watched great vessels tow Golden Gateward, breaking out their gleaming canvas, and longed to run away to sea. Or, slipping along with slack sheet before a light zephyr, one eye on the sail, one hand at the helm, he devoured countless tales of voyagers, the covers of which he first protected with newspaper against injury by dampness or salt spray.

In this wise he applied himself to master the manners of little craft until their management should become automatic to hand and brain. Here he laid foundation for the consummate small-boat sailor to whom I, yachtswoman long in advance of our meeting, entrusted my life seventeen years later in ocean voyaging on a forty-five-foot ketch. "The small-boat sailor is the real sailor," was his opinion, although he courteously prefaces the remark with "barring captains and mates of big ships." And he goes on: "He knows — he must know — how to make the wind carry his craft from one given point to another given point. He must know about tides and rips and eddies,

bar and channel markings, and day and night signals; he must be wise in weather-lore; and he must be sympathetically familiar with the peculiar qualities of his boat which differentiate it from every other boat that was ever built and rigged. He must know how to gentle her about, as one instance of a myriad, and to fill her on the other tack without deadening her way or allowing her to fall off too far." As for the captains of liners as well as officers and able seamen, I have heard them frankly admit: "No, I can't swim; and I don't know the first thing about handling small sailing vessels." It is an art by itself, and Jack London became a past master of it during his early teens.

Never did he forget his astonishment upon encountering his first modern deep-water sailor — runaway from an English merchantman. He sat in breathless wonder-worship of this sea-god who discoursed lightly of hair-raising hurricanes and violent deeds in strange lands and oceans. One day the superior being consented to sail with him. "With all the trepidation of the veriest little amateur I hoisted sail and got under way. Here was a man, looking on critically, I was sure, who knew more in one second about boats and the water than I could ever know. After an interval in which I exceeded myself he took the tiller and the sheet. I sat on the little thwart amidships open-mouthed, prepared to learn what real sailing was. My mouth remained open, for I learned what a real sailor was in a small boat.

"He couldn't trim the sheet to save himself, he nearly capsized several times in squalls, and once again by blunderingly jibing over. He didn't know what a centerboard was for, nor did he know that in running a boat before the wind one must sit in the middle instead of on the side; and, finally, when we came back to the wharf, he ran the skiff in full tilt, shattering her nose and carrying away the mast-step. . . . A man can sail in the forecastle of big ships all his life and never know what real sailing is."

Sometimes a boy companion was his on the thrilling traverse to Goat Island, athwart the churning wakes of leviathan ferry steamers. But most often he occupied unshared his domain of free fair solitude, milling out his own problems, empirical or spiritual the former rooted in one sure test, "Will it work — will you trust your life to it?" — the latter resolving into an equal conviction that the existence he escaped on shore was sordid and meaningless compared with this. Unaided by man, he was engaged in identifying himself with the universe as it unfolded to his unboyish perspective, establishing his separate ego, and making toward the polymorphic entity he was to become.

And here, fleeing from the crowded turmoil ashore, thrilling with beauty and wonder of sea and sky, in the "vast indifference of heaven and sea," he fell into a cool gravity of contemplation that few realized of him in his manhood. I knew; for with him, speeding away from cities, in peace and truth I was " . . . as one that leaves

The heat and babble of a crowded room
And steps into the great, cool, silent night."

"No one has helped me vitally — name me one," he has challenged in bald moments when the struggling past arose. Indeed, in reviewing what I know from him and of him, it does seem that after eliminating all who tried to help, one finds the history of

a success that was won almost in spite of proffered assistance, which was for the most part misdirected. This because in the main the effort, through misconception of his superb free quality, made toward conventionalizing, holding him back and down. The only souls who may rest in joy of having helped are those (to whom my gratitude!) who gave him moments of happiness.

Dreamer though he was, and dream though he did, the boy learned withal that a boat would capsize and he be brine-soaked, or worse, if he did not apply practical system in handling her. While his ardent boyish heart was conscious of beauty and pleasure, he respected the means of their attainment. "I have been real," he adjudged his mental method, "and did not cheat reality any step of the way.

Those who choose for the foundation of their judgments the sensational aspects of his career, are surprised that his approach by water was not heralded by much noise of steam or gasolene-driven enginery, or, upon terra firma, by dust-rimed, red devil touring-car. Once, indeed, during a period of dangerous depression, he had contemplated the big red devil, biggest and reddest, for the outrunning of his blue fiends. But he never owned an automobile, although, when in 1916 we planned a world-around voyage after the War, the finest purchasable car was to be an item of dunnage in a remodeled three-topmast schooner such as we had seen in the Alameda Basin.

"We shall be anachronisms, you and I, Mate Woman," he would prophesy gleefully, "for when we are seventy and beyond, still shall we be riding and driving horses on the highways, still shall we be sailing boats. I do believe that boat sailing is a finer, more difficult art than running a motor. It would n t be right to insist that any one can run the newest fool-proof gasolene machinery, but most of us can. This is not true of sailing a boat. It takes more skill and intelligence, and certainly more training."

Picturing the embryo sailor steering the frail fabric of wood and cotton, clinging almost a part of this workable thing of his dreams, curls blown back from the uplifted face with its marveling smile, I am reminded of what Edwin Markham wrote me in the shadows:

"I think of him as part of the heroic youth and courage of the world."

One fails to discern where he passed from boyhood into youth. Paradoxically, we might say, as he so often said, that there never was a boyhood for him. Hardly did he experience even a youth. From first to last it was as boy-man and man-boy that he came face to face with life. "I never had a boyhood," were his own words, "and I seem to be hunting for that lost boyhood." One passion of my wifehood, was, that to son of his and mine, I might have part in making up for that ineffable treasure of childhood that Jack London had missed.

Now see how, in physical immaturity, striving as always for fuller scope, he foregathered in all lawlessness with youths and men. With a rare apperception of their foreignness, soon he was able so to coordinate with it as to bridge incongruity of years and step forth indistinguishable, — to them, — from their own essential quality. Not with foreign bloods, however, was his initiation into the man-game. It took place in the familiar "creek," aboard the large sloop yacht, Idler, lying not far from the wide-

waisted unused whalers. To the romancing eye of the youngster, head crammed with enticing stories of seafar-ing, she was shrouded in fabulous mist. Rumor had it that she was interned for a questionable but dare-devil transaction known as opium smuggling in savage isles on the western sea-rim, none other than the Sandwich Islands of glib geography recitation. On more than one occasion his skiff had tacked at respectful distance about the slim white hull and raking scraped mast, and he had vaguely envied the husky, bronzed caretaker, who kept the elegant craft shipshape.

One day came the golden opportunity to meet with this brawny man of nineteen, who was reputed to be a harpooner, waiting his chance to put to sea in professional capacity on one of the whalers, the Bonanza. Her tumble down sides even now resounded to the tinkering incident to outfitting for a new voyage. It was the before mentioned runaway English sailor who made possible the event, by asking Jack to put him aboard the Idler for a "gam" with the harpooner. The boy, inwardly trembling with delight, hoisted his tiny sail and directly they were zipping across the estuary. He and the sailor were bidden hospitably on deck by the caretaker. Jack, before going below, in precise seamanlike method dropped his boat astern on a long painter, "with two nonchalant half-hitches," that there might be no scratching of the yacht's shining white paint. Then he followed with bated breath down the brassy companionway, and filled his lungs with the musty, damp odor of the first sea-interior he had ever entered.

If we may trace any definite line betwixt his youth and manhood, it leads to this cabin of the opium smuggler, Idler, where, though he lapsed for a time thereafter, he became indissolubly bound with the affairs of men. And such men! "At last I was living. Here I sat, inside my first ship, a smuggler, accepted as comrade by a harpooner and a runaway English sailor who said his name was Scotty." Preserving discreet silence, that he might display no jarring immaturity, he was taken for granted. Newly conscious of his uncouth land-lubberly garments, he regarded the clothing that gently swayed on the cabin walls to the roll left by passing tugs: ". . . leather jackets lined with corduroy, blue coats of pilot cloth, sou'westers, sea boots, oilskins." It all gave out a musty smell, "but what of that? Was it not the seagear of men?" And the cabin — it and its appointments were photographed on his retina for all time, and their like registered as the dearest and most desirable of surroundings;". . . everywhere was in evidence the economy of space — the narrow bunks, the swinging tables, the blue-backed charts carelessly rolled and tucked away, the signal-flags in alphabetical order, and a mariner's dividers jammed into the woodwork to hold a calendar."

The swift-evolving lad of fourteen, shrewdly observing by aid of the usual allotment of senses and that extra one of fitness which was the flower of the other five, renewed acquaintance with the oblique concomitant of manhood's prowess and comradery. Where could they get something to drink! Nothing aboard, and no licensed saloons anywhere near. The harpooner knew; and with flask in pocket disappeared overside. The flask was full when again the click of his rowlocks was heard, and the smallest member of the law-scoffing company was deeply mystified concerning the relation between "rot-gut" — euphonious name by which the adulterated fire-water was known by these swagger

adventurers — and certain sightless swine. But it was not many moments before the significance of "blind pig" burst upon him.

Vinegar and gall the liquor was to his lips and throat; but he "drank with them, drink by drink, raw and straight, though the damned stuff couldn't compare with a stick of chewing taffy or a delectable 'cannon-ball.'" And to spend fortunes of cents on such debatable nectar! He carried twenty in his man-length jeans, and could not do less than contribute them with offhand smile toward the many refillings of the square-face bottle, "though with regret at the enormous store of candy" they represented.

As the hours flew, and the fumes rose and worked within his hard young skull, he became aware of the virtue of the potion that unbound diffidences and true modesties. Absorbing the unloosed confidences of these suddenly established cronies, his ego began to loom like a genii within its narrow house, realizing an unsuspected stature side by side with taller egos. All attention to a self-glorying tale of valor from Scotty, and its lurid fellow from the harpooner, he came to think that he had not done so badly either, in his solitary wanderings. Waiting for a pause, he launched into bold narrative of how he had sailed his skiff across the bay in a big south-easter that held deep-water tonnage at none too safe anchorage in port. Spurred by the respect he seemed to command, a step further he dared, charging Scotty with being a "bum" hand in a small sailboat. Only another round of whisky disengaged the inflamed pair, who, now outside of all reticence, vowed in maudlin embrace, that, inseparable, they would navigate the round world around. Jack beheld himself one of the Bonanza's crew in the North Pacific, thence in other keels to Far Ind. They all three roared sea chanteys, and boasted to the pitying skies.

"The fortunate man is he who cannot take a couple of drinks without becoming intoxicated," was Jack London's opinion. "The unfortunate wight is the one who can take many glasses without betraying a sign." Though the young Jack had betrayed signs a-many on this day of infinite consequence, it was he, the virgin carouser, full to the guards, who put the two seasoned sinners to bed. Yearning to lose consciousness in another of the tempting mattressed bunks, he yet felt called upon to demonstrate, new-made giant that he was, that no tottering weakness moved within him. Again at his tiller, sail set, he plunged the skiff's bow into the crisping channel and angled, madly careering, across to the Oakland shore. "I was now at the pinnacle of exaltation. I sang 'Blow the Man Down' as I sailed. I was no boy of fourteen, living the mediocre ways of a town. . . . I was a man, a god, and the very elements rendered me allegiance as I bitted them to my will.

The water was at lowest mark, and hundreds of feet of greasy grey mud intervened between its lapping edge and the boat landing. With centerboard lifted, he drove full speed into the ooze, and when the skiff lost headway, stood up in the sternsheets and punted with an oar. And here outraged mind and flesh refused to function in common. As tho one gave in to the poison, the other crumpled over board into the unspeakable slime; and the poor little man-of-the-world knew painfully, as his skin tore against the barnacles of a broken pile, that he was nauseatingly drunk. But not as the others were

drunk, he still contended as he scrambled to his feet, for in the sinuous maze of his struggling wits there stirred a lofty satisfaction that he had beaten two strong men at their own game.

Once more, as in San Mateo six years before, he swore "never again." Not even the limitless vision he had been vouchsafed, in addled ecstasy, of the glories of a conquered world, could compensate for the come-back of miserable days of sickness and depression. Purple as had been the dream, it and the means of it he repudiated, spent his next savings on taffy and "all-day suckers," and returned to his odd jobs and life on the streets. The inexhaustible trove of the library seemed ample foreign adventuring for the nonce.

Queen of the Oyster Pirates

VOLUME I — CHAPTER VI 15 to 16 years

ALTHOUGH the hero of this book more than once ran JL away bodily from manual labor, before final desertion of it through conviction of its conflict with his remote ends, a sense of responsibility never released him for long, if at all. He was destined to become a sort of patriarch to a group of dependents.

Barely fifteen, shore life for him had begun to reveal itself as a serious and manacling thing, and from the needs of the household there were left but few cents of his slender earnings, and fewer hours of leisure, for amusements and taffy. His first steady servitude was in an Oakland cannery, established in an insanitary old stable which was ventilated by drafty interstices in its ramshackle frame. Here he became an unconscious example of child-exploitation — that most incredible of all the shames of civilized society. His broadening shoulders that had shaken free under the open sky, or braced squarely against the shock of brave west wind and drenching southeaster, were now rounded above dangerous machinery for an average of ten hours a day, with as many cents compensation per hour. Roofed from their divine right of sunshine, boys and girls alike they sat and stood before their unprotected machines, the safety of tender young hands and fingers depending solely upon deft mental correlation. Some, slower by nature than others, were beaten in the unfair contest, accidents were frequent, and the victims went mutilated for the rest of their lives; the girls more sadly in proportion than their male companions.

"We could not spare a look or a qualm from our own wariness of the machinery, when one of us was hurt," Jack has visualized the scene for me. "A frightened look aside, a moment's let-down of tensest attention to the thing in hand, and slap! off would go your own finger. I guess I was just lucky," he disclaimed credit for his own keen correlations.

Those fittest to cope with the work could talk back and forth down the bowed rows, boys and girls chaffing one another and making "dates" for noon-hour and street-corner trysts; but even this intermittent social chatter was confined to the forenoon and for

a short time after lunch. The later of the ten actual working hours were passed under almost unendurable strain of taut nerves.

Even if in spirit of blindly humorous yet grim reprisal against fate in general, one sort of revenge for their toil and pain seems to have been taken by the overdriven employees. From Jack's reminiscences to me, I have gathered that other extraneous matter than tears of weariness and rebellion was often closed and soldered into the shiny tin cans of tomatoes and peaches, berries and corn; and none felt called upon, in absence of the overseer, to skim off dust blown into the toothsome contents by streams of wind that forced through the apertures of the old barn. One of the filth-collecting ledges on the wall that faced the workers was almost on a level with their eyes, and now and again contributed its quota of menace to the health of others than the cannery's workers. And thus the public, also, was ill served by the masters of labor — all valuable mental pabulum for the fiery reformer Jack London was soon to become.

To him perhaps alone of these slaves of the old cannery was given a capacity to react in good time, and make him self heard in no uncertain voice, for the education of the mole-minded workers toward protest and demand for pro-tection and adequate compensation, even to the seizing of the very machinery of production. That his mind was set astir even in the thick of the gruelling experience, one reads from his own view of that drab period:

"I asked myself if this were the meaning of life — to be a work-beast? I knew no horse in the City of Oakland that worked the hours I worked. If this were living, I was entirely unenamored of it."

And the girls: here again, those beings he heard referred to as he "weaker" sex, and therefore to be cherished, were being despoiled by the same iron lot that befell their brothers. At the same time, for some reason which he had not fathomed, they were denied the relaxations and robust recreations allowed these brothers; else they were not considered "nice" girls. Maintaining pace with awakening sex-consciousness, curiosity urged him to speculate widely concerning these pretty, fun-loving creatures of more delicate frame than himself. More marvelous became contemplation and reality of his trysts with the little maids of the cannery whose lash-veiled affirmative glances in stolen instants from work answered the questioning lift of his own brows. Whatever knowledge his curiosity and their complacence yielded in time, he never forgot the exquisite spiritual quality of the aura that surrounded his first love, a couple of years later.

The while he remained a slave, an irreproachable slave he was. None could criticize his faithfulness nor the product of his effort. But when his moment struck, through he was with restraint and all its works. Insurrectionary he stood forth; though along with a radical shifting of viewpoint, an amazingly careful estimate of values coordinated with the flinging off of bonds. Up to a certain stage, the marshalling of values must have been unconscious; but his bursts of action in any premise were as if well-considered from every angle. That he did not func-tion without some measure of deliberate thought, there is ample evidence from his own reminiscences.

What I am trying to present is this: Out of a free range of conscious or unconscious thought-material, garnered as consciously or unconsciously from his already varied experience, he abruptly formed concepts that led him as abruptly to rise and throw off any complication that proved unendurable and unprofitable to his logic. Back in his small but independent flat-bottomed shallop on the wicked currents of one of the greatest and most treacherous of harbors, he suddenly came to reckon with the absurdity of the groveling, destructive existence he had let himself sink into. Which held the meaning of life? — the turbulent waters with their "careless captains," alcohol and all, or a "viewless, hueless deep" of dehumanizing labor? Perhaps his thrilling heritage of physical ardor determined the issue. At all events, selfhood asserted overnight, and heaved the burden from off his spirit. And the only outlet that was shown to him was the water-way he so loved. Money he must bring home — there was no discussion about that, and no idea of evading responsibility crossed his mind. But why not combine his heart's-desire with bread-getting?

He "remembered the wind that blew every day on the bay . . . all the beauty and wonder and the sense-delights of the world denied . . . the bite of the salt air . . . the bite of the salt water " when he plunged overside. The pulsing colors of forgotten sunrises and sunsets flushed in his jaded brain.

Still again, I draw on that "duty" letter to his later sweetheart:

". . . worked in the cannery for a short summer vacation — the reward was to be a term at college. I worked in the same cannery, not for a vacation but for a year. . . . My wages were small, but I worked such long hours that I sometimes made as high as fifty dollars a month. Duty — I turned every cent over. Duty — I have worked in that hell hole for thirty-six straight hours, at a machine, and I was only a child. I remember how I was trying to save the money to buy a skiff — eight dollars. All that summer I saved and scraped. In the fall I had five dollars as a result of absolutely doing without all pleasure. My mother had to have the money — she came to the machine where I worked and asked me for it. I could have killed myself that night. . . . Duty — had I followed your conception of duty, I should never have gone to High School, never to the University, never — I should have remained a laborer."

Once more at the sun-warped tiller of his barnacled skiff, leg o mutton sail trimmed, frayed sheet slipping deliciously through his fingers as he blew down the ebb tide before the wind, tremulous with joy of returning to what appealed as his natural habitat, the clear-eyed young viking of the West expanded long-cramped lungs and gave himself over to taking inventory of his assets: One good, average think-box, he calmly flattered himself, and one good average body that could, at need, surpass in resistance others of its age and size, not to mention certain older and bulkier physiques. And his priceless asset, of which he was then ignorant, was the cogency of that brain which enabled him to focus swiftly and surely upon an aggregation of data and set each item where it best would serve his ends.

I think it must have been right here, aligning his equipment for immediate benefit of all concerned in his province, that the budding philosopher forever renounced idle

dreaming. Henceforward he appeared to range his conclusions with more or less logical application to practical solutions.

Reviewing the months just past, during which he had availed himself of law-abiding means of making, not his way in the world, but mere bread and butter, he was "unenamored" of the process. Body and soul had been outraged by the sodden, bestial dullness, and he was ripe to swerve into an equally pernicious if more attractive abyss. The Seabreeze bore him tidings of incommunicable lure, and his would have been the bliss of blindly answering the call, had he not felt the cords of duty. It was not in him to flee from the failing ones at home. A sturdy, law-respecting quality that ran in his composition would best have been sustained if the water had offered some honest method of livelihood. Plainly he could not contribute his share to ward family expenses by mere angling from a skiff.

What wonder, if his reading had limned the charmed word "pirate" in illuminated characters! Suppressed boyhood and adventure-lusting youth rose to the word and all its glamor. Why not! What boy is withheld from "playing pirates," or "burglars," or Indian or white-man atrocities, with their lurid imagery? The fancied evil of it leaves no more mark on the playing-child's perceptions than did the actual evil cling to this working-child. Besides, drudgery had not impressed him as innocent and unharmful. The sin of filching oysters at the risk of limb and liberty, enmeshed as it was with exaltation of adventure, appeared a lesser harm. Besides, were there not plenty of oysters for everybody. Again, that threshing mind flayed out the "irrefragable fact" that lurked in all seeming contradiction, and went on finding itself through agency of empirical research. Who was to tell him what was right and what wrong! He must discover for himself — and the exploration promised delight in its manful hazard.

"I wanted to be where the winds of adventure blew," his desire ran. "And the winds of adventure blew the oyster pirate sloops up and down San Francisco Bay, from raided oyster-beds and fights at night on shoal and flat, to markets in the morning against city wharves, where peddlers and saloon-keepers came down to buy. Every raid . . . was a felony. The penalty was state imprisonment, the stripes and the lockstep. And what of that! The men in stripes worked a shorter day than I at my machine. And there was vastly more romance in being an oyster pirate than in being a machine slave. And behind it all, behind all of me with youth a-bubble, whispered Romance, Adventure."

"French Frank," a man of fifty, a notorious "oyster-pirate," had stirred Jack's interest in the water-front circle. Slight, graceful, debonair, a dandy with the brave ladies of his hot-headed class, French Frank's very foreignness surrounded him with romance. Young Jack heard that French Frank had a boat to sell, a nifty sloop with the dizzy name of Razzle Dazzle zigzagged across her saucy stern. Three hundred dollars was her price — three hundred cart-wheels! But he did not take time to gasp, for his ramping fancy entertained no obstacle. Upon his vision, roving for possibilities, impinged Mammy Jenny's thrifty purse, that purse which ever sagged open-mouth toward her "white child." What of the social exigencies of his new profession of swashbuckling, he was a

long time paying back that three hundred dollars of her wages for nursing the sick; and it was a happy day when at last he laid the final instalment in her soft, dark hand.

The Sunday when he dropped his skiff on a long painter astern of the Razzle Dazzle, and stood on his "two hindlegs like a man" talking business with a real pirate, albeit of defenseless bivalves, carried Jack across the moat into man's estate. A twenty-dollar gold piece ratified the agreement, which was to be drawn up on the morrow. Then the prospective owner, treading almost reverently the deck of his first boat worthy of the name, moved in a dream down into the stuffy little cabin that reeked of tobacco and the flowing "red paint" of abhorrent memory.

In "John Barleycorn" is given an euphemistic account of the affair and how it terminated. The sloop was anchored near the Alameda bank of the Creek, not far from Webster Street Bridge. French Frank, scintillating with joy of much wine and feminine companionship, made Jack acquainted with his friends — "Whiskey" Bob, a hardened character only a year older than himself, "Spider" Healey, "black-whiskered wharf-rat of twenty," and, for the most approved piratical garnishing, though not the spoils of sea-raiding, two young and attractive females whom Jack has named Mamie and Tess. Mamie, unbeknown to the boy, was the object of a frantic French passion; but the honorable offer of wifehood from the elderly if dapper Frank had not proved sufficient prize to make her forswear free-lancing as Queen of the Oyster Pirates.

When the bulgy demijohn of red wine tipped to another tumbler, Jack, with the eye of the gay Queen upon him, all his childish bridges crashing, swallowed first his rising gorge and then with befitting sang-froid the tumblerful — and kept it down with a set smile that he hoped was natural in its seeming. The others had been drinking for hours and, with the exception of the Queen, were soon paying all their attention to the singing of popular ditties, at first in uninterrupted solos and presently in discordant medley, each singing on his or her own account.

Jack found himself "able to miss drinks without being noticed or called to account." Also, "standing in the companionway, head and shoulders out and glass in hand," he could cool his head and fling the wine overboard. "My manhood," he reasoned, "must compel me to appear to like this wine . . . I shall so appear. But I shall drink no more than is unavoidable . . . And we sat there, glasses in hand, and sang, while the demijohn went around; and I was the only strictly sober one . . . And I enjoyed it as no one of them was able to enjoy it," he illustrates his growing wisdom and observation. "Here, in this atmosphere of bohemianism, I could not but contrast the scene with my scene of the day before, sitting at my machine, in the stifling, shut-in air, repeating, endlessly repeating, at top speed, my series of mechanical motions. And here I sat now, glass in hand, in warm-glowing camaraderie, with the oyster pirates, adventurers who refused to be slaves to petty routine, who flouted restrictions and the law, who carried their lives and their liberties in their hands."

He did not try to resist the Queen, wise beyond her years. Before the native pentration of this girl, who was less commonplace than the average run of her sisterhood, well as he succeeded in merging with her social stratum, he could not altogether dissem-

ble his almost pristine freshness. Disregarding any peril to him from her hot-headed suitor of nearly four times Jack's age, she swept the hand some boy into her train. Oh, no — he did not lose his head; show him the petticoat who could bring about such lamentable disaster, indeed! No Mark Antony he, but an Augustus capable of taking feminine wiles at their proper worth in his career. He knew his history books, and Augustus had earned his distinct approval.

As always, a woman's-man, still women never interfered with his playing the man's game. I do not think any woman ever made him miss an engagement with a man. In short, passionate lover though he might be, he was no follower of petticoats to the extent of clouding his manly attitude toward his own sex. It might be said, reviewing his rise to prominence, that he succeeded in spite of petticoats.

The Queen abstracted him from the maudlin crew, and more especially from her not uninterested sister, and made love to him where they sat on the cabin roof; while the boy, entirely unaware that he was poaching upon Frank's preserve, added the charm of her presence into the crucible of his perfect hour. Even at that, her charm was negligible in comparison with the thrill he knew at prospect of endless days that had no business with routine, but were concerned with life, more life. That was it — too long he had made one with the unburied dead; and the renascent desire for life, boundless life, bore him out beyond the reef of old clock-watching, whistle-obeying standards.

His capacity for happiness had no horizon on that day of days. Faultless was the round blue universe, he was its conscious center, and his princely ego paced out upon its conquering way. "The afternoon breeze blew its tang into my lungs, and curled the waves in mid-channel. Before it came the scow schooners, wing-and-wing, blowing their horns for the drawbridges to open. Bed-stacked tugs tore by, rocking the Razzle Dazzle in the waves of their wake. A sugar bark towed from the 'boneyard' to sea. The sunwash was on the crisping water, and life was big. . . . There it was, the smack and slap of the spirit of revolt, of adventure, of romance, of the things forbidden and done defiantly and grandly. . . . To-morrow I would be an oyster pirate, as free a freebooter as the century and the waters of San Francisco Bay would permit. Spider had already agreed to sail with me as my crew of one, and, also, as cook while I did the deck work. We would outfit our grub and water in the morning, hoist the big mainsail, and beat our way out the estuary on the last of the ebb. Then we would slack sheets, and on the first of the flood run down the bay to the Asparagus Islands, where we would anchor miles off shore. And at last my dream would be realized: I would sleep upon the water. And next morning I would wake upon the water; and thereafter all my days and nights would be on the water."

Oyster-pirating

VOLUME I — CHAPTER VII

I NEVER told you, did I, Mate Woman, the essential reason for my title 'Prince of the Oyster Pirates'?" This from Jack London to me twenty years thereafter. And here I warn that the story may seem unpretty to those who pharisaically shrink from the facts of life.

"Why, you see when I, the youngest of the pirates, commanded my own Razzle Dazzle, the Queen went along with me! I was the only skipper in the fleet sailing with a woman aboard, and it made a sensation. Spider had told me French Frank was 'crazy jealous' the night she asked me to row her ashore from his boat; but I couldn't believe that a man of his age could be jealous of a boy like myself. So I dismissed the matter from mind until one night he tried to run me down in a black squall on the oyster-flats.

"Spider I paid to do the cooking and help me generally, and I did the deck-work and sailorizing — I had already learned pride in a boat. I guess the Queen had an easy time enough. — Why did I take her? It would be hard to say it all," he retrospected, an odd bashful expression flitting across his face. "I was making a career for myself, after a picture I had created out of the books I always kept on exchanging at the old library. I was in revolt from the beastly hopelessness of the labor I had been performing, and had not yet seen ahead to the other kinds of beastly consequences of the life I was entering inescapable — to any one who stayed in it. All I saw was glamor of conquest, of scarlet adventure and yellow gold which latter I needed badly. — Men did these reckless things; only, I would do them better than I saw them done around me: I would preserve the romance and leave out the brutality if possible.

"The Queen again? — you'll never know her real name, my dear. . . . It was largely a hard-headed manifestation of myself as a man among men. And she wanted to go with me. But in all my life, in its roughest, toughest aspects, surrounded by brutal men and brutal acts, I never laid my hand on a woman except in gentleness — I hardly need tell you this. But my personal feeling — why, I liked the girl. She was good-looking, and warm and kind, and best of all she made a real home in that little bit of a cabin. It stirred my imagination — I glimpsed, beyond adventure, dim visions of a future in which wife and children and home figured. Besides, she was a sort of waif herself and we had that unspoken sympathy between us. Then, too, I could not help admiring a certain pluck she had about her, good fellow all through, unafraid of God or man or devil. But along with a prestige that obtained from holding my own woman against all comers, I knew the handicap of being considered tied by apron-strings; and there were times when the Queen knew better than to show her head above deck. — And then you must take into account," he referred to the human passion of a body that ever remained incorruptibly normal, I was a husky man at sixteen, and already knew girls — my first wondering knowledge had been presented to me by one much older than myself; and the Queen met more than one need I had come to recognize."

The real comradeship that existed between them partially redeemed the precocity of the affair. There was nothing of the moral imbecile about the Queen. In her make-up was no weakness of "squealing" at danger, nor for hurt feelings nor even the desertions incident to her chosen adventurings. She took the world as it came, and this remarkable

new friend's very unsentimentality appealed to her along with his vital charm. That he did not spill over nor deceive her as to the shallowness of his ultimate regard, was to her in his favor. She asked no more than he gave, and she appreciated his humanity.

As one wise woman has remembered him: "Sincerity was the greatest trait of his character. He never made pretensions and he built neither his work nor his life on sophisms and evasions."

"I'm a funny sort of fellow, I guess," he pursued the self-revelation. "Because I have sung the paean of the strong, and despite the whole heart I threw into showing the weak how to become strong, as I saw it, the world has given me the personal reputation of a cave-man! How much of a cave-man have you, or has any one, found me? . . . Sometimes I almost wonder if even you would not have more respect for me, love me more if I'd beat you up soundly once in a while" — laughingly whirling me into an embrace. "You know my opinion of woman in general, and that it s not all flattering by any means; but even in my violent youth a woman was always to me something to handle tenderly. Oh, I'll rough-house with a bunch of romping boy-girls and give as good as I take, and then some. But that's different." And once he mused: "I cannot understand the type of man who, having held a woman in his arms, thinks less of her. Girls have told me of such lovers, and I was aghast. To you I say solemnly that no woman, howsoever little dear to me, whom I have ever held in my arms, but has been dearer to me for it."

And so, the Queen of the Oyster Pirates, now herself long dead, clasped the shadow of the lover he was in ripeness of time to discover himself. Indeed, she clasped but the shadow of what he then was, for he gave her no more of himself than was expedient, not even yet having been touched with the shy madness of first love.

The maturing philosopher would perform no uncon-genial work, so long as there were others willing to receive his pay for the same; yet he would rupture a blood-vessel or rip off his sensitive nail-quick, jumping into a breach or doing what appealed to a whim, or to accomplish an end. And he asked no man to do what he could not himself do. That he did not break his neck or cripple himself for life, was due to his exquisite balance. Waste motion was a crime against common sense. Master of life that he intended to become, he would eliminate every effort that did not bear directly upon his success. And success in what? Merely living to the full while he earned something over and above his bread and butter. The cannery masters worked with their heads — why not he? Seven years later, and a year before his precipitate first marriage, he wrote to Cloudesley Johns:

"I, too, have worked like a horse, and eaten like an ox; but as to work while no comrade can ever say Jack London shirked in the slightest, I hate the very thought of thus wasting my time. It s so deadening I mean hard labor. . . . While I have a strong will, I deliberately withhold it when it happens to clash with desire. I simply refuse to draw the curb. When I was just sixteen I broke loose and went off on my own hook. Took unto myself a mistress of the same age, lived a year of wildest risk in which I made more money in one week than I do in a year now, and then, to escape the inevitable downward drift, broke away from every thing and went to sea."

During school days and afterward, he had been an in defatigable trader and collector of everything under the sun. There were his painstakingly hunted and labeled birdeggs; a treasure of marbles — finest collection of agates he had even seen, won by skill in schoolyard or street games; and his cigarette-pictures and posters and albums had been the envy of associates. Not having had the spending of his own money, he had made use of duplicate papers in trading with the newsboys. Foreshadowing what was to become a perfect system in larger matters, he

amassed a series of pictures complete from every cigarette manufacturer, "such as the Great Eacehorses, Parisian Beauties, Women of All Nations, Flags of All Nations, Noted Actors, Champion Prizefighters. And each series he had in three different ways: "in the card from the cigarette package, in the poster, and in the album." After which, he set out to gather sets for trading purposes. In addition, through barter he had accumulated an excellent album of postage stamps, a fair shelf of minerals, and some good curios that whetted his instinct to rove in far countries.

Because this hoarding depended, not upon money, but upon his wits, he achieved a name as a sharp trader, and trading became to him a game. "I could make even a junkman weep when I had dealings with him, he refers to one branch of operations that lasted into his pirate days. "Other boys called me in to sell for them their collections of bottles, rags, old iron, grain and gunny sacks, and five-gallon oil-cans — aye, and gave me a commission for doing it."

And now, determined fledgling in a cutthroat crowd who sneered at boyish sports which to some of them were in deed unknown, he steadily strengthened his pinions among "birds" vain of titles like "Whiskey" Bob, Joe Goose, Nicky the Greek, "Scratch" Nelson, "Soup" and "Stew" Kennedy, "Clam" Bart, "Irish" and "Oyster" Kelly, Patsy Haggerty, "Harmonica" Joe, "Hell and Blazes." He wrote to his dumbfounded mother to distribute his wealth according to the choices of his erstwhile cronies. Here it must have been that he commenced to foster that distaste for looking behind him with which I came to reckon early in our friendship. "We are now concerned with to day," was his familiar adjuration. "Forget the mistakes of yesterday, except as warning against making the same mistake twice." He would have no commerce with what he termed "the rule of the dead." The living present was the thing. Inimical he knew this new world to be: therefore he would concentrate upon becoming one with it only insofar as it gave him pleasure and profit. Oh, he did not reason it in so many words; but his cerebration was to that effect. The old shackling sense of poverty he resolutely disowned, and with free fist spent all of eighty cents upon detested liquor when it served the purpose of educating himself in mastership of the human elements that surrounded him. Abandoning a measure of caution, drink for drink he tossed them down. And he marveled and gloated upon the patent fact that he could as before win laurels from the well pickled villains with whom he had cast lot. If the whiskey route was the only one by which he, the rank tyro, could overtake his book-heroes, the whiskey route for him — on the surface at any rate. But there were stolen occasions when the Razzle Dazzle's snug cabin, locked from the inside, was the scene of blissful

secret orgies of reading and sucking "cannon-balls" and taffy. For "dollars and dollars, across the bar, couldn't buy the satisfaction that twenty-five cents did in a candy store."

"I was aware that I was making a grave decision," he declared. "I was deciding between money and men, between niggardliness and romance. Either I must throw overboard all my old values of money and look upon it as something to be flung about wastefully, or I must throw overboard ray comradeship with those men whose peculiar quirks made them care for strong drink."

The very embodiment of the thrilling baresark of the boy s Norse mythology was "Young Scratch" Nelson — one day to be the mightiest-shouldered cadaver that the Benicia undertaker ever laid out. That he could neither read nor write, far from diminishing, rather enhanced the figure he was to Jack. What had his Viking ancestral drift to do with type and ink? "Squarehead" did not suit the younger boy as a just or beautiful appellation for this blond beast of unconsidered rages that flared in terrible, admiration-compelling deeds. The first of these which came under Jack's observation was a mad freak in a nasty blow one starless night, when the Scandinavian sailed his piratical sloop Reindeer, dredging a record burglary of oysters, around and around the other boats that fearfully clung at anchor in the pounding shallow waves.

As for "Old Scratch," young Nelson's sire, blue-eyed and yellow-maned, owner and master of the great scow schooner Annie Mine — what wonder Jack's most exalted pinnacle seemed reached on the day when Old Scratch accepted quite as a matter of course his shyly-dared invitation to have a drink! Treat by treat, mere "beer-bust" though it was, the session was protracted until the distended brace of salts succumbed. But what of that? Old Scratch was as helpless as he, the novice — more helpless than he, was the one thing of which the latter felt sure. And before the hops and the heat of the summer afternoon had reduced him to slumbrous defeat, out of his book-lore and the connivance of his and the bartender s combined tact in supplying beers large and small, he had led the old sea dog into unbelievable reminiscence of his youth in northern seas. The telling sobriquet of "Scratch," by the way, had been won by virtue of a tigerish mode of clawing off the faces of opponents in his Berserker brawls. And when the rumor came to Jack's ravished ears that he had been "soused all afternoon with Old Scratch," his cup of self-esteem brimmed.

Little had he dreamed, that day aboard the Idler, filled as he was with idolatry of the runaway sailor Scotty and the harpooner and the whole neighborhood, that he would so soon be his own fearless buccaneer. But here he was, causing the waterfront of his home town, that once had been his awe, in turn to feel the shock of his dare-devil exploits, and beholding his one-time hero, Scotty, and the impish "Irish," and "Spider," successively taking orders aboard his own ship. For government was in his veins, unguessed by the very ones who submitted to his vital charm and admirable ability to make good in the matter of their wages. The very air whispered deviltry, and the whimsy of his altered relation must have shaken thoughtful moments with silent mirth. Gone were parsimonious days, flung to the four winds. I can see the glint of eye

and firm clutch of jaw, when he ranged the sloop alongside the wharf with the biggest load of stolen oysters of any two-man craft in the raffish fleet. I can see him with a cocked double-barreled shotgun in his small salt-grimed hands, crouched feet-on-wheel holding the plunging Razzle Dazzle on her course under a racing dark sky, that exciting night French Frank failed to ram him.

"And there was the time when we raided far down in Lower Bay," he recounts, "and mine was the only craft back at daylight to the anchorage off Asparagus Island. . . . And the Thursday night we raced for market and I brought the Razzle Dazzle in without a rudder, first of the fleet, and skimmed the cream of the Friday morning trade. . . . And the time I brought her in from Upper Bay under jib, when Scotty burned my mainsail." (In 1909, among those seeing us off on the steamer Loongana from Melbourne to Launceston, Tasmania, was Scotty of the Razzle Dazzle days. Jack, grinning at the recollection, could not forbear a reference to the burned mainsail. "But you burned the mainsail," Mr. Scott disputed stoutly, where upon argument waxed. But after we had waved our last to the receding quay, my ex-oyster-pirate smiled, "Well, after all, if it makes him happy to think I burned that mainsail, why shouldn't I let him have it that way!")

As for fear of the law and its enforcement, read this: " . . . lying at the wharf disposing of my oysters, there were dusky twilights when big policemen and plainclothes men stole on board. And because we lived in the shadow of the police, we opened oysters and fed them to them with squirts of pepper sauce, and rushed the growler or got stronger stuff in bottles." Jack would ruffle with pride at remembrance of the "A. No. 1" oyster-cocktails he had mixed.

"Mayn't I meet Johnny Heinold some time?" I once asked Jack, learning that he had been into the "First and Last Chance" Saloon on Webster Street, to see his old friend. The stamping-ground of the water-front habitues, where the boy's intrepid foot had rested upon the brass rail, bore this two-faced pseudonym by reason of its accommodating relation to comers as well as goers across the drawbridge. "Why, I'd like you to see Johnny," he acknowledged pleasedly. "I'll ask him up to the Ranch some time. It would be pretty difficult to manage so you could meet him in the old place," he hesitated at my suggestion. "It's a rough crowd that congregates there — though I might slip you in at a slack hour. But the time never was decided upon in our busy lives, and Heinold never found his way up to Glen Ellen; so that I have yet to shake his hand.

Jack first crossed Johnny's threshold on that fateful Monday morning he turned up missing at the cannery. French Frank, dissembling his choler toward the lad for the unwitting theft of his inamorata, had met him here by appointment to receive the price of the Razzle Dazzle in exchange for a bill of sale. The transaction completed, the new-made skipper of the tidy sloop underwent initiation, unsuspected save by the proprietor of the bar, into public-house etiquette. French Frank, once with Jack's funds in pocket, proceeded to demonstrate the wastrel progress of camaraderie amongst men of his loose profession. Beadily could Jack grasp the logic of the seller, which caused him "to

wet a piece of it [the money] in the establishment where the trade was consummated." But on top of this, Frank "treated the house." The boy speedily concluded that the saloonkeeper made a profit on the drink he accepted which reasoning was upset when Johnny treated in return. He could also see why Spider and Whiskey Bob were included in the invitation, along with Pat, the Queen's brother. But why in the name of sense should every one else standing about the sawdusted floor be bidden to help squander the Frenchman's money — Mammy Jenny's hard-won savings?

Although it was early morning, the entire company ordered whiskey. So "whiskey for mine," the freshman out law registered indifference. But his soul sickened that he must make of himself a martyr to this silly custom of pouring a nauseous and expensive draught down his throat, when his desire was to be off to his new command.

With his thoughts upon the sloop, he failed to notice an awkwardness that crept into the manner of the others, though he did vaguely sense a growing antagonism in French Frank, which also seemed to tincture the Queen's brother. All waited for him, the boat-buyer, to treat as the seller had treated. And here Johnny Heinold rendered the first of many kind services to the youth, whom he alone of the foolish gang understood in his ignorance of drinking usages. "Watch out for French Frank," Heinold breathed, bending close as he reached for the soiled glasses. On many another occasion, closely following the amateur drinker's unwilling matriculation into the brotherhood of the saloon, Johnny took it upon his elastic conscience to save Jack from himself by warning when he had had enough small beers or other liquor, by which magic potions the student of raw human nature beguiled its traditions from this same human nature.

Whiskey Bob, and Spider, too, softly articulated, "Keep your eye peeled for Frenchy," or "Frank's ugly, take my tip and look out." To their friendly signals he nodded comprehension where comprehension was not, and perhaps this very bepuzzlement preserved him, what of his apparent cool poise in a tense and vibrant situation. How was he, hardly sixteen, who had worked sordidly for his living and gleaned his romance from the books, "who had not dreamed of giving the Queen of the Oyster Pirates a second thought, and who did not know that French Frank was madly and Latinly in love with her — " how was he to know? "And how was I to guess that the story of how the Queen had thrown him down on his own boat, the moment I hove in sight, was already the gleeful gossip of the water-front? " When he presently learned the inwardness of his celebrity as a bold gallant, he could not help feeling elation "that French Frank, the adventurer of fifty, the sailor of all the seas of all the world, was jealous . . . and jealous over a girl most romantically named the Queen of the Oyster Pirates. I had read of such things in books, and regarded them as personal probabilities of a distant maturity. Oh, I felt a rare young devil, as we hoisted the big mainsail that morning, broke out anchor, and filled away close-hauled on the three-mile beat to windward out into the bay. . . . Such was my escape from the killing machine-toil, and my introduction to the oyster-pirates. True, the introduction had begun with drink. But was I to stay away from it for such reason? Wherever life ran free and great, there men drank. Romance and adventure seemed always to go down the street locked arm in arm with

John Barleycorn. To know the two, I must know the third. Or else I must go back to my free-library books and read of the deeds of other men and do no deeds of my own save to slave for ten cents an hour at a machine in a cannery."

Even after losing one hundred and eighty dollars in one glorious night of inchoate induction, ashore with Nelson, his sobered aching head still deduced: "Better to reign among booze-fighters, a prince, than to toil twelve hours a day at a machine for ten cents an hour. There are no purple passages in machine toil. But if the spending of one hundred and eighty dollars in twelve hours isn't a purple passage, then I'd like to know what is." But he would avoid over-drinking when drink was thrust upon him, he forewarned himself, and there should be no alcoholic beverage of whatsoever description aboard his own sloop except in port at anchor when it devolved upon him to entertain. Alcohol and his austere ideal of seamanship had nothing in common.

Ashore, however, one of his proudest moments after he had adjusted to the necessity of "boozing" with those whose temper he must discern, was when Johnny Heinold, quite as a matter of course, reached down his book and opened a charge account for the young reveler's convenience, his name at the top of a clean page. A trusted customer he was established, as behooved one in this man-world wherein he had elected to distinguish himself.

The vicissitudes of several months' living, earning, spending, landed him metaphorically high and dry one comfortless foggy dawn after a wild orgy on the sand-flats, with empty pockets, a burned mainsail, and a breach with Scotty resulting from an overnight fistic engagement. Young Nelson in similar fashion had forfeited his crew, and bore one wounded hand in a sling to boot. Their mutual plight and a consultation terminated in a pact whereby Jack and Nelson cast together their fortunes as partners in rakish crime on the smart Reindeer, and forth with departed for the oyster-beds. But first Johnny Heinold was approached for a loan with which to buy stores, and he, knowing their ethics in such matters, trusted them without misgiving. Reviewing that night, Jack London makes an appeal for sympathy of understanding of the unsatisfied boy-soul that was his:

"And now, of all this that is squalid, and ridiculous, and bestial, try to think what it meant to me, a youth not yet sixteen, burning with the spirit of adventure, fancy-filled with tales of buccaneers and sea-rovers, sacks of cities and conflicts of armed men, and imagination-maddened by the stuff I had drunk. It was life raw and naked, wild and free — the only life of that sort which my birth in time and space permitted me to attain. And more than that. It carried a promise. It was the beginning. From the sand-pit the way led out through the Golden Gate to the vastness of adventure of all the world, where battles would be fought, not for old shirts and over stolen salmon boats, but high purposes and romantic ends."

His own boat was raided by a rival gang of pirates, dismantled and set adrift. By the time Jack found the battered hulk, she was hardly worth the twenty dollars he got for her.

“Never have I regretted those months of mad deviltry I put in with Nelson,” Jack always averred. The Norseman was a blind genius in affairs nautical, and luck played its part in that the pair escaped with their lives. “To steer to miss destruction was his joy. . . . Never to reef down was his mania, and in all the time I spent with him, blow high or low, the Reindeer was never reefed. Nor was she ever dry. We strained her open and sailed her open continually. “

The odd thing is that far from the making of Jack a reckless sailor, he became an exceptionally cautious one. The only tangible harm that seemed wrought by association with Nelson was the ruination of his vocal cords and his ear, and by the same process that had been worked on him by the teacher in East Oakland. Nelson had no sense of pitch, and bawled endless rowdy songs and sea chanteys regardless of key. Jack, doing his valorous best toward augmenting the unmelodious din, bereft himself of what he has told me was a “golden voice.” (His speaking tone remained pleasant, even musical; but the mellow timbre was gone, to return wholly, but once. When he was about twenty-five, on the lecture platform one evening he discovered himself listening to a voice that had been asleep for nearly a decade. “It was the ‘golden voice,’ Mate — I’d give anything if you could have heard it,” he said long afterward. “I don’t believe it — but I heard it, I’m telling you. I reveled in it, turned it over on my tongue, sounded its clarion for all I was worth. When I stopped speaking — just to show you this is no fairytale — people came up the hall and told me what a beautiful voice I had! And that was the one and only time, since Nelson finished the spoiling of my ear. It’s the only thing I’ve got against Nelson!”)

To the mad-cap masters of the Reindeer the lower-bay haunts soon became inadequate. In the opposite direction they ranged over the vast and devious waters behind the Golden Gate, and eastward into the terrific narrowed tides of the tributary San Pablo and Suisun Bays. Well Jack fixed in mind the Forbidden Anchorages of the traffic routes of the main harbor, and the violent habits of Raccoon Straits, between Angel Island and Tiburon. And high and quiet his happiness, the time they first voyaged northwest across the big waters of the inland sea, Golden Gate and Angel Island sliding by on the left; on past that sunset cabochon jewel, Red Rock, so long coveted from afar; northerly skirting The Brothers, with Marin Islands to port; thence entering San Pablo Bay. Then the joy of running into anchorage in the purpling dusk on the flats; heaving over the sturdy hook; watching the vessel swing to the proper length of cable that slipped through his measuring hands; while the heavenly odor of frizzling bacon and strong, rich coffee floated up the companionway from the hot little galley stove, and the wild geese honked over head. Life was sweeter than honey on his tongue, and he dreamed dreams of seeing the whole wide world some day, in a boat of his very own. How well I know it all — ah, do I not? who have done it with him in that very boat of his own!

Steadily, through the muck and ruck that mixed with the healthier material of his experience at this time, there burned the pure flame of adventure’s passionate en-chantment: the falling asleep peacefully to the rocking of the sloop to the rippled

ebb and flow of tides along her sleek sides; the opening of happy eyes each morning upon a different spaciousness of sky and water; the adjusting and stabilizing of himself in relation to undependable mankind and the rolling planet, victory resting upon his acuity in gauging the capriciousness of all things.

Intermittently within this succession of months between the ages of a little under sixteen and up to say twenty-one, the incipient sage, adding to his knowledge of man kind and its singular way upon the earth, must have committed nearly every natural crime in the calendar, save disloyalty and murder. Nothing, in his view or temperament in any period, was meet to invite him to the taking of life, little as he came to respect life; and even when it was merely the question of honor among thieves, his instinctive ethic, if an ethic may be instinctive, was that disloyalty was the only real sin. And he died reverencing this self-made axiom. To me he has confessed:

"If I should serve sentences on end for pranks I did in sheer pursuit of the tang of living, from time to time during the scattered months I was busy finding myself on the Bay, or tramping, or ashore with the 'Boo Gang' and the 'Sporting Life Gang' that terrorized Oakland, I'd languish behind prison bars for a hundred years!"

As for unnatural crimes, these were not admissible in his magnificently balanced body and mind. No inbred fastidiousness was weak enough to unfit him for eating and sleeping, playing or working, with the unmoral and the unwashed, to their complete befoolment as to his intrinsic difference from them. He could love with them, and fight with them; for he had "kissed his woman and struck his man," although he did not know the lusty old phrase. But in all his days, let the unnatural, the abnormal, creep near, and his trigger-like recoil of sense and perception and swift reaction left no uncertain impact upon the aggressor, be he brutal or subtle. Except in one or two defensive incidents, such as when French Frank was out hunting for him on the oyster-beds, either with the pirates or the subsequent fish-patrol contingent, Jack went unprotected by other arms than an ordinary table-fork. The sole provocation under which this ridiculous but effective weapon was drawn, was in the case of a degenerate Greek fisherman he had aboard in capacity of sailor. The happening does not lend itself to polite literature, and should be treated by some one compounded of a Balzac and a Havelock Ellis.

Fish-patrol

VOLUME I — CHAPTER VIII 17th Year

HERE Jack London differed most essentially from his rough-neck associates was in the divine unrest that forever withheld him from content with any static condition. One thing or a group of things mastered, he was done with it so far as it represented an end, and hot on the trail of the unexplored. Each experience, or succession of experiences of a kind, was automatically retired to its due niche in a mind that had become surfeited with that particular phase, laid by for reference when needed. With

him, only in minor details did habit replace definite thought; whereas his comrades, as time passed, reflected less and functioned more through blind habit.

Vital in his phychology was that law-respecting tendency which drew him to realize, under all paint of romance, the unsavoriness, the rotten structure of this "pirate" society. It had looked so bright on the surface. Even Nelson, through blood if not brain the truest, maddest adventurer of all whom Jack had overtaken and passed in their own game, even he, young Scratch, urged by his eager partner to new fields of exploit up country, wavered. He was unenthusiastic from sheer lack of capacity, and melted back into the Oakland water-front life that was now outworn of value to the superior youth. Jack had touched at all points upon its restrictedness — exhausted the most intricate processes of its once mysterious denizens, as well as become familiar to boredom with the hundreds of miles of indented shore line of the lower and main harbor and the peculiar currents thereof. Wider activities were calling to be shared, and far-stretching water lanes to be investigated, some of which he and Nelson had sailed but not lingered upon.

And so, the two parted in all friendliness.

Almost a foreign port seemed the quaint interior town of Benicia. From its great wharf the Solano, the largest ferry steamer in the world, conveyed transcontinental trains of imposing railway carriages, with their leviathan locomotives, to and from the main-line tracks at Port Costa across the risky Carquinez Straits. On the voyage from Oakland, nearing Benicia, Jack had passed Vallejo, and Mare Island Navy Yard with its fascinating old training-ship that was none other than the historic, many-decked hull of the 1812 battleship Independence.

Once at Benicia, he proceeded to become at one with the fisherman element which housed in a floating suburb of little arks moored or half-grounded in the rustling tules. And never far from this bachelor purlieu flickered the scarlet night lights of one or another of the pleasure barges that swung to anchor on the fringes of such communities. Sometimes, as in his initiation with the lower-bay people, he was struck afresh with the belief that he, newest in their midst, was having a much better time than these older, more experienced men, whether workers or vagabonds. Their obtuse sensibilities were in greater or less degree numb to the very romance of which they were part. Sheer animal spirits might be theirs; but to Jack's glorious and contagious animal spirits that brought to him admiration and affection from the most unlit of the roystering inhabitants, was added comprehension. Not only did he envision the romance of the present, but further romance for which the day at hand was a preparation, a stepping-stone.

Missing no smallest sheaf of joy-gleaning by the way, he still must keep a circumspect eye to business chance; and surely it tickled his fancy that the most lucrative employment in sight should be with the Fish Patrol service. Combing for possibilities, he had fallen in with a trio of deputy patrolmen, one Charley Le Grant, Billy Murphy, and Joe Boyd, who put the idea into his head. The patrolman proper, under whose orders

they worked, was a salaried employee, while the deputies depended for their pay upon a certain percentage of the fines collected from violators of Fish Patrol rules.

Knowing so well the illicit side of the shield, Jack naturally found the other face of it keenly interesting; and being anything but retrogressive in his bent, the restraining of a felony was more to his liking and logic than the committing. His all-round nature at the same time responded warmly to a pity for even the most insubordinate Italian and Greek and Chinese desperadoes he must assist in holding down. To these, who had to abstract their living from the waters, the half-understood Fish Patrol laws and the drastic punishments for trifling with them seemed captious and unjust. To Jack this eternal strife for existence, by land or sea, often appeared a dog-eat-dog matter at best. As he says: "We menaced their lives, or their living, which is the same thing. . . . We confiscated illegal traps and nets, the materials of which had cost them considerable sums and the making of which required weeks of labor. We prevented them from catching fish at many times and seasons, which was equivalent to preventing them from making as good a living as they might have made had we not been in existence. . . . As a result, they hated us vindictively. . . . They looked upon the men of the Fish Patrol as their natural enemies."

Following his calling, he knew hazards many and hair breadth. Sometimes it was a perilous contest outmaneuvering a clever Greek or Italian or vicious oriental fisherman whom he was trying to apprehend; sometimes it was a battle with the shouting waves when terrific Northers from across the illimitable valleys whipped the frenzied incoming and outgoing ocean tides into mighty upstanding tide-rips; sometimes it was all together. Pitting his seamanship against enemies and elements was to him the acme of high living, and he won praise for both that seamanship and his cunning from the smartest of his companions as well as from the outwitted law-breakers. His capacity for enjoyment is expressed in a tale of that time:

"I was as wildly excited as the water. The boat was behaving splendidly, leaping and lurching through the welter like a racehorse. I could hardly contain myself with the joy of it. The huge sail, the plunging boat I, a pygmy, a mere speck in the midst of it, was mastering the elemental strife, flying through it and over it, triumphant and victorious. . . . Conflicting currents tore about in all directions, colliding, forming whirlpools, sucks, and boils, and shooting up spitefully into hollow waves which fell aboard as often from leeward as from windward. And through it all, confused, driven into a madness of motion, thundered the great smoking seas from San Pablo Bay," through which he "roared like a conquering hero." He knew of deep-sea vessels that had confidently made their way here and ignominiously capsized, drowning their astounded captains. There would be no capsizing for him.

Leaving out the factors of his robustness, luck, and common sense, Jack's survival of this taxing period in his growth is due to two things: out-door, active days, and his unconquerable aversion to the taste of alcohol, which prevented him from being a regular tippler. Even so, it is a marvel that the quantities of whiskey consumed at intervals did not wreck him beyond nature's repairing. He had not glimpsed the delicate

esthetic of imbibing artistically for the sake of stimulating wit and other social graces, nor yet for the purpose of inhibiting sorrow and the disillusion of merciless truth. He cast off from his moorings of caution for a time and, in the frequent leisure spaces between raids on the fishermen, abandoned himself to becoming congenial to the men with whom he made headquarters. Gradually he "developed the misconception that the secret of John Barleycorn lay in going on mad drunks, rising through the successive stages that only an iron constitution could endure to final stupefaction and swinish unconsciousness." Wherever he walked, saloon doors swung open to him, the "poor man's clubs" that drew together those who knew no higher amusement and relaxation. On the way home to ark or sloop, the youngster would accumulate enough "snake poison" to deprive his bed of its occupant; and when, of a morning, his "unconscious carcass was disentangled from the nets of the drying frames" whither he had "stupidly, blindly crawled," and when the waterfront buzzed over it "with many a giggle and laugh and another drink," he quite excusably regarded his inebriation as something to be vain of.

An eminent American writer who, desiring to be a realist, yet recoiled temperamently from observing realism at first hand, once appealed to Jack London in this strain: "Must I, in order to describe a saloon, myself become familiar with saloon life?" Jack, true apostle of the real, was uncompromising in his counsel. "But," quavered the would-be realist, "do you mean to say that you ever have been actually drunk?"

"Man, I have not only been drunk, beastly, hopelessly drunk unnumbered times," Jack assured him, with inward cheer at the jolt he was delivering, "but once I was drunk for three weeks on end. I mean, literally, that I did not draw one single, sober breath for twenty-one days and nights."

It was this very debauch, coupled with a fearful incident which grew out of it, which first, if not permanently, aroused the decision that he was making little progress toward the fair ideals he had set for himself. He discovered, when it was almost too late, "abysses of intoxication hitherto undreamed." His was too fine an organism to trifle, unscathed, with this insidious destruction of mental as well as physical fiber. He, who loved life so vitally, to whom the idea of suicide had always appeared an abnormal ferment in the cowardly and unfit, suddenly came to consider death. Poisoned through and through, it seemed to his undermined vision that he had lived life to the last, lowest ebb, and the dregs, plainly to be drunk with the bums and loafers at world's end, should not be for him.

It came about by his stumbling overboard from the sloop where he had reeled to sleep. In his stupefaction, the best the shock could do for him was to show up the worthlessness of this mundane existence. A powerful channel run-out laid hold and swept him seaward, while he, keeping afloat effortlessly as any untutored young animal, developed a dream of going out literally and figuratively with the tide, yielding his useless sordid self to the all-embracing sea that was his mother o'dreams. With contradictory fervor he luxuriated in tipsy sentiment and the silken flood that enveloped him, exalted in deliberate, kingly choice of a romantic passing that proved him, after

all, not entirely devoid of definite will and ambition. Then, as is the way of alcoholic sentimentality, he broke down and reveled unctuously in tears.

Greatly fancying the courage of his non-resistance, he began to chant heaven knows what funereal song, as the still tide carried him past the town. But he was not yet clear of Dead Man's Island, around the end of which he knew the strong suck and sweep of the tide under the long steamboat wharf. Abruptly remembering the menace of barnacled piling, he worked off all clothing and swam for his life so that he might better court death according to program. Only when he had left behind the last of the wharf-end lights did he cease to swim, and rest on his back under the stars. Again in mid-channel, with none to hear and interfere with his disposal of his fate, the enthusiastically lugubrious death-song was resumed.

But the worst alcoholic fever must give way to hours in cold water, and the ever-moving currents hereabout are far from tropical. Before dawn the boy was thoroughly chilled, soberly wretched, and in a fine panic at thought of drowning, which was now imminent enough by reason of weakness. Swinging resistlessly into the ugly tide-rips between Vallejo and the Contra Costa shore, he was becoming exhausted and already swallowing salt water. And he would indeed have been lost, unwillingly doomed, except for a Greek salmon fisherman who chanced along in the smother.

One last raid, he concluded, and he would move on. In that raid, he nearly forfeited his life at the hands of a murderous Chinese shrimp poacher who marooned him gagged and bound, on one of the Marin Islands, and returned alone to kill him. How Jack outwitted the would-be assassin, he tells in "Yellow Handkerchief," one of the stories in "Tales of the Fish Patrol."

The "vast good luck" in which at all times he liked to think he believed, preserved him then and thereafter in all his cool chance-taking. He made himself acquainted with other towns on the straits and bays and rivers, towns with alluring names — Martinez, Black Diamond, Antioch, Rio Vista — knocking about seeing what he could see, and finding as always, look where he would, that the swinging portals of "poor man's clubs" were the only doors to companion ship for such as he. In a short while he had drifted back to Nelson and the old Oakland crowd, although only socially. He had quit pirating for good.

But he never referred with much pleasure to this period. Gone was the zest he had known when the Estuary and the public-house and the gilded sin of pirating shellfish were untried domain. Nothing new presenting itself, he loafed between sporadic jobs ashore, spending far more time carousing and running with the hoodlum gangs than was good for his best self, especially in lack of the out-door life he had become used to. Occasionally there was chance to cruise for a few days as an extra hand on one of the scow schooners peculiar to this region — great, flat-bottomed, square-ended hulls that carry cargo and sail incredible, and that have made more than one fine yacht, built for speed championship, lose her laurels in the racing winds and seas of the harbor.

He went on drinking, sometimes to excess; and it took another knockout jolt from this source to set his face toward deep water, the thought of which had at no time been

entirely buried. It was during a free-for-all saloon rouse, incident to electioneering in Oakland. He awoke one evening, quite alone, with aching jaw and head, from nearly twenty-four hours of unconsciousness, in a strange room in a dingy lodging house where Nelson and the boys, for whom he had been fighting, had put him to bed. All of the details of the ridiculous but dangerous exploit he had figured in, and which had so effectually put him out, were not clear in his mind. He could not remember whether it was a Democratic or a Republican parade he had joined, in another town whither the politicians had given a train-ride gratis to as many loafers as were willing to assume a fire brigade helmet and red shirt and carry a torch to the glory of the party. He recalled that the saloons had been reported as bought for the day by the merry politicians, and that he and his clique had not been backward in testing the validity of the rumor. There was a head-splitting memory of smashed train windows on the return trip, when the maniacally-drunken anti-Nelson and pro-Nelson factions locked in a fray that wrecked the in terior of the coach. And his last conscious impression was of the start toward him of an anti-Nelson fist that had sent him, too whiskey-suffocated to defend himself, for a night and a day, into the black as of death. He was sickened with the unlovely spectacle of himself and the mean-ingless madness of the conditions that had laid him so low. Body and soul, he was very, very sick.

"So I considered my situation," he writes, "and knew that I was getting into a bad way of living. It made toward death too quickly to suit my youth and vitality. And there was only one way out . . . and that was to get out. . . . Whiskey was dangerous, like other dangerous things in the natural world. Men died of whiskey; but then, too," his wide-awake philosophical twist asserted, "fishermen were capsized and drowned, hoboes fell under trains and were cut to pieces." At the same time, while in a moral sense he did not consider drinking wrong, he reverted to a former conviction that it must be done with discretion.

"It struck me," he sums up, "from watching those with whom I associated, that the life we were living was more destructive than that lived by the average man." He could see no fun in becoming a helpless, dependent sot, nor yet in giving up the ghost. His one experiment had cured any desire, even in his silliest cups, for suicide. There was something ahead — he felt it in his bones. Also, he could never quite disabuse himself of that old pride in the captaincy of his own powers.

In line with this, "Everywhere," he reasoned, "I saw men doing, drunk, what they would never dream of doing sober. . . . Saloon mates I drank with, who were good fellows and harmless, sober, did most violent and lunatic things when they were drunk. And then the police gathered them in and they vanished from our ken. Sometimes I visited them behind the bars and said good-by ere they journeyed across the bay to put on the felon's stripes. . . . If I hadn't been drunk I wouldn't a-done it."" He listened to their pitiful and unavailing plea as they reviewed the cause of their undoing. The boy did a world of thinking about these, for in those days a criminal was a criminal, — whether he was or not, so he was convicted of crime. Jack London lived to see a glimmer of the light that psy-chologists are increasingly permitted to sift into the

courts and punitive institutions. But in the years of his untrained observation of the sightless legal disposition of misguided human souls and bodies, he was puzzled and distressed at the very apparent contradictions that outraged his embryonic logic of justice.

So it will be seen that this second unmistakable warning dealt by John Barleycorn was but one item in the mass of data which pointed a conclusion that he was on the road to destroy his efficiency as master of his own des tiny. Realizing, beyond all loyalty to his late congenial heroes and friends, that he was unendurably bored with them and their standards, he shook the mislaid dreams of conquest into the forefront of his curly head. He began without delay, although of course in the saloons, to affect the society of the seasoned personnel of a sealing fleet then wintering in San Francisco Bay. Mingling freely with them, from boat-pullers and steerers, up to the keen-eyed hunters, the chesty mates, and the to him imposing captains, grown men all, he felt his way to the big adventure. A friend he made of one of the seal-hunters, Pete Holt, who was looking for a likely schooner, and in a half-dozen glasses they pledged that Jack sign on as his boat-puller for the next cruise to the coast of Japan and Bering Sea. So possessed with relief and recrudescent joy was the boy at cutting loose from the old life which now gloomed so dun to his retrospective eye, that he fell victim to momentary fear lest its ginny "death-road" might trip him before the day of departure. "I lived more circumspectly," he confesses, "drank less deeply, and went home more frequently. When drinking grew too wild, I got out."

"Home" at this juncture meant a plain, unattractive cottage at Clinton Station, one of several built from the materials of torn-down recreation buildings on the site of old Badger Park, where once Jack had set up ninepins and swept out lemonade booths, and which he subsequently em-ployed under the name of Weasel Park as setting for a scene in "Martin Eden." From this house he went forth to see the world. With a regret in his heart that he could not share this supreme adventure, he noted the wistful look in John London's gray eyes at parting.

Never, since the day he paid over the Razzle Dazzle's price to French Frank, had he known quite such thrilling contentment as upon his seventeenth birthday. On that date, January 12, 1893, before a real shipping commissioner, he signed as boat-puller on the articles of a real sea-going vessel, the beautiful three-topmast schooner Sophie Sutherland, bound for Japan and Bering Sea. And in his being swelled the lofty purpose of making good in all respects with man-size men in a man-size universe.

"Sophie Sutherland," Sealing

VOLUME I — CHAPTER IX 17 to nearly 18 years

WHENEVER Jack London set foot upon deck-planking, he left behind more than the solid earth. Whatsoever load of soul-sickness or care he had borne to the water's edge fell from him, or, more fitly, shrank to its true scant measure under the springing

arch of life. Any embarcadero was a wharf of dreams where, glad face to sweeping river or to open sea, he felt the burthen upon his shoulders transfigured into blithe immateriality as of wings.

Even so early, the dollar had ceased to stand as an unqualified goal; it was but a means to an end, or to many ends. Money bought larger life, and life to the full, was all his goal. Good indeed it was to know that he possessed ability to earn gold and silver which in turn was good to spend in playing the game as he saw it, the game wherein duty and pleasure were two of many points to win. The concept which had caused that clean break with a miserly past when he gave away his boyish treasures, had rendered it unlikely that mere money-getting should ever again hold him from the joy of living. "And somehow," he puts his case, "from the day I achieved that concept . . . I have never cared much for money. No one has ever considered me a miser since, while my carelessness of money is a source of anxiety to some that know me."

Descending the steep companionway into the fresh-paint air of the Sophie Sutherland's renovated forecastle, he de-posited his bulging canvas sea-bag, packed the previous night at Eliza's, in a bunk selected for the best lighting from the hatch. And in that moment he relegated to its expedient limbo all worry as to finances. Fixed wages would be accumulating against the day of his return, and in that day the coin should be applied where it would benefit the most. Meantime thought of the same need not vex his head, a head which must be bent upon the study, moment by moment, of fitting himself into his exact place, be it audacious first or humble twelfth, among the round dozen deep-sea veterans in this deep-sea bottom. There was no call for currency in the fo'c's'le, and thank heaven the last round of drinks for many a month had been bought. The schooner carried no liquor of any sort.

Do not conceive of him as reflecting at any length with idle hands. A "busy child" he had been; a busier man he now was. Child-dreamer or man-dreamer, he worked while he dreamed, he "thought on his feet," to use his words, and with him action was quick as the thought. Throughout his complex mechanism there resided that unity which defied either misapplied effort or unproductive inertia.

While the handsome schooner's crew was typical of its rough Scandinavian class, Jack was immediately struck by an incongruity higher up. The sealer's owner, a somewhat unusual circumstance, sailed in her for personal reasons unfathomed by the ship's company, unless it was to make a sailor of his son, who was also on board. Apparently the father was a land-lubberly soul in a quiet, pensive way — his exterior, to their simple judgment, even suggesting piousness. Little he seemed to know or care about seamanship, always preserving an air of detachment from the management of his vessel, which was left entirely in the hands of the sailing master. "He thinks he's on his yacht, one of the men guffawed below deck a few days out.

Jack, one eye on sailing-master and mate, the other alert to his companions of the forecastle, kept tongue between teeth as he had done with unprofessional ones of their stripe, and walked warily. Things were different now — no longer was he master of his own keel, nor even partner, as on the Reindeer. No authority of any kind was his,

except over his inner self, and that was a confidential matter. He had had the "nerve," as Pete Holt had grinned, to sign on as A. B., he, who had never been more than a mile outside the Golden Gate. But what of that? — he was able-bodied if any of them were, and he was a seaman or he did not know what the word meant. He would see to it that he was an able one.

"I was an able seaman," he asserts. "I had graduated from the right school. It took no more than minutes to learn the names and uses of the few new ropes. It was simple. I did not do things blindly. As a small-boat sailor I had learned to reason out and know the why of everything. It is true, I had to learn to steer by compass, which took maybe half a minute; but when it came to steering full-and-by and close-and-by, I could beat the average of my shipmates, because that was the very way I had always sailed. Inside fifteen minutes I could box the compass around and back again. And there was little else to learn during that seven-months cruise, except fancy rope-sailorizing, such as the more complicated lanyard knots and the making of various kinds of sennit and rope-mats."

It must be remembered that, while he realized he was measuring against better-informed sailors than those he had known, his undue reverence for deep-water men had been shaken when they came to managing small sailing craft. Scotty's fiasco with the little old skiff of tender remembrance was not the only one he had witnessed.

Of him there should be no complaint from captain or officers. Simultaneously he appreciated that any difficulty in making good lay in relation to the forecastle rather than to the deck. He sensed a sneering antagonism, in certain able-bodied salts for'ard, toward the mere undersized bay-sailor he indubitably was, and his chest rose and his eye darkened with the zest of strife against odds. Oh, not strife with his hands, unless forced ; he would make no hasty nor false moves. But the conquesting of minds of their caliber he well knew was easily possible, though only by keeping one jump ahead of them. One did it with animals, and he had found the same method practicable with most boys he had known and with some men.

Swiftly "sizing up" the seamed visages of the elder A. B. s, he divined without error the ones he must deal with from the word go. Not for nothing had he pondered the weird unreckonable quality of the order of Scandinavian intelligence that had come his way in the past. And here he uncovered the same mental quirks, although not one of these "squareheads" could boast of the physical beauty or charm of either of the "Scratches."

He must make no blunders. These seasoned tars would make capital of the raw material they deemed him, as they were traditionally accustomed. He would degenerate to a mere cabin-boy, a door-mat, and worse, if he were not cautious and more than cautious. Obliging he would be, of course; but he must firmly entrench himself short of being imposed upon. He gave them credit for a primitive cunning that would pounce upon an unguarded weakening. Difficult clay this for a youngster to mold for his own survival, but malleable clay nevertheless, which he must steel himself to thumb without

fumbling. Here he laid foundation for the tactician without hypocrisy which in time he came to be.

Reviewing his problem, he writes: "These hard-bit Scandinavian sailors had come through a hard school. As boys they had served their mates, and as able seamen they looked to be served by other boys. I was a boy . . . I had never been to sea before — withal I was a good sailor and knew my business . . . I had signed on as an equal, and an equal I must maintain myself, or else endure seven months of hell at their hands. And it was this very equality they resented. By what right was I an equal? I had not earned that high privilege. I had not endured the miseries they had endured as maltreated boys or bullied ordinaries. Worse than that, I was a land-lubber making his first voyage. And yet, by the injustice of fate, on the ship's articles I was their equal.

"My method was deliberate, and simple, and drastic. In the first place, I resolved to do my work, no matter how hard or dangerous it might be, so well that no man would be called upon to do it for me. Further, I put ginger in my muscles. I never malingered when pulling on a rope, for I knew the eagle eyes of my forecastle mates were squinting for just such evidence of my inferiority. I made it a point to be among the first of the watch going on deck, among the last going below, never leaving a sheet or tackle for some one else to coil over a pin. I was always eager for the run aloft for the shifting of topsail sheets and tacks, or for the setting or taking in of topsails ; and in these matters I did more than my share."

While he adjusted and outlined further adjustment, he was sensible of being very much alone; but he was always that, in almost any group. It was his fate to be isolate, owing to a faculty for anticipating, which left him little to learn from the average run of individuals. And in his predicament aboard the schooner, as usual there seemed to be none to help him; he must work everything out for himself. Although he did not know it then, this was be cause he was actually preeminent in judgment of the fitness, of things. Seldom did he come in contact with persons who could discriminate as quickly as he, due to that supreme awareness which quickened his every wakeful moment. His keynote was awareness, consciousness.

Making this appraisement of the Sophie Sutherland's complement and his relation to it, meanwhile exerting his mightiest in setting sail and making fast and coiling down, he retained capacity to glory in the fact that he was at last clearing the Golden Gate on the beautiful, lifting highway to Heart s Desire. When the tug had cast off outside the Heads, and the trim sailer breasted the Bar and filled to her course on "the sea's blue swerve," surging past the rocky Farallones and slowly burying the high coastline, the young voyager filled his lungs with the flowing Seabreeze and realized with enormous relief that he was also clearing the moral morass ashore that had threatened to engulf him. "I shudder to think how close a shave I ran," once he referred to his escape. Never again, he promised himself, would he more than skim the surface of that morass — for the sake of old times and friends to whom he felt and owed loyalty.

But there was another and very important factor that entered into his calculations, namely his own temper, which was itself "on a hair-trigger of resentment" in face of

"any abuse or the slightest patronizing." And the men were not unnoting of the warning advertised by an involuntary setting of that square jaw or a tightening curl at one corner of the full mouth, nor of the sudden omen of darkening eyes behind their long crescent lashes. Several times he "mixed" hotly with one or another of them, in sudden flares that as suddenly subsided; but "I left the impression that I was a wild-cat and that I would just as willingly fight again," he recalls. I proved that the man that imposed upon me must have a fight on his hands. And, doing my work well, the innate justice of the men, assisted by their wholesome dislike for a clawing and rending wildcat ruction, soon led them to give over their hectoring."

Comparatively seldom, considering the way of his life, had he hit out with his fists. There had been the usual school and street "scraps," in the course of determining his status among the boys. Once, when he was running with the hoodlum crowd, one real battle royal between the two bad Oakland gangs, had taken place on a bridge which spanned the neck of water separating Lake Merritt from the Bay. The water-front brawls had drawn him in on more than one occasion. He never forgot the day he made good his threat, twice repeated, to knock the daylights out of a stupid lunk-head of a sailor on the Reindeer, who had as many times let go the main-sheet in a delicate maneuver Jack was essaying in a tight corner. Practically, these were the only times he had used his hands in this way. And he was punctilious always in a determination never to threaten unless he intended to make good. "I hope I'll never have to draw a gun," I have heard him say, "because, if I did, I'd have to use it!"

On the Sophie Sutherland, however, it remained for one decisive victory to clarify the atmosphere for all the voyage.

Red John, a huge-boned Swede, had not yet ceased looking for trouble with this smooth-cheeked boy who declined to be mere boy, nor heeded the signs that boy hung out in plain sight from time to time as the other tried to incite him to protest. But one day, when Jack, on watch below, was sitting in his bunk engaged in the unoffending task of weaving a rope-yarn mat for sister Eliza at home, the inevitable moment presented, and he recognized and dealt with it for all it was worth.

It was Red John's peggy-day — his turn at cleaning house in the sailor s quarters; and Red John's eagerness to impress the greenest hand into personal service cost him his caution and a distinct loss of dignity. Some rough order he flung at Jack, who woke from pleasant reverie and bristled and tensed, but paid no other attention to the bully, while he went on making his love-gift.

Red John mumbled and cursed without noticeable effect on the mat-weaver. Suddenly boiling over, the incensed giant let go the coffee-pot he was carrying, and gave the boy a back-handed blow across the mouth. Like a flash Jack landed on the other's eye, dodged the return swing of the sledge-hammer fist, and the combat was on — the strangest ever seen by their mates, who scuttled into bunks to be out of the way and enjoy the show. With that cat-like swiftness he later ascribed to his "Sea Wolf," Jack had outflanked the foe and sprung upon his shoulders, where he clasped powerful short legs in a strangle-hold about the roaring bull-throat, while his fingers sought

eyes and windpipe of the confounded, raging brute under him. The only recourse left the Swede was main strength, which he used, perhaps by mere instinct, in butting his captor against the deck beams. This inflicted bloody and painful damage to the young tiger's scalp and crouched shoulders. But those excruciating pointed digits in larynx and eye-sockets settled the issue, and the tormented Berserker was forced to give in by hoarsely bellowing assent to Jack's breathless repetition of "Will y'leave me alone, now? Will y'let up on me for keeps? Will y'leave me be? — Will yuh? Will yuh?"

Once more on his feet, quivering and weak amidst the wreck of the forecastle, but wrapt in the solicitous congratulations of admiring colleagues, he cemented their respectful regard by an utter lack of swank over his victory. "That's all right, boys," and a "Thank you kindly," was all they could get out of him as he grinned through the blood that dripped from his lacerated scalp, and went about cleansing it. Hardly needful to mention, Red John became the staunchest admirer and champion of this valiant cub whom he had failed to whip. As for the others, "It was my pride that I was taken in as an equal, in spirit as well as in fact. From then on, everything was beautiful, and the voyage promised to be a happy one." Quite opposed, it will be seen, to accounts from inexcusably careless biographers, that the friendly schooner was a hell-ship in which Jack London had a fight on his hands, or provoked one, every day of the voyage!

And very happy it was. While he could get along com-fortably without approbation, his content was enhanced by it; and the pleasure of camaraderie with his fellows below or on deck, or aloft in the shrieking rigging in a gale, was not to be calculated. No exhausting strain could dampen the ardor of holding his own with the best in sheer muscular rivalry. Even in middle age, for him to be able to say, "I have toiled all night, both watches on deck, off the coast of Japan," meant more to him than the best passage he had ever written. It should be remembered that eye-to-eye, strain-to-strain, blow-to-blow, with these rougher forces, he overbore the unjust handicap of supersensitiveness — making no allowance for small-boned wrists and ankles that were foredoomed to injury. But whatever his disgruntlement may have been as regarded those fragile extremities, he could be secretly pleased with the augmenting bulge of muscle on back and shoulders, legs and biceps, although it may be the strenuousness of his hit-or-miss education in hardship cost him an inch or so of stature.

He was never apathetic to the beauty of the world about the pretty schooner he took prideful hand in sailing. His trick at the wheel, ably and faithfully discharged, brought him inexhaustible delights, not the least of which was the satisfaction of holding his own as a helmsman among helmsmen. The chronometer, that "least imperfect timepiece that man has devised," and the nautical instruments, were things almost of enchantment, and again he dreamed dreams of some day working his own ship by their aid under sun and star. The wide sea and dome of sky, with all their moods of color and motion, pervaded him with a never-palling joyance of eye and spirit. In the night watches, swinging majestically under the wintry steel-blue stars, or fighting through big seas beneath low scudding moonlit cloud-masses, with only the pale-glimmering

bin nacle for company, he knew again those lofty, cool levels of contemplation wherein his vision was extended into ever-receding distances of thought.

Because of the extravagant and unappeased hunger of his mind, sleeping hours he divided with the books he had smuggled aboard. At the nearest possible inch to the inner wall of his confined bunk, he crept with a tiny improvised light, fitted with a shade so that he might not disturb the men. I think he has described the contrivance as a saucer of slush-oil containing a floating bit of wick, which "lamp" he was obliged to hold in his hand. To such lengths he went to feed that mind-hunger. Two reasons there were for this stealth — a decent consideration toward the men, and, still more important, an unmistaken intuition that good fellowship depended upon hiding propensities they might construe as "airish." There was too much at stake.

It was some years since this inquisitive pilgrim, with his disturbing aptitude for looking aside into the amazing by-ways of cause and effect, had begun to outstrip the childish methods of argument common amongst sailor folk. He concealed his advanced opinions, thrashing out in busy solitude the questions that arose in him, and nursing an increasing wonder at what Dana has called "the simple psychology of the forecastle." Hour upon hour he harkened to these huge men argue prodigiously and earnestly, and even come to blows, over the most obviously infantile details, splitting hairs ad infinitum and ad nauseam. He had to play down to their intelligence — caught himself time and again anticipating their conclusions, with leisure to indulge in speculations of his own while automatically following their talk.

Nevertheless certain simplicities of code were beneficial, and perhaps in the Sophie Sutherland's crowded forecastle were fixed in him economies of habit that stayed with him always, such as orderliness with personal belongings, and a notable scarcity of the same. It was only right that one's private possessions and convictions should not get in the way of others. There were places for both groups, and they should not be misplaced to the harassment of persons one had to live with and vice versa. Besides, such encroachment was promptly resented in no uncertain terms and actions.

Though they were really children mentally, he noted vital differences of character. Victor and Axel, Swede and Norwegian respectively, were the youngest and most congenial to the antic side of his own personality, and after the wild adventure of the first landfall, they became known as "the Three Sports " aboard ship and ashore. Pete Holt, the hunter, Jack always liked to work with in the boats. For the vanquished Red John he felt good-humored tolerance along with ungrudged admiration for his gigantic proportions. And Long John was a fair sport. The senior member of the crew, poor fat Louis, old at fifty, was in Jack's sailor psychology that most unfortunate of wrecks, a broken skipper. He was deeply impressed to learn that drink had been the cause of Louis going to pieces and losing his papers. There it was again — drink had "thrown" a good man, "and he was winding up his career where he had begun it, in the forecastle. The worst of this, the boy was almost convinced, was that it had not killed the reduced skipper outright, but had done "much worse . . . robbed him of power and place and comfort, crucified his pride," and sailor-pride remained to Jack a superfine

quality. And now the luckless Louis, once master of a ship, was "condemned to the hardships of the common sailor."

But when this youngest A. B. discovered himself repeating that solemn vow of Never Again, there would leap behind his eyes the rollicking high times, the "purple passages that went hand in hand with lusty drinking. Often, of course," he relates, "the talk in the forecastle turned on drink, and the men told of their more exciting and hu-morous drunks, remembering such passages keenly, with greater delight, than all the other passages of their adventurous lives." The eternal riddle propounded by alcohol took place in his thinking as a cosmic contradiction.

Then, when he had failed to reach any congenial solution, he would turn to another sort of derelict, the man in their midst whom he always thought of as the twelfth and last of the dozen. No one knew his name. The only personal items he had let slip were that he was a Missouri bricklayer, and had never seen salt water before. That would have been enough to disqualify him; for not only in this respect was he an insult to the forecastle "he was vicious, malignant, dirty, and without common decency." Apparently he was strong, and perpetually he looked for a fight, though an unfair opponent. The first day out, he had reached for Jack's table knife to cut a plug of chewing tobacco. Jack "promptly exploded," and the first row of the voyage ensued. Subsequently, the man came to blows with every one of the other ten men. Combined with personal nastiness, his uselessness fomented the hatred of the crew, whom he bullied by indirection. Try as they would, they could never teach him to steer. . . . He never mastered its [the compass's] cardinal points, much less the checking and steadying of the ship on her course. It was mentally impossible for him to learn the easy muscular trick of throwing his weight on a rope in pulling and hauling. . . . He was mortally afraid of going aloft. He managed to get under the cross-trees, and there he froze to the ratlines. Two sailors had to go after him to help him down."

Fifteen years later, the subject of "praying to death" by the Kahunas (witch doctors) one day came up when we were in Hawaii. Jack declared a wholesome respect for the belief, soberly enough recalling the uncanny ending of the "Bricklayer" in the forecastle of the Sophie Sutherland, in the sealing grounds off Japan. "He was a beast, and we treated him like a beast," I find him saying. "It is only by looking back through the years that I realize how heartless we were. . . . He had not made himself, and for his making he was not responsible. Yet we treated him as a free agent and held him personally responsible for all that he was and that he should not have been. As a result, our treatment was as terrible as he was himself terrible." The man was ill of some mysterious ailment, but he had long since forfeited kindness from any one. Nor did he want kindness. Instead, he repelled any tentative offer. "For weeks before he died we neither spoke to him nor did he speak to us. And for weeks he moved among us, or lay in his bunk in our crowded house, grinning at us his hatred and malignancy. . . . He encumbered our life with his presence, and ours was a rough life that made rough men of us. And so he died, in a small space crowded by twelve men and as much

alone as if he had died on some desolate mountain peak. . . He died as he had lived, a beast, and he died hating us and hated by us.

Strange mental food for one so young and so thoughtful as Jack. But whatever remorse he may have felt was neutralized by the inevitable memory of the man's awfulness. Yet after the body had been flung overboard from the ice-rimed vessel, he did what no one else dared do — calmly moved his belongings into the thoroughly cleansed deserted bunk, mainly for the reason that it was dryer than his and commanded a better light for reading. By now the boys had accepted his little row of books as an amiable idiosyncrasy. "My other reason was pride," he explains. "I saw the sailors were superstitious, and I determined to show that I was braver than they. I would cap my proved equality by a deed that would compel their recognition of my superiority. Oh, the arrogance of youth! . . . Then they begged and pleaded with me, and my pride was tickled in that they showed they really liked me and were concerned. . . . I moved in, and lying in the dead man's bunk, all afternoon and evening listened to dire prophecies of my future. . . . Also stories of awful deaths and grewsome ghosts that secretly shivered the hearts of all of us."

Although not recorded that the Bricklayer's obscene wraith was cognizant, it had its revenge upon at least one hated survivor. That night, hovering just above the identical spot where the unsavory corpse had been consigned to the deep, followed by his belongings, which the most avaricious had no stomach to appropriate, Jack saw wavering what seemed a long, gaunt ghost, and himself stood not upon the order of his going, but "leaped like a startled deer and in a blind madness of terror rushed aft along the poop, heading for the cabin." His "arrogance of youth and intellectual calm" deserted him cold, and he was "panic-stricken as a frightened horse." Through him "were vibrating the fiber-instincts of ten thousand generations of superstitious forebears who had been afraid of the dark and the things of the dark." He excuses or explains his abrupt terror on a biological basis: "I was not I. I was, in truth, those ten thousand forebears. I was the race, the whole human race, in its superstitious infancy."

He came to himself descending the cabin companionway, "suffocating, trembling, dizzy. . . . I clung to the ladder and considered. I could not doubt my senses. . . . But what was it? Either a ghost or a joke. . . . If a ghost. . . would it appear again?" and pride rushed to his rescue: if it did not appear again and he awoke the ship's officers, he would become the laughing stock of all on board which, of course, was unthinkable dishonor. Even more unthinkable would be his plight if the officers turned out to witness a practical joke. So he figured, "If I were to retain my hard-won place of equality, it would never do to arouse any one until I ascertained the nature of the thing."

"I am a brave man," he asserts. "I dare to say so; for in fear and trembling I crept up the companionway and went back. . . . It had vanished. My bravery was qualified, however, " he temporizes. "Though I could see nothing, I was afraid to go forward to the spot where I had seen the thing. . . As my equanimity returned. . . I concluded that the whole affair had been a trick of the imagination and that I had got what I

deserved for allowing my mind to dwell on such matters . . . and then, suddenly, I was a madman, rushing wildly aft. I had seen the thing again, the long, wavering attenuated substance through which could be seen the fore-rigging. This time I only reached the break of the poop. . . . Again I reasoned . . . and it was pride that counseled strongest. . . . And for a third time I resumed my amidships pacing." Growing angrier and angrier with the idea that he was the butt of hoaxers who had seen him twice run, at the third demonstration he drew his sheathe-knife and started for the Thing, though almost curdled with fear. "Step by step, nearer and nearer, the effort to control myself grew more severe. The struggle was between my will, my identity, my very self, on the one hand, and on the other, the ten thousand ancestors. . . ."

"And then, right before my eyes, it vanished . . . faded away, ceased to be. . . . I swear, from what I experienced in those few succeeding moments, that I know full well that men can die of fright. . . . In all my life I never went through more torment and mental suffering than on that lonely night watch."

Of course, he never mentioned the incident aboard the schooner, nor how, in despair at the impossibility of running away from "the malevolent world of ghosts" to which he had suddenly given credence, he had as suddenly discovered the cause of the apparition in the shadow of a rocking topmast against the cloud-dimmed moon radiance on the fore-rigging. "Once again I have seen a ghost," he admits, and he was done with ghosts forever. "It proved to be a Newfoundland dog, and I don't know which of us was the more frightened, for I hit that Newfoundland a full right-arm swing to the jaw."

It may have been it was the happiest period of his whole life, that voyage in the Sophie Sutherland; for then even his disillusionments were healthy, and the compensations ample. Within him, as the active days of the exceptionally fine passage rolled by, was the delicious anticipation of his first foreign port, which was to be in the Bonin Islands, a cluster to the southeast of Japan, once known as the Arzo-bispo group. And they would be wholly foreign. Thus he foretasted the bliss of lifting their heads above the sea-rim, for he had read that since recognition of their Japanese ownership over thirty years before, American and English settlements had been deserted. And even though dead, these were volcanic isles, which was another thrilling consideration albeit not the first he had seen. For the Sophie Sutherland had navigated the southern route, skirting Hawaii, the highest island in the world; and he had gazed spellbound upon the night-glow and day-smoke of the world s greatest active crater, Kilauea, in the foreground of a snow-capped mountain nearly fourteen thousand feet high.

The young Argonaut was deeply affected when at last the blue-distant peaks of the Bonins pierced the horizon, steadily growing less mirage-like, until he could make out the heavy green forestage, and smell what no voyager ever forgets, that scent, borne on the ocean breeze, of a tropic garden-isle of fruit and flowers and cocoa-palms. And presently the schooner was threading the surfy reefs and sounding her way into a landlocked harbor. Here were anchored twenty-odd sail of the American and Canadian fleets, put in for repairs and replenishing of water supplies, in readiness for the seal-hunting to the north. All about were sampans and queer native canoes paddled by

oriental aborigines, who made for the latest arrival and swarmed aboard as Jack had read in old chronicles.

"I had won to the other side of the world," he rejoiced, "and I would see all I had read in the books come true. I was wild to get ashore."

He could hardly wait, when on leave they rowed across the clear green water above a fairy jungle of branching coral, to beach on the gleaming coral sands. Such fishing as they would have on that reef, from those outlandish sampans, after all that was possible had been seen of the palmy, blossomy heights. Somehow he did not think so much about the village itself. He wanted to stretch himself out of doors, on that mountainside, and perhaps find other villages, much more strange and picturesque than the one on the beach, which was alive with white-skinned mariners anyway. And so, he and Victor and Axel "walked across the fringe of beach under the cocoanut palms and into the little town, and found several hundred riotous seamen from all the world drinking prodigiously, singing prodigiously, dancing prodigiously — and all on the main street, to the scandal of a helpless handful of Japanese police."

Victor and Axel proposed that they have one drink for old sake's sake, before starting on their long, warm hike. Jack did not want the drink — but what should be his troubles to them? "Could I decline to drink with these two chesty shipmates? Drinking together, glass in hand, put the seal on comradeship." Fifty-one days had worked all the alcohol out of his system, and he swears he had not known the desire for it, doubting if he once thought of a drink. But apparently "It was the way of life. Our teetotaler owner-captain was laughed at, and sneered at, by all of us because of his teetotalism. I didn't in the least want a drink, but I did want to be a good fellow and a good comrade." He thought of poor old Louis's case, but his own swamp was far behind him, and he felt too strong, from the splendid conditioning of the voyage, to be fearful. "My blood ran full and red," he was healthily conscious; "I had a constitution of iron; and — well, youth ever grins scornfully at the wreckage of age."

The feet of the Sailors Three never trod that flowery path into the perfumed fastnesses of the mountain isle. The pitfalls of the town were too numerous to step over or around. Their long-deprived eyes were captivated by the flower-faces of the impossibly tiny, doll-like girls, dressed in bright kimonos with their reversed obis. "Little bits of things off a fan," Jack once described the Japanese women to me. And provokingly unreal they appeared to his young fancy, the little butterfly courtesans. So Jack and Axel left the turbulent village only in order to carry Victor, a lunatic from vast quantities of adulterated whiskey and the pale-golden native saké', back to the schooner, which he proceeded to "clean up." Balked in this, he threw himself overboard. The other two followed to the rescue, for though the keenest of the older crew, Victor evidently was one of the notorious able seamen who could swim little. Jack and Axel were not so tipsy but they wanted to return to the delights ashore, which they did after getting the subdued Victor into his bunk. "It was curious," Jack reflected later, "the judgment passed on Victor by his shipmates, drinkers themselves. They shook their heads disapprovingly and muttered: 'A man like that oughtn't drink.'"

Jack seems to have kept his head long enough to capture his meed of the saturnalian orgy that ran wide open that night. "Ashore, snugly ensconsed in a Japanese house of entertainment," he and Axel had several quiet nips of saké, first alone together, then with succeeding shipmates who dropped in. Just as they were luxuriously settling on their native wooden head-rests to enjoy the novelty of music made on samisens and taikos they had engaged, "came a wild howl from the street . . howling, disdaining doorways, with bloodshot eyes and wildly waving muscular arms, Victor burst upon us through the fragile walls." It developed later that Victor had dreamed that a pretty Japanese girl whom he had known earlier in the afternoon was appropriated by Jack, and he forthwith ran amuck. "The orchestra fled," Jack recounts; "so did we. We went through doorways, and we went through paper walls — anything to get away." They returned, however, to pay for the demolished house.

"The main street was a madness. Because the chief of police with his small force was helpless, the Governor of the colony had issued orders to the captains to have all their men on board by sunset. This was the signal for a "general debauch for all hands." The men "went around inviting the authorities to try to put them aboard." Jack, still sober enough to take it all in, "thought it was great. It was like the old days of the Spanish Main come back. It was license; it was adventure. And I was part of it, a chesty sea-rover along with all these other chesty sea-rovers among the paper houses of Japan."

Many pictures he remembered, in which he unconsciously posed, the last one "standing out very clear and bright in the midst of vagueness before and blackness afterward." He and several angel-faced apprentices of his own age from the Canadian sealers, "are swaying and clinging to one another under the stars . . . singing a rollicking sea-song, all save one who sits on the ground and weeps; and we are marking the rhythm with waving square-faces. From up and down the street come far choruses of sea-voices similarly singing, and life is great, and beautiful, and romantic, and magnificently mad."

As in his babyhood beer-bust, returning intelligence was under the anxious eyes of some one, this time a strange Japanese woman, the port pilot's wife, where Jack, stripped of everything but his trousers — money, watch, shoes, belt, everything — had been left upon her threshold as a joke by the angelic blond apprentices. For ten days it was the same story, except that the Three Sports "caroused somewhat more discreetly." Even Victor, repentant of excesses, saw the wisdom of discretion. But why regret that one adventure went wrong? Jack undoubtedly figured, then and after, that because he missed exploring the island he perhaps lived more than he would have in all the mountain climbing on earth. Of him I have observed, when on occasion one arrangement was interfered with by some other, that he forgot regret, or at least replaced regret, with wholesouled interest in the substitution. Eventually he summed up the entire Bonin incident in his customary philosophical way, though in this instance pointing the immorality of alcohol s accessibility to the young.

"I might have seen and healthily enjoyed a whole lot more of the Bonin Islands if I had done what I ought to have done. But, as I see it, it is not a matter of what

one ought to do, or ought not to do. It is what one does do. That is the everlasting, irrefragable fact. I did just what I did. I did what all those men did in the Bonin Islands. I did what millions of men over the world were doing at that particular point in time. I did it because the way led to it, because I was only a human boy, a creature of my environment, and neither an anemic nor a god. I was just human, and I was taking the path in the world that men took — men whom I admired, if you please ; full-blooded men, lusty, breedy, chesty men, free spirits and anything but niggards in the way they foamed life away.

"And the way was open."

Each daybreak on the northward run brought its fresh excitement of locating the positions of other vessels in their race for the sealing grounds. These reached, for twelve weeks they saw the sun hardly as many times. Jack, boat-puller, did his man's work at the oars, and skinning as well as packing the fabulously valuable pelts which he could scarce credit were the same furs that made the lovely, plushy coats he had seen on fine ladies who could not forego wearing them even in California's mild winters. With habitual thoroughness he had soon informed himself of the process of plucking and softening the unbeautiful slimy hides he was instrumental in securing.

"The deck was a slaughter-house, week in and week out," he has told me. "There wasn't a malingerer left among us since the Bricklayer slid overside; and we kept up a lively competition to see who would have the biggest number of skins salted down at the close of the season. It was wild, heavy work off the coast of Siberia, with no let-up weeks on end. We had our fun, though — savage fun it sometimes was, but wholly good-natured. One horrid practical joke I remember," he exploded in that giggle which every one about him always enjoyed, " — oh, it was silly, and dirty and disgusting and everything else — and it did nearly cost us Long John's friendship; but he got back at us in some way, I forget how, and all was for given.

"Maybe it was Long John's length that put the idea into some one s mind, or his custom of sleeping naked — there'd be so much of him to shock! Now a skinned seal is not a pretty object nor nice to touch — all grease and blood, and colder than hell. We had a time getting it into the forecastle unknown to Long John — it was a whale for size — and into his bunk, where we laid it close to the ship's side, and covered it all up. When we went to bed those nights, we were so dog-tired we turned in all-standing, never looked first but just grabbed up the bedclothes, flopped in with them on top, raised our feet to swoop the blankets under and around, and were dead to the world. No reading for me those nights. — You can follow, can't you," he interrupted himself, "how I got the habit you've noticed, of spoiling my nicely made bed, pulling the blankets out with my feet and rolling up in them. I'm a savage anyway, in spite of my tender skin!

"But anyway — we were all on hand for the show; and some show! It went like a charm. Long John ripped off his oilskins and woollens, everything, and in one big movement landed under the covers full length of his bare, warm body against that horrible, blood-slimy, half-frozen corpse. God! — but he let out the most soul-curdling

yell I've ever heard, and shot out of that bunk a hundredfold quicker than he went in. I'll bet his first thought was of the Bricklayer — but his next was no slower, for he tried to lay out the whole fo'c's'le. When a slow man does get mad. . . . I can tell you no one of us ever turned in again on that voyage without examining the bed!"

About the only relaxation the crew got was an occasional "gam" aboard the other sealers, scattered widely over the face of the gray sea, One of these, the schooner Herman, in 1907 under the name of the Roberta trading in the South Seas, put into Taiohae while we were visiting the Marquesas Islands in the Snark.

The sole indisposition I know of, that claimed Jack on the Sutherland voyage, was a sudden and severe attack upon his sensory nerves by the excruciating "shingles" (herpes zoster) — an intercostal manifestation that came near to proving fatal.

One more adventure Jack was promised, and they would be bound home with a big catch. Into the capacious Bay of Tokyo the Sophie Sutherland made her way, and let go anchor off Yokohama's imposing docks. Those docks, with the modern public buildings, invested the Far East metropolis with a-disappointingly European character. It was the largest city he had ever seen, its population totaling upward of 200,000, and incredulously he referred to one of the history books he had brought on the voyage, which stated that Yokohama had been a mere fishing hamlet less than thirty-five years earlier. Ever afterward he nourished an admir-ing respect for these short-legged, canoe-bodied, brilliant-minded sub-Mongolians and the shorter-legged, gentle-voiced, flower-faced mothers of the wonderful race. The preceding generation of average Californians is apt to be slipshod to a degree not understood by citizens of the Atlantic seaboard, concerning both Chinese and Japanese immigrants of whatsoever station. This because the familiar cook and coolie, house-servant, laundryman, and vegetable peddler, of western pioneer occupation, were usually Mongolian. Jack, in his hoodlum antics, had undoubtedly not been guiltless of teasing a Japanese or Chinese boy or two. Still, I have heard him indignantly descant upon how he had seen a ruthless gang jump off a moving Seventh Street "local" in order to besmirch and tear to bits the clean laundry on a wagon, first binding the helplessly chattering Chinese driver by his long queue to a telegraph post. "Teasing" of this criminal sort seems not to have been funny to Jack.

In skiff-voyaging on San Francisco Bay, then populous with lofty-masted ships of all the world, toward which his eyes had yearned so worshipfully, he had dwelt upon the scented cargoes which he imagined lay in their holds — rarest teas and glossy silks, perfumed fans of carven sandalwood, lacquered furniture and bamboo wares. And now he was making ready to land upon one of the massive piers of the very emporium of Japan's silk industry.

The sailors were kept aboard at ship's work all the first day; and none more anxious than Jack London that his American vessel should be the most immaculate and trim in port. That ship-pride kept pace with his years, and be came as natural as his efficiency or his sense of the beautiful.

Evening came at last, and spic and span the young mariners disembarked from their rowboat upon a warf, and pursued their laughing way in ‘rickshaws directly to a Japanese public-house. There they were to meet the hunters, to whom the Captain had given their pay. The hunters were already in full possession of the gay, paper-partitioned building and its engratiating entertainers.

When the fortnight was ended, and he bent to the windlass to break out the schooner’s hook, and braced to her heeling pace before the homing West Wind of the northern passage, he knew what his undeviating course was to be when he landed in Oakland: steady work of some sort and what schooling he could cram in. As the thirty-seven days of the voyage neared completion, each of the crew conceived a plan of sheerest virtue for himself. They were all going to cut out this drink stuff for good, and make up for wasted time and money. A good pay-day was still due, despite those wastrel Japan nights — they could live, if they lived decently, until next year s sealing, on what was coming to them. And warmly they vowed to sail together the following season.

“They refused to buy anything more from the slopchest. Old rags had to last, and they sewed patch upon patch, turning out what are called ‘homeward-bound patches’ of the most amazing dimensions. They even saved on matches, waiting till two or three were ready to light their pipes from the same match.”

When they had reëntered the Golden Gate and were towing slowly past the San Francisco wharves, the crew in profane language warned off predacious sailor-boardinghouse runners who flocked aboard from Whitehall boats. Once ashore, and the owner departed for his home, all the Sophie Sutherland’s family, from sailing-master and mate to her youngest sailor, Jack, agreed that they must have one drink to pledge friendship and safe return. There were nineteen all told, and each of course must treat. And so it went. Every good intention of the older men was shattered that night, as it had been shattered on former returns. “From two days to a week saw the end of their money and saw them being carted by the boarding-house masters on board outward-bound ships.” Jack, lucky enough to have a home, did not spend all his pay-day nor get shanghai’d. In the early morning he withdrew and crossed to Oakland.*

The following year, Pete Holt reminded Jack of his promise to sail another voyage with him as boat-puller, this time on the schooner Mary Thomas. But Jack declined on some pretext, for his reading had by then fired him to inspect quite a different part of the world — the South Seas. The Mary Thomas never was spoken after she passed the Farallones. Her disappearance, remains, in so far as I know, a mystery to this day.

* Referring to his first sea voyage, in the “duty” letter to his girl in 1898, he says: “Aye, I at last kicked over the traces; but even then, did I wholly run away from duty? Many a gold piece went into the family when I returned from seven months at sea. What did I do with my pay day? I bought a second-hand hat, some forty-cent shirts, two fifty-cent suits of underclothes, and a second-hand coat and vest. I spent exactly seventy cents for drinks among the crowd I had known before I went to sea. The rest went to pay some debts of my father and to the family.

Boy-and-girl Love

VOLUME I — CHAPTER X 17-18 years

SOMETHING was wrong, very wrong. There was a sense of confusion, and he could not see the light. Here he was, man-strong with mighty shoulders and chest and biceps developed in fair competition with veteran seamen. He had measured up in work and endurance with the best, and felt entitled to all the arrogance of individuality that welled up at thought of his "hard-won place of equality" with the professionally able-bodied; he had experience of the world — a being far removed from the mere boy of less than a year before who had worked in a cannery for ten cents an hour. And yet, the best job that offered to him, big sailor with a rolling gait, was at "hum-drum machine toil" in a jute-mill — at the same old ten cents an hour for the same old ten hours and more a day. He was thoroughly persuaded by his mother that he had roamed enough; that his allotment of dreaming and blond-beasting had ended; that he must acquire a trade and settle down. But for the accident of a restless intellect which could not tolerate unrelieved routine, Jack London might have lived and died an artisan instead of artist and greatly more.

No outrage was so ill-entertained by him as outrage to his common-sense. And this thing was ridiculous. Like Kipling's tramp-royal, "Me that have been what I ve been" — and still ten cents an hour, "me!" Notwithstanding, he must get to work, and immediately, for his parents needed his strength to lean upon. So he dismissed the unresolved and confused issues, and buckled to in that single-minded way he could assume which made him such an exemplary asset to employers of unskilled labor. Once going straight in the shafts, being an artist he took pride in his work, and became quite a conventional member of the proletariat, pleased with his own capability. "As for the unfortunates, the sick . . . and old and maimed," he reviewed his position, "I vaguely felt that they, barring accidents, could be as good as I if they wanted to real hard. . . . Further, the optimism bred of a stomach which could digest scrap iron, and a body which flourished on hardships, did not permit me to consider accidents as even remotely related to my glorious personality.

He has also declared that to him at that time the dignity of labor came to be the most impressive thing in the world, and he evolved a "gospel of work" that put Kipling's and Carlyle's in the shade, though he knew it not. "The pride I took in a hard day's work," he marveled, "would be inconceivable to you. It is almost inconceivable to me now as I look back upon it." For him to shirk on the man who paid him wages was a sin second only to that greatest sin, disloyalty; indeed, it was a disloyalty. In short, as he says in an essay, "my joyous individuality was dominated by the orthodox bourgeois ethics. I read the bourgeois papers, listened to the bourgeois preachers, and shouted at the sonorous platitudes of the bourgeois politicians." Such a virtuous conformist did he become that he could not understand his old infatuation for the water-front. "I didn't care for the drinking, nor the vagrancy of it," he affirms.

Back he wandered to the Free Library, and read and reread the books, with eyes made wide by experience. Boyish enthusiasm had been satiated for a time and he felt superior, steadied. He had done some of these slashing and romantic things himself — and could tell a few more that were not in the books if he were so minded. This several months interval between the sealing voyage and his next abrupt break-away from Oakland is notable especially for producing his first literary effort viewed as such. In a letter to a friend he says: "When I was working in the jute-mills, I received forty dollars pay and at the same time twenty-five dollars from a prize in a literary contest. I bought a ten dollar suit of clothes and got my watch out of hock. That was all I spent. Two days afterward, I had to soak my watch to get money for tobacco."

It was his mother who noticed the prize-offer from the San Francisco Call for the best descriptive article submitted within a given time. Jack was slaving for thirteen hours a day, finding it difficult to get enough rest as it was. Finally he gave in to her urge that he try for the prize. "Only, what shall I write about?" he complained. It was evening, and in his wearied eye was the prospect of rising at half-past five. "Oh, why not tell about something you did or saw in Japan, or at sea," Flora pricked his memory. This he mulled with knit brows. All at once, with a grin, he swooped down upon the kitchen table with an old school tablet, where he wrote furiously without note of the clock until breakfast. Two thousand words was the limit fixed by the Call, and he had already exceeded this, with his idea but half worked out.

"The next night, under the same conditions," he says, "I continued, adding another two thousand." And the third night, in a wakeful trance from exhaustion, he revised his story into the proper length. The manuscript, signed "John London," published in The Morning Call, Sunday, November 12, 1893, and entitled "Typhoon Off the Coast of Japan," to his amazement, carried off the first prize, probably because it had been whipped out hot from the mind of one who possessed exceptional powers of observation and instinct for beauty. Still more amazing, the contestants who took second and third awards were stu-dents of Stanford and the University of California respectively. Jack's father was so elated that he bought up every copy he could lay his hands on, to distribute to friends.

Jack himself, greatly excited, harking back to dreams in the days when he had pored over "Signa," could hardly wait to catch up with sleep before putting his hand again to such fascinating and lucrative work, which had been mere amusement so far. But what he next sent to the Call editor he designates as "gush." It was promptly rejected, and he contented himself with his regular employment.

But some sort of recreation beside reading did the subdued and amiable young factory hand naturally crave. He did not drink. He did not want to drink. He never in his whole life wanted to drink for drink's sake. He devoutly wished, from beginning to end, that drinking never had been invented as a social function. "I wish there had never been any alcohol in the world." I have heard him say, "it is all to the bad."

And here lies the pity of his preceding youthful experience. It had for the most part unfitted him for the healthful, normal youngness of fellows of his own age. He knew

of the opportunities for athletics as well as education in the Young Men's Christian Association. All his future, in deed, he spoke warmly in appreciation of the work and scope of this organization.

The Y. M. C. A. was all right, he conceded; it was he who was at fault, or, more concisely, so unfortunate as to be too worldly-wise to find its atmosphere congenial. To him, the sophisticated, it proved juvenile to boredom. It had come too late, even though he was for the moment the perfect conformist in a bourgeois environment. "I had bucked big with men," was his regret. "I knew mysterious and violent things. I was from the other side of life so far as concerned the young men I encountered in the Y. M. C. A. I spoke another language, possessed a sadder and more terrible wisdom" — although it seemed far from "terrible" to him then. And he "got more out of the books than they. . . . Their meager physical experiences, plus their meager intellectual experiences, made a negative sum so vast that it overbalanced their wholesome normality and healthful sports."

Still, though he could not command social advantages that would have helped, these months formed a clean and pleasing period, singularly innocent and satisfying to one so lately roughing his way over the world. He always recalled the purity of his first love and the idyllic way of its pursuit, idyllic despite its setting; and his companionship with Louis Shattuck, who led him into its sweet paths.

Louis Shattuck, blacksmith's apprentice and dandy, considered himself quite a devil of a Lothario. Nevertheless it was through his tutelage in town ways of their class that Jack happily regressed to boyhood's simple consciousness, and overtook somewhat of the pristine ecstasy which had not come to him in the usual order of adolescence.

Remember, in their stratum, there were no chaperoned calls in cozy parlors of the working class homes, no formality of any sort in the mode of getting acquainted, no dancing schools other than the dubious and expensive public dance-halls and picnic-park Sunday whirls. And neither Louis nor Jack could afford these. At sunset and twilight of Sunday afternoon, in linked pairs the young girls strolled the sidewalks, the boys likewise. The head-gear of the boys tilted at angles esteemed smart: the smarter the angle of "tile" and glance, the greater impression upon the demure or tittering female of the species in her "fresh print gown."

Jack was suddenly devastated of the pride he had nourished in his manhood's prowess toward man and woman. He discovered himself without knowledge of the guileless methods of boys like Louis, who was "without one vicious trait . . . handsome, and graceful, and filled with love for the girls." In Louis's manner, alas, Jack did not know girls at all. He "had been too busy being a man" in all departments of his buccaneering life. "And when I saw Louis say good-bye to me, raise his hat to a girl of his acquaintance, and walk by her side down the sidewalk, I was made excited and envious. I, too, wanted to play this game.

Recalling personal ways of my husband, it seems to me I often lingered pleasantly upon the movement with which he lifted his cap or hat — almost diffidently, with an expression as if it were a practice newly sweet and consciously lovable. When he was

Louis s chum, of course he already knew that hats were "tipped" to ladies, but with him it was far from having become an involuntary gesture. Louis, modestly charmed that he could teach anything whatsoever to such a traveled hero, planned how Jack should "get a girl." Which was more difficult than it sounded, Jack found: "We both lived at home and paid our way. When we had done this, and bought our cigarettes" (Jack had smoked steadily since his newsboy days) "and . . . clothes and shoes, there remained to each of us . . . a sum that varied between seventy cents and a dollar for the week. We whacked this up, shared it, and sometimes loaned all of what was left when one of us needed it for some more gorgeous girl-adventure, such as carfare out to Blair's Park and back — twenty cents, bang, just like that; and ice cream for two — thirty cents; or tamales, which came cheaper and which for two cost only twenty cents." He, who as pirate had squandered nearly two hundred dollars in one night! And right here he reiterates that disdain of his for money; but characteristically, in his philosophy he completed the circle, finding himself "as equable with the lack of a ten-cent piece" as he had been in the lurid months passed by.

Listen how they went about it: "Louis's several girls he wanted for himself. . . . He did persuade them to bring girl-friends for me; but I found them weak sisters, pale and ineffectual alongside the choice specimens he had." So Louis had to initiate Jack, who was bordering on panic worthy of a lad of thirteen, in the accepted manner of getting acquainted with some one whose looks did appeal to him. All spruced up, the two boys met of evenings in a little candy shop, where they bought their smokes and sometimes a nickel's worth of " red-hots." Louis was as frankly fond of sweets as Jack.

Consider this quondam lover of cannery maidens; Prince of the Queen of the Oyster Pirates; gay reveler of red-lanterned barges on the winding rivers; squire of more than one lowly Madame Chrysanthéme on her native heath: it would seem that he was yet undespoiled of delicacy and virginity of imagination. Struggling with diffidence, he entered into what he has termed the "Arcadian phase" of his career, and learned how to overtake with a jaunty lift of his hat the pretty young things who did not look unapproachable; and how to walk and joke lightly and make speeches that commanded approving glances and laughter. But the infatuation he craved, as he saw it working in Louis, did not immediately descend upon him, although he "pursued the quest," Looking back upon it all, he wrote: "Some of Louis's and my adventures have since given me serious pause when casting sociological generalizations. But it was all good and innocently youthful."

At length it came, "All the dear fond deliciousness of it, all the glory and the wonder" of boy-love and girl-love. I almost think it was the most wonderful, beautiful, uplifting thing in his whole life of learning how the world was made. One evening he had found himself, out of curiosity, at a Salvation Army meeting, and the little woman of under sixteen, there for the same reason, sat next to him beside her aunt.

He has called her Haydee, and never divulged her true name. She was somehow different from the other good little girls he had flirted with; and he caught himself think-ing the shape of her face and delicate coloring, her brown sweet eyes and tip-

tilted nose, her pretty brown hair and petulant rosy mouth, were the loveliest he had ever seen. I can see now why he always favored a tam o' shanter. Haydee wore a tam o'shanter. It must have been about this time that he bought for a nickel, at a rummage sale, an old brown "tam" which made an item of his wardrobe aboard the Snark into the South Seas, from Australia to Ecuador in the tramp collier Tymeric, up-river in California on the Roamer, and around Cape Horn on the Dirigo; the which I darned, darn upon darn, and which finally with regret he pronounced too far gone for further service, and had laid away in the attic with other beloved old "gear."

To this blond, awkward-bashful sailor, already tanned for life, face and hands, it was a "great half-hour" they spent in the Salvation tent, the while they "glanced shyly at each other, and shyly avoided or as shyly returned and met each other's glances more than several times." Indeed, so great was that half-hour that he was solemnly ever afterward "convinced of the reality of love at first sight."

As stern fate would have it, when he followed the girl and her aunt from the tent, that he might learn where they lived, he in turn was followed by quite another sort of woman, and accosted by her. She was not unknown to him — I wonder if it was the Queen herself? — and wished to tell him of young Nelson, who when he was shot had died in her arms. But when he had listened to all she had to relate, he pulled himself back from a host of undesired memories of his rampaging past, bade her farewell and hurried on after his love. Although he lost her that evening, Louis was able to tell him something of Haydee: she was a Lafayette School pupil, he knew girl friends of hers, and an introduction would be easy. Jack could not wait, and begged one of the girls to carry a note to her from him.

His experience with regard to Haydee is almost incred-ible. That he, "who could sail boats, lay aloft in black and storm, or go into the toughest hang-outs in sailor town" and be quite at home, "didn't know the first thing I might say or do with this slender little chit of a girl-woman whose scant skirt just reached her shoe-tops and who was as abysmally ignorant of life, as I was, or thought I was, profoundly wise"! He came to know, in brief meetings, sitting on a bench under the stars, with "fully a foot of space" between them, "all the sweet madness of boy's love and girl's love." He goes on to record that "so far as it goes it is not the biggest love in the world, but I do dare to assert that it is the sweetest. . . . Never did girl have a more innocent boy-lover than I who had been so wicked-wise and violent beyond my years."

He could not believe, as in all ages, first-lovers have failed to believe, that so exquisite a creature as his worship made her could be merely human; that she really had to eat to live — though once she daintily shared with him a nickel's worth of red-hots; that she could be similar in any mere human way to other humans. I have heard him tell it! He did not know how to act. Should he kiss her? She, the chrysalis Eve, tapped his lips with her glove. Hear this: "I was like to swoon with delight. It was the most wonderful thing that had ever happened to me." Then followed an "agony of apprehension and doubt." Should he imprison that little hand along with the glove? "Should I dare to

kiss her there and then, or slip my arm around her waist? Or dared I even sit closer?" But he dared nothing. I merely continued to sit there and love with all my soul.

They never met more than a dozen stolen half-hours, and "kissed perhaps a dozen times — as boys and girls kiss, briefly and innocently, and wonderingly." The quality of his adoration was so mysteriously holy, passionless, clean — as if for an angel or a bird. This is the way he closes the incident: I have always fondly believed that she loved me. I know I loved her; and I dreamed day dreams of her for a year and more, and the memory of her is very dear."

When winter came on, social recreation perforce terminated. It was too wet and shivery to promenade, and Louis and Jack, unable to buy overcoats, were driven to search for the most quiet saloon where they could keep warm whilst playing cards — they were deep in the intricacies of two-handed euchre. They did not want to drink, but self-respect pressed them each evening to indulge in a small beer apiece, as tacit rent for the table and the boon of the big stove. Sorely they grudged the two nickel pieces, wishing they could be spent on red-hots. But Louis's girl friends who waited on customers in the little candy shop were not allowed to entertain in the sitting room where their idle moments between customers were lived.

The saloon least distasteful in its crowd was the old National, at Tenth and Franklin Streets, where the two young men met some of their childhood schoolmates. But the inevitable consequent treating " skinned" them of forty to fifty cents a "clatter," and the two were "broke" until next pay-day. The National was too speedy for them; and meantime their thin coats were buttoned higher at the necks while they played euchre and casino in a livery stable. Sometimes discomfort made them cast tentative glances at the Y. M. C. A. reading and social rooms, and their speculations even strayed as far as Sunday-school socials, where girls whom they knew told of jolly good times. But Jack for one felt distressedly alien, the very delicacies of his diffidences standing in the way.

Unskilled labor, reason presently unfolded to Jack, was getting him nowhere — in a favorite phrase, "buying him nothing"; even a promised increase to $1.25 a day was not made good. He looked about, and with his usual deliberation selected a trade he believed would give him the chance to rise. As an electrician he could go far; and ambition, which never was denied for long, swelled afresh.

"He saw me coming, all right," Jack reminisced a bit grimly, telling the story of his call upon the superintendent of the power plant of an Oakland street railway. This man, by name Grimm, was of a towering patriarchal presence, his face winged with huge, snowy burnside whiskers. "How could I know he was mad that morning at the quitting of two coal-passers who didn't like their pay, and that I looked good to him merely from the standpoint of coal-passing! I, young fool, intent on learning electrical engineering from the ground up, listened entranced to his suave elucidation of the necessity of beginning on the lowest floor, literally, in this case; and I calculated I could shovel coal with anybody. I could, too, it seems, for until I learned through an admiringly compassionate fireman that I, a youth of eighteen, was doing by day,

for thirty a month, with only one day off, what two horny-handed laborers, working day-and-night shifts and getting eighty, had thrown down as too stiff for them — well, until I found out this, under binding seal not to give the fireman away, I staid with it though it nearly laid me out."

I have listened to his account of how he had to strap the swelling of those small-boned, sprained wrists that were so ill-suited to obey the driving muscles of his over-developed sailor shoulders; of how he would eat his daily-larger packet of lunch ere the forenoon was half over, and be famished and almost done before quitting-time; how he would fall asleep on the car going home, and when the conductor shook him at his corner he had already stiffened so that other passengers helped him to the ground, where he almost fell; and how, struggling in a dual nightmare agony of hunger and drowsiness, he would drop asleep "wolfing" bread and butter while his mother put the hot dinner on the table, rouse to partake of it, and almost immediately fall into slumber so profound that Flora and John carried him to his room, night after night, undressed him and put him to bed.

"He would have told me sooner, the fireman said, except that he thought I would soon get enough of it and clear out. I was just about killing myself, I admitted; and he pointed out that I was keeping two men out of a job anyway, and cheapening the price of labor. This sounded reasonable; but I was proud of my ancestors who had fought in all the wars of the U. S. A., and I wasn t going to give up the job till I showed I could hold it down without breaking. So one day, when I had concluded my purpose was accomplished, I spread myself getting in the last of the night coal (you see I'd already got in the day-coal!) and resigned. And I did some thinking, too, after I had slept for twenty-four hours without waking."

Tramping — "The Road"

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XI

The Sailor on Foot and Rod — 1894

19th Year

MANY become tramps, not through a reasoned mental attitude, but because their bodies rebel against the maiming from overwork that precludes natural gladness of being. Not so with Jack London. When hard toil was a game, winning its own delights, as he found it on the water, all was fair enough. But long-continued and under-paid grind that left neither time nor strength for recreation, not even for reading, held no reward that he could see, no matter how earnestly he had gone in for "settling down." The coöperation of logic and adventurousness worked a revolt in thought, which went hand in hand with revolt in action. He was intelligently resentful toward what he felt was merciless exploitation of his manifest and enviable muscle. As far back as the cannery episode, despite the pretty picture he had been struck unpleasantly by the luxury of the carriage in which a daughter of one of the cannery-owners rolled about

the city. It had almost seemed that his own muscle had something to do with the pulling of her elegant equipage.

The revulsion was now more portentous than ever before, coming as it did near the end of that state of flux which precedes full growth, when youth's beliefs are likely to crystallize for bad or good, and what he did or did not do exerted an increasingly grave bearing upon his ultimate manhood. For the time being he cared little if he never "settled down." It was an irritating phrase, now he came to think of it. Settling down did not look good to him. "Learning a trade" could go hang. He would break loose, at least until rested in body and spirit, and that would be a long way off. After all, he owed a little something to himself. So even duty went by the board for once. The result of his orgy of work, brief though it had been, was to sicken him of toil. The memory of the overdose of hard graft he had let himself in for was actually nauseating. When he presently ran across, and approved, Milton's "Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven," more firmly than ever was he persuaded, as in the case of Washington Irving and others, that great minds ran in the same channels.

Probably this was the most critical juncture in his life. Only that magnificent balance preserved him from ruin. He had had sense enough to stop before any vital physical deformity had been wrought. Even at that, when he shook those unharmed shoulders defiantly once more, his very liberty was tainted with disgust at his inadequate wrists, bandaged with tight straps that for a year he was never without.

He strolled along the waterfront and considered going to sea. He was not tired of the water. Never did he tire of going down to the sea in ships; "the savor of the salt" could not stale. And here he might from sheer bleakness of soul have slid along the weakest line of resistance that stretched before his uncaring vision. As it was, out of a complex of temporarily dulled desires there glimmered the undying one that had influenced him to decline another sealing expedition. He had only one life: there were more varied experiences than he could ever get around to in that one life; therefore no hour was too soon to get about the business of pursuit. Anyhow, as he said of himself, "I was so made that I couldn t work all my life on one same shift." In his final decision there was no intention other than for adventure and surcease from deathly routine, no notion of gathering data for sociological conclusions. In all the vivid plannings of his adult years, adventure was the prime factor. The fact of his office being located under his hat was a secondary, if important, consideration. Any port would incidentally provide grist for his lucrative literature-mill; but the port, in relation to personal enjoyment — the port was the thing. That his present unmitigated lark of loafing across the continent made him into a socialist philosopher was but an inevitable sequence in a passionately adventuring intellect. As he put it: "Sociology was merely incidental. It came afterward, in the same manner that a wet skin follows a ducking."

What Jack's next move might have been if the notorious "Kelly's Army" had not just then been forming in his home town, one can only speculate. It was shortly before Easter, in the year of 1894. "Industrial Army" he heard it called, and this unvarnished phraseology would not have enticed one in his irritated mood toward industrial conno-

tations; but certain sneering remarks that accompanied the words in connection with the unique organization had fixed in him the picture of a tatterdemalion crew of bums and hoboes and other wearied rebels like himself. He would join the thing and have whatever fun there was to be got out of it, and Coxey's Army farther east. He would "just as leave" wind up at Washington, D. C., as any other city; besides, once that far on the way, he stood a chance to see other big Eastern centers.

When he went to bid Eliza farewell, it took her but a moment to find out that he had only a few cents in his pocket. Concealing under a bright demeanor any disapproval she may have harbored for this new wild-goose chase, briskly she stepped to the bureau, and lifted her snowy pile of best handkerchiefs from the top drawer, beneath which reposed a ten-dollar gold piece. "Run out and get this changed," she said, "and I'll give you half. I'm afraid, if you have it all, some of the bunch of do-nothings will get it away from you." But when he came back with the change, conscience smote her that he should depart with only five dollars, and she pressed the entire sum upon him. And I have not a doubt that when upon Easter Sunday she put on the last Easter's retrimmed straw, it made her twice as happy as would the coveted new one she had set her heart on previous to her brother's leave-taking.

On a Friday morning — to be accurate, April 6, 1894 — Oakland's city fathers were to forward the "Army" by free-rail conveyance to the unappreciative capital, Sacramento; but when Jack arrived at the stated hour of seven, to make one with the "push," he found they had been packed incontinently off two hours earlier. The only thing to do was to spend part of his precious ten dollars in following by fast passenger-train.

According to his penciled diary, he and a companion he calls Frank arrived in Sacramento at eight P. M., and supped at the Mississippi Kitchen. On the trip from Oakland, whirring by the old scenes of wild times he had known on land and boat, his somber mantle of discouragement had fallen from him as it had fallen when he boarded the Sophie Sutherland on that morning of dawning world-adventure. Again he felt "the prod and stir of life," not to go back into the debilitating commercial treadmill — heaven forbid; but to conquer life in the open once more, to "royster and frolic" over the face of the earth.

Sacramento had been too quick for him; she had not delayed in passing the hungry hundreds on to an unreceptive Nevada. Jack and Frank drifted to the arks and fishing-boats on Sacramento's river-front, where they came upon a scanty remnant of indigent young riffraff left be hind for lack of rolling-stock.

"The water was fine," Jack remembered, "and we spent most of our time in swimming. " The men "talked differently from the fellows I had been used to herding with, . . . and with every word they uttered the lure of the road laid hold of me more imperiously."

Every moment, with alert ear and eye, this latest recruit was absorbing each scrap of information that would instruct him in the idiom of the road. No, not the idiom, but the language; for a language it surely is, living, picturesque and foreign. And this he had to do while learning the fine art of dodging horrid accident to body and limb on

stolen rides by way of the whirling, clanking machinery underneath “limited” railway coaches.

The wanderlust had returned to flame as fresh as on that day he sat in the Idler’s cabin with Scotty and the alleged harpooner; as lawlessly as the evening he took the Queen with him aboard his own Razzle Dazzle, broke out anchor, and hoisted sail for the oyster flats. Although the learning amassed when he had been one with hoodlum and pirate and common sailor stood him in good stead in the present emergency, it was only to a quickly reached and limited degree. The “road-kids,” by misfortune of birth or later mischance, seemed a lower sort of human animal, unemployed by choice or physical inability, on their backs and in their pockets only such clothing and money as they could beg or pilfer.

These reckless ones regarded life from a contrary angle to the independent, carelessly free-handed spenders he had known, who made a generous, if sometimes haphazard, livelihood upon the waters. Revolutionary that he was, Jack slammed the brakes upon previous norms, took a square look at himself and the eccentric crowd, then eased into their rate of going. The road-kids did not like his hat. Neither did he. So they showed him, just off K Street that night, how to remedy matters.

“But you did not join that raid years before when the Oakland gang destroyed the poor Chinaman’s laundry,” I demurred to his confession of the hat.

“The laundry,” he declared, “was not that Chinaman’s property; he had to pay his customers for their lost raiment. The Chinaman from whom I lifted the hat owned the hat, and he was not a poor ‘Chink,’ for the hat was a beauty, and he was otherwise well dressed. You will admit there is a difference, no? Yes?” And to me, I having meekly admitted the difference, he melted.

“It was not nice; it was wrong and wilful. Yet I did not do it in sheer viciousness. It was part of the new game that I must learn in a hurry. I’d like this very minute to pay that frantic, jabbering Chinaman the five dollars he must have spent for that beautiful Stetson.” He giggled at the comical fracas that had ensued. “What? Wearing a Chinaman’s hat? Oh, it was never my habit to let squeamishness stand in the way when expediency was sufficiently pressing. And I’ve worn more suspicious articles than Chinaman’s hats! A tramp cannot be an exquisite, my dear. I washed my face and took a bath of some sort whenever there was opportunity, which wasn’t every day, because chances for swimming were scarce. Don’t forget, I’m pretty much of a savage when amongst savages. Yes, I’ve slept with them and eaten with them and begged with them and loused with them, which was the awfullest. And you, thank God!” he broke in with beaming eyes, — ”you, tender woman in your pretty gown, you don’t blanch in my face at the raw facts. What a lot most women miss by shuddering from playing some part of their men’s adventure-game or even from trying to understand it. Wait a minute — where did I say it?” He reached for his shelf of first editions. “Here it is; listen, ‘It is not given to woman to live in sweet-scented narrow rooms and at the same time be a little sister to all the world.’ You, Mate Woman, he concluded, “I don’t ever want you to know real hardship at first hand, and you have never known it

yet; but I do want you to know and face facts as they exist. Shrink your closest from the thing itself, and no blame to you; but not from the fact that the thing exists."

Still, he himself was never physically inured to the hardships youth put upon him. Irritation of burning cinders, grit, exposure, strains on wrists, jarrings of unexpected long jumps on slender ankles — all such hardships showed a rare endowment of beautiful elasticity. What I mean to make clear is that wherever he excelled in this and that arduous game, the price he paid was greater than that of the average man.

On the river-front that April day he was very busy under an amiably nonchalant exterior, acquiring the qualifications of a proper "blowed-in-the-glass" hobo. Since he had elected the road, nothing less than tramp-royal would he aim to be, and by the shortest cut possible.

What he did not take to himself of the tramps' oblique psychology would make very small additions to the literature of America's mighty army of Weary Willies as the country knew it before the Great War.

So well did he listen and apply that under his own "monaker," Sailor Jack, presented by his mates, he, the absolute tyro, was the only one of the crowd except Frank, who acted upon his example, to make a clean get-away on the late Overland Limited train of the Central Pacific. The "shacks" (brakemen) accounted for all the rest, and one luckless road-kid lost both legs in the scuffle. Of course, Jack registered automatic brain-notes upon the incompetence of the poor dubs at their own calling.

Sailor Jack had been warned beforehand to stay on the mail-car's deck — this being its roof, — to which he had clawed like the seaman he was, until a certain junction had been passed where the constables were especially unpopular with the "stiffs." Afterward he would descend to a less unsheltered nook on the platform of a blind-baggage. But this particular stiff made security from shacks doubly sure by holding down his precarious up-ended bed clear over the "hill," as the Sierra Nevada summits were styled by the "profesh," all through those smoke-stifling miles of snow-sheds. These somehow reminded him of the beamed ceiling of the Sophie Sutherland when he had bestridden Red John's heaving shoulders. He let himself down, almost congealed Avith cold, gritty, and scarred with hot cinders, only when Truckee was reached. Having beaten the railroad "over the hill," he had won his spurs as a proper road-kid, and he never owned up to the "bunch" when they overtook him at Reno, watching some Piute Indians gambling, that he had spent the night on the "deck." He arrived at Reno in a "side-door Pullman," which is a box car, and was thrown off a passenger-coach he tried to ride out.

"It was no time at all," he told me, "before I was riding the rods on a 'ticket.' Oh, no, not a pasteboard one; but a little bit of a piece of wood, with a groove across the middle to hold it on the rod." One day he came across the old "ticket" that had been part of his slender equipment, and at my request labeled it. How different from most lavendered mementoes a widow may cherish! I step to his huge fire-proof safe and take it out — a weather-grayed section of four-inch board less than an inch thick, irregularly six inches long, with the shallow crosswise groove hacked out by his jack-knife long

ago. And how eloquent is the high polish on the originally unplaned surface! The tag reads, in his own hand:

My "Ticket" used by me, in 1894, when tramping.

The notch rested on the rod inside the truck of

the four-wheel passenger coaches.

Jack London, Aug. 12, 1914.

His agility in ducking under rapidly moving cars and invading the internal mechanism of four-wheel trucks always remained a matter of pride to him, calling as it did for the smoothest coordination of nerve and muscle. This meant the grasping of a gunnel and swinging his feet under to the brake-beam, thence crawling over the top of the truck to let his body down inside to a seat on the cross-rod, made somewhat easier by sitting on the "ticket" — all this in darkness and deafening noise of grinding, revolving wheels. How he, or any tramp, could dare even drowse in what one may be excused for calling an extreme predicament, is an enigma. Yet I have Jack's word that he was able so to drowse, although many a time he "burned" his boots or trousers-legs, and even his flesh, on a whizzing steel periphery.

I have heard him swear with exasperation at the in correct descriptions of this nimble feat — an exasperation which reached its just climax when his own description, in "The Koad," was wrongly illustrated by photograph.

Together with his big sincerity, sometimes of the bluntest, in Jack London there dwelt a prominent trait of the play-actor, and this served him well in beating his way across the States. Unwilling cooks and housewives, loath to part with "hand-out" or "set-down," burly policemen, temporary employers, with all classes he practiced his wits to see how far this play-acting gift would carry him into their hearts for the attainment of his ends.

Owing to his natural penchant for independence, how ever, one sharp disinclination he had to overcome was this very begging, whether on the street for a "light-piece" or from door to door for the "hand-out" or "set-down." His first lesson in the gentle art was undergone even before he saw the last of Eliza's ten dollars, and it was almost beyond him to bend to the humble posture. But very shortly he adjusted his focus, and thereafter encouraged that latent histrionic talent, much to his own amusement. Time and again he nearly landed into trouble when a glib use of invention led him too far into piteous fiction that unfolded the circumstances which had reduced his estate. Or else his originality was too much for the gravity of some appreciative, if less talented, companion whom Jack was also bent upon victualing. Having cast himself for this purposeful mummery, he hesitated not to make capital of all the seraphic facial advantages he was heir to. Still, he never ceased to feel a half-serious guilt regarding certain kind-souled women who, as reward for the best their larders afforded, fed up&n the almost unbelievable misadventures that had brought this guileless child, with the innocent mouth, to the dire strait of begging food. However, he was able to offset this uneasiness by considering that there had been no palpable harm.

"If those ladies had been less trustful . . . they could have tangled me up beautifully in my chronology. Well, well, and what of it? It was fair exchange. For their many cups of coffee and eggs and bites of toast I gave full value. Eight royally I gave them entertainment. My coming to sit at their table was their adventure, and adventure is beyond price, anyway."

Many editors and publishers have wondered how they came to sign certain contracts which, to his own enrichment, Jack London had defaced with initialed amendments on their margins. During one of our visits in New York I said that I would give anything to hear him talk business with these men when he was discussing new contracts or renewing expiring ones. But he would never consent.

"I will confess to you that I do a good deal of play-acting at such times," he said, salving my disappointment. "It's a game or a play. We're all acting. The best actor wins most. If I were under your scrutiny, it would spoil my play-acting, and thereby lose money for us both, you and me. You know me too well. And once, referring to the subject, he said: "Somehow, I don't know exactly why, but I don't seem to want you to see me in this rôle. Maybe I'm not especially proud of it."

Many were his chances to learn what it really meant to go hungry, but in his case even clawing emptiness of stomach did not discourage. It was part of the big play in which he was more or less a puppet; and, too, his was the consciousness of stored efficiency so lacking in the bulk of his associates, which kept him atop the heap of the more dispirited and the hopeless ones. While it still made him curiously uneasy to contemplate steady work or routine of any sort, he was highly enjoying this great picnic of irresponsibility. Occasionally, too, he was in funds of a few dollars that dribbled along his lengthening trail from the hand of Sister Eliza; while several times his mother, terrified lest vagrancy land him in jail, spared him small sums.

No loveliness of mountain or desert or prairie-land, morning, noonday or night, escaped his ranging eyes. No morning too cold, no aching muscles too painful after a night on the unprotected blind-baggage, no headache too violent from sleeping over a round-house boiler, to deprive him of the beauty of the new day that was the herald of unguessed variety.

"Sweet plains of Nebraska" they were to him, and it was not until he had made his way across them as far as Council Bluffs that he came up with the elusive, more or less orderly mob under command of General Kelly. That undisappointing figure on "a magnificent black charger" fired Jack's imagination with the human romance of the exploit of this man who had marshaled an augmenting force of the dissatisfied clear from the Pacific coast. Nor had they walked, but proceeded upon captured trains to the double-intentioned cheerings of citizens of a West only too anxious to see the shape of their backs. Jack's, by the way, was adorned by a huge blackened rent caused by fire from a cinder that had caught his overcoat one night of ride-stealing.

The Eastern railroads took a sterner view, and the Army hung up at Council Bluffs. Jack dropped into the last rank of the rear-guard as the procession, stepping to martial music, swung out on the several miles of road to the town of Weston. There its advent

tied up two important railway lines that declined on principle to operate any trains whatsoever rather than oblige the invaders. A state of mild anarchy prevailed, for Council Bluffs, to obviate a return of the divisions, prepared to commandeer a train and run it to Weston for General Kelly's use. In the end the Army arrived at Des Moines on foot, and never rode again, except when it lifted its feet on river boats. Jack's dislike for "hiking" increased rapidly, for the soles of his shoes wore into holes until, I find in his diary, he was walking on "eight blisters and more coming." No shoes were to be had from the commissary, and finally his feet were in so "horrible a condition" that he dropped out and waited for a chance to ride with some farmer. The process of reducing the Army to the pass of tramping by foot cost the railroad companies "slathers" of money; but they established what they knew was an important precedent. In the end the Army arrived in Des Moines, and on Monday, April 30, I read in Jack's faded penciling, he "walked 15 miles into Des Moines, arriving in time for supper." That diary, incidentally, is absorbing reading, and his boyishly conventional comments on the good people who came to camp are delicious, though it is too long to quote entire.

Jack forever nursed a soft spot in his heart for the Iowans, who, though not wholly with disinterest, welcomed, banqueted, and bade God-speed to the "two thousands stiffs" that composed General Kelly's following. Jack voted it the time of his young life.

"It was a circus day when we came to town, and every day was circus day, for there were many towns. Sure; they enjoyed it as much as we. We played their local nines with our picked baseball team; and we gave them better vaudeville than they'd often had, for there was good talent left in some of the decayed artists in the Army." Years afterward, from our drawing-room on the Limited, pulling out of Des Moines, Jack pointed out to me the old stove-works where he with the Army had camped and invited the city either to furnish six thousand meals a day or to make the railroads come across with unremunerated accommodation. They continuing to decline, the riddle was solved by General Weaver's brilliant idea of building, at the city's expense, enough ten-foot flatboats to float the whole two thousand "soldiers" down the Des Moines River to Keokuk, on the Mississippi, and good riddance at the rice.

Sailor Jack selected nine of the likeliest fellows from Company L, of which he was a member, known as the "Nevada Push," and contrived to get his boat out first of the string. Thence on, the ten graceless scamps proceeded to raise Cain for everybody along three hundred miles of the shallow stream, helping themselves to the cream of the provisions collected by farmers in advance of the main Army's descent. In the diary I note a recurrent phrase, "living fine." Jack was not impressed with the dignity of the Army's management, looking upon the whole scheme as bound directly toward failure, which it eventually reached.

Meanwhile, having been outwitted by General Kelly in the continuance of their high-handed methods of preceding the main body, Jack and his contingent returned and disbanded one division, reorganizing it pretty much to suit themselves; after which

they resumed and enlarged upon the scope of their cussedness. It is to be hoped that General Kelly and his sorely tried officers, for the sake of their own remembered youth, reaped a little fun out of the in corrigible pranks of these prodigals, whose ringleader was the irrepressible and resourceful John Drake, an alias under which Jack received some of his mail. As for the latter's own sober retrospect, he wrote:

"I want to say to General Kelly and Colonel Speed that here's my hand. You were heroes, both of you, and you were men. And I'm sorry for at least ten per cent of the trouble that was given you."

From Quincy, Illinois, to Hannibal, Missouri, Jack had opportunity to become acquainted with twenty-odd miles of the Mississippi of Tom Sawyer, and enjoyed it as much as was possible from the questionable vantage of an enormous raft formed by lashing together all the flat-boats. Somewhere along the way there caught up with him a letter from his mother, addressed to John Drake, Quincy, Illinois, and variously forwarded, as the scrawled envelop attests, to St. Louis, Cairo and Louisville.

Oakland, Tuesday, May 22, 1894.

"Dear Son —

"I sent you a few lines this afternoon as soon as I received your postal of the 16th and mailed it immediately that you should know immediately that there were some 8 or ten letters at Chicago waiting for you each one of which contained stamps, paper and envelopes, two of which contains money in greenbacks, one 2 dollars and the other $3.00, which you must stand very much in need of. John just as soon as we know whether you have got what we have already sent, we will try and send you some more. John take good care of yourself, and do not under any circumstances fight, if it should come to that. Remember you are all I have and both papa and I are growing old and you are all we have to look to in our old age. . . . When we did not get a letter for three weeks I worried so that I could neither eat or sleep, but Papa would always say 'never mind Jack, he knows how to take care of himself, and he will make his mark yet.' John, Papa builds great expectations of your future success. . . . John under no circumstances place yourself in a position to be imprisoned, you have gone to see the country and not to spend your time behind the bars. Be careful of fever and ague that is the bane of the East. Keep your liver and kidneys all right and you need not fear it. If you succeed in getting your Chicago mail, be careful not to fall into the water with what money we have sent you, for as it is in greenbacks it might be spoiled like your writing paper. Now my dear son take good care of yourself and remem-ber our thoughts and best wishes for your success, happiness and safe return are always with you. With lots of love, Papa, Mama and Sister."

On Thursday, May 24, arriving at Hannibal, Jack remarks:

"We went supperless to bed. Am going to pull out in the morning. I can't stand starvation." Truth to tell, he and several others had gleaned all they wanted of this particular class of adventure. So they hit out in a borrowed skiff, thence by hand-car and blind-baggage, with many vicissitudes, for Jacksonville. Jack was the only one of the party who was successful in staying aboard a "K. C. Passenger" to Mason City. On

the twenty-ninth, at seven in the morning, he slipped circumspectly off a cattle-train in Chicago. First, at the general delivery window of the post-office he was handed the letters referred to by his mother, and the five dollars in greenbacks which he found therein were partly spent "amongst the Jews of South Clark Street," where, "after a great deal of wrangling," he fitted himself out with "shoes, overcoat, hat, pants and shirt." Thus equipped, "with a shave and a good dinner," he started out to "see the sights. Went to the theater in the evening, and then to bed," the first bed, he records, that he had lain in since leaving home nearly two months before. The next day he passed at the White City of the World's Fair, and "in the evening went to the Salvation Army and then to another fifteen cent bed."

"Your mother's people" had always been a familiar phrase to Jack's ears, enunciated by Flora London; also "my sister Susie," or "your Aunt Mary." So he had been specially exhorted to make a side-trip to "St. Joe," Michigan, that Aunt Mary Everhard and her sons might have a look at Flora's shoot of the family oak. Mrs. London must have lived in some trepidation as to the appearance he would present after tattering weeks on the road. Evidently Jack's shopping in South Clark Street had only slightly improved his appearance, for I have it from one of Aunt Mary's sons, Mr. P. H. "Harry" Everhard, that his cousin Jack "landed in St. Joe in somewhat ragged condition, but in good health and spirits, having enjoyed his experiences. . . . Mother," he goes on, "was greatly pleased at his coming. Took him down town and rigged him out in a suit of store clothes, and gave little parties for him, inviting those of his age or a little older."

Somehow the spectacle of this world-wise, weather-seasoned sapling sunning himself in the mild social atmosphere of Mrs. Everhard's carefully selected companions of his years or even "a little older," is delightfully comical. Chances are, however, that her not ungrateful nephew's deportment toward her and her friends was above reproach, for his instinctive manner, from earliest childhood, had been one of responsive gentleness. While he was hail-fellow-well-met in all sympathy of understanding when the going was rough, refined surroundings, with affection in the balance, always saw him sympathetic, even anticipatory of well meaning and courteousness. Hence, far from being shocked by what she may have learned or guessed of his bold past, in Aunt Mary's eye he was, according to her son, "a 'hero,' and she just worshiped him."

Undoubtedly owing to the quality of her love for Jack, which was responsible for certain unintentional injustices that she wreaked upon her own affronted offspring, he did not make any hit at all with my brother or myself," Harry Everhard recalls. He adds that this want of appreciation by himself and Ernest was repaid in kind and with interest by their guest. Jack was enjoying his bespoiling for all there was in it as a brand-new sensation, save for his life long indulgence from Eliza. It is easily possible, too, that he had let loose upon these well-raised cousins a few salient sketches of his tour, and that their mother would not listen to not nice reports of surreptitious introductions into vari-ous sorts of "blind-pigs" in prohibition Iowa, accessible to any wide-awake male of any tender age; nor unthinkably loathsome camp-fire meetings of "alki-stiffs" (those dregs of tramphood who imbibe druggists alcohol undiluted, "stuff

that would take the bark off your throat.") And Jack, even allowing for the latent artistry in him, probably did not greatly exaggerate his doings with the outcasts he had, in passing, made good with.

One incident alone told me by Harry Everhard will absolve the wrathful brothers from the onus of inhospitality.

"There was a good-sized lawn or yard of possibly an acre of ground with big elm trees, well covered with timothy and clover. With the exception of the grass close to the house it was allowed to grow high enough to make hay. . . . My brother on the day covered by this incident had the hay all cut and in small stacks and called to Jack to help him load it on the wagon.

"It was a pretty hot day and with a rain in sight that would have spoiled the hay. Jack jumped to the work and was pitching hay like an old hand when mother got sight of him and called, 'Ernest, don't you know better than to expose Jack to that hot sun?' And she forthwith made Jack go in the shade and protect himself. Now he had been sleeping in box-cars and had crossed the desert where the sun roasted one as if in an oven, but according to Mother's view of it our summer sun of St. Joe was too strong for his literary habits. Anyhow, I had to finish out helping to get in the hay and Jack got a shady place under the trees."

The beautiful name of Ernest Everhard always dwelt in Jack's memory, and he used it for one of his own favorite characters — hero of "The Iron Heel." It is not to be marveled at, however, that his cousin, inoffensively pursuing a serener pathway in life, was not markedly pleased with this bestowment of his name upon even the noblest conceivable of labor agitators and revolutionists, no matter how much a pet of his creator. Little wonder that Jack lingered several weeks in the easeful environment of the roomy, vine-trailed brick home; and it would seem that he had not entirely abandoned thought of writing, which made decided impression upon his fond aunt. Mr. Everhard remembers him "sorting up notes he had taken during his trip," and that he "had a sort of ledger and journal system of keeping his data. He did not call these books by that name, but they had the same relation to keeping account of his thoughts as a bookkeeper uses in keeping account of business transactions." This was an outcropping of a future relentless system with his myriad notes, and further pointed an ingrained brain-saving executiveness that goes side by side with government.

Two strong motives appear to have been struggling for possession of the genius that was in Jack. One, of art-expression, was controlled by a conventionality he had not yet been impelled to pluck from out his consciousness, as shown by his diary, as well as a number of amateurish stories he wrote of knights and ladies and such hackneyed themes, submitted the following months to Aunt Mary for her criticism. The other motive, quite apart, was based upon his expansive lore of the under-world of down-and-outs. It was, still unrealized, his desire to coalesce ideal and reality into tangible art.

Tramping

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XII

From St. Joseph, Mich., to Washington, D. C. New York, Boston, Canada, and Home — 1894

MANY day of all the days is a day apart, with a record of swift-moving pictures all its own," Jack has said. Still charmed with the absence of monotony in a peripatetic existence "for such as cannot use one bed too long," he, being one of these, pulled out upon the brake-beams again some time in July. He was now wearer of the proud nom-de-rail of "Frisco Kid," and would "go observin' matters" first in Washington, D. C., thence up the Atlantic railroad lines to other cities.

I have before me an eloquently battered note-book of cheapest imitation red leather. It contains names and addresses of friends at home, including Louis Shattuck and a Mr. Darnell; and there is a string of girls — Lizzie Connolly, who figures as a character in "Martin Eden"; Katie, Nellie, Dollie, and Bernice; and a few eastern names, among them Eugene J. McCarthy, 69 Barton Street, Boston. One item reads: "Mrs. Logan's house — her house used to be the old stone hospital during the war." Captain Shepard and Eliza, both for some time past engaged in the business of prosecuting pension claims, had been guests of General Logan's widow during the Grand Encampment of the G. A. E. in Washington two years before Jack blew into the city, and Eliza wished Jack to meet her friends. Her brother's annotations reveal the intention of seeing every thing possible relating to the war in which John London had fought Abraham Lincoln's fight to preserve the Union. Follows an itinerary of sight-seeing, such as "Alexander, Va., by steamer, fare 15c," and short historical references to Arlington, Mount Vernon, and other suburbs. And of course this was his first chance to see the Atlantic ocean and dream of further travel. The first deciperable data in the scrappy little journal is Thursday, August 9, 1894, on which he made a tour of the United States government buildings, the name of each crossed off as done with.

A couple of tiny pages are devoted to prose on the subject of "Beauty," which, though without grace of quotation marks, he credits to Frank D. Sherman. Evidently Jack had been dipping into wells of theological speculation, for several sheets are covered by a dissertation on Deism and Theism based on the query: "Which came into the world first, the chicken or the egg?" One may judge from his remarks that biologically he was far from satisfied with the Bible story of Adam and Eve and the succeeding generation or two.

There are copies of quite commonplace sentimental songs of the day, with their refrains; and his current notion of humor may be guessed from this:

"Johnny! Johnny!" said the minister, as he met an urchin one Sunday afternoon carrying a string of fish, "do these belong to you?"

"Ye-es, sir; you see that's what they got for chasing worms on Sunday."

Fragments of dialogue that struck him as worth preserving, perhaps for use in the yarns submitted to Aunt Mary, are interspersed with copies of poems, good and bad,

conundrums lacking answers, and streaks of tramp vernacular. And midmost of this living stuff one meets a quoted verse that speak's the boy's awareness of life's unrest:

"Twere best at once to sink to peace
Like birds the charming serpent draws,
To drop head foremost in the jaws
Of vacant darkness, and to cease."

Some years ago, sorting over keepsakes he had stored in the Oakland residence where Jack London housed his mother and his Mammy Jennie, he came across that little worn memorandum-book. "Look, Mate — here's one of the diaries I kept in my tramp days," he cried, and fell to running over the penciled notations. Presently he looked up with a moist luster over the profound gray of those deep-fringed eyes, and the expression of untried chastity upon his mouth which made him into a beautiful boy-child hesitant to divulge his deeper emotions. "It brings up my groping ideals of that time," very softly he went on, "and I want you to mark especially how I recurred to my old ambition for fatherhood and stability in life, in spite of my vagabonding tastes. Listen to this." And what he read quite solemnly to me, I now give from the same source, reverently word for word:

"In Washington, D. C., Thursday, August 9, 1894, in the afternoon, suddenly there came over me a great longing for paternity. A longing for children; not a sensuous longing for the accompanying pleasure of begetting them, but a pure spiritual longing for something in this world to look up to me; to depend on me; trust me, and be akin to me, as I must have been to my father and mother. Now I must confess that this is rather foolish of me, a lad of eighteen, to think of. It was brought on by contemplating the hopeless, friendless condition of a tramp I had been talking with in particular, and of the whole of mankind in general. I always said that I would not marry till 26 or 27, and I still think that holds good. But I will look around me in the meantime and try and profit by the experience, obtained by others through the lottery of marriage."

Evidences of his awakening interest in economics are to be found in scattered quotations, as well as through observations of his own. Having attached himself to a job that he might make a better appearance whilst seeing the metropolis and his sister's friends, it is inconceivable that he did not spend some of his spare hours at the libraries. He was plainly studying for a vocabulary, as well as facile punctuation, attested, as one reads on, by a strict following of the latter in quoting authors.

At some period of his stay in Washington he seems to have put up at the "Hillman House, at 226 North Capitol St." Hard upon some comments on immortality and the merits and demerits of a man's taking his own life, by Jas. E. Barker, a number of narrow pages are filled by Hamlet's Soliloquy, followed by a couplet from Longfellow's "Golden Legend" that might have been the suggestion for Jack London's disposal of the hero in "Martin Eden":

"A single step and all is o er.
A plunge, a bubble, and no more."

The job above referred to might be classified as janitorship in a livery-stable, where he also made his sleeping quarters. In line of relaxation and easement of his gambling proclivities, he was not averse to sit in at various highly exciting and illicit crap-games by gas-light with negro horse-boys and their friends. A concerted police raid upon a session one evening, when as luck would have it, he was only a "broke" onlooker, was the cause of Jack's resigning his position. This he did by way of a window, first dodging on all fours between the irate legs of an officer with that catlike quickness of his. That he could put up a better sprint than the star-breasted "bull" who decorated with the window-sash, lit out upon his heels, was the reason Jack did not sleep behind bars.

Indeed, he did not rest at all that night. Added to the fact that the "cops" were on his track, he had seen and done all the things for which he had come to Washington, and now seemed the fateful moment for him to quit the beautiful city. So he worked his discreet flight around toward the railroad yards, where he caught the first "blind" out on the Pennsylvania Express. At Baltimore a railroad bull reached for him before he had swung off the platform, and the night s second Marathon was on for many confusing blocks in a strange "burg." His prided sense of direction helped him back to the tracks, where successfully eluding "bull" and "shack" he ensconsed himself damp and winded on a baggage platform. But that sense of direction suffered a grievous set-back when, after forty shivering miles, he discovered himself again in the bright station at Washington. He had squandered the whole night in a fatuous round-trip to Baltimore. Mad as a wet hen, spraining even his robust Western vocabulary, he rested not or breakfasted until, late in the morning, again in Baltimore, he "threw his feet for grub."

Thence up through Pennsylvania he adventured, always overtaking the variety upon which his nature feasted. Little he asked of the world, it seemed to him just the privilege of going and coming quite harmlessly at his own sweet will, with gift of an occasional meal, infrequent loan of cigarette "makin's," and a place under roof or stars to "pound his ear," meaning to slumber.

One day when he was swimming alone in the Susquehanna, some one went through his clothing. He bewailed the loss of his tobacco more than the small change. But "I leave it to you," he laughed it off, "if being robbed isn't adventure enough for one day. Glad that the thieves had spared his clothes, shortly he had the pleasure of borrowing what he could have sworn were his own "makin's" from a bunch of waifs who were not wide awake enough to perceive that he was "on."

There was that fearful afternoon, he, a hobo, suffered mental and emotional torture in a camp of American gipsies, when one of the men dispassionately flogged his children and their protesting mother. Here Jack, most passionate of champions of the weak of either sex, had to call upon a philosophy out of keeping with his age to control all knightly inheritance of his long line of fighting forefathers, that he might refrain from interference. It would have made the woman s plight more desperate, and undoubtedly brought about his annihilation. Eight or wrong in the abstract struggled in his brain with man's civil-and uncivil-practices. But in his own anguish in the woman's

anguish, which made him clench longing fists till a gipsy man, noting, for Jack's own safety warned "Easy, pardner, easy," there came to his succor one face of the uncommon common-sense that reinforced sensitiveness all his difficult life. In her ethic, this woman gipsy among gipsies would not thank a rank outsider for "butting in." Jack had marveled before this upon the notorious ingratitude of certain females, oftenest of foreign blood, when their husbands were deterred, by outsiders, from fistic manifestation of possessiveness. As well might Jack's deep-burnt emotion have justified him in trying to halt with his hands an execution by hanging which later in youth he witnessed at San Quentin. These were not hazards in the open, where the best man or beast wins. Outrageous, hurtful, abysmal wrongs, in his profoundest deeps he felt them to be. But they were the law: one, the law of the outlaw, if you please; the other, alas, the strange law of that most free of all civilized nations, for which his father and his father's father and grandfathers had bled.

So he drew himself together with a mighty effort and met, cool steel for steel, the glitter of the gipsyman's narrowed black eye. He could fake an indifferent aspect; but his flesh was clammy and he was sick to his marrow every crack of the wicked thong laid on the cowering woman's frame striped his soul with red as few experiences ever marked it. It did more; it lashed him to swifter sifting of the tares from the wheat in his abundant thought-harvest.

But Jack was healthy-minded and-bodied, and it would have been a morbidity not to dismiss the occurrence as best he could. The development of that mind had not reached a point where he could even think he knew the remedy for such demonstration as he had witnessed. The searing day was done — ". . . one day of all my days. Tomorrow would be another day, and I was young," he said.

As he "pointed his toes" northward, unknown to him self adventure was undergoing a transmutation into something potentially different from the ideal which had quickened imagination and footstep to the varied gifts of earth. His unquieting perceptiveness was getting in under the skin of things the while he paid a lessening if still bright and discerning attention to the world of landscape and architecture and industry. From these, indeed, he wrested progression and sustenance, alone or in company with specimens of the floating population of incompetents that coasted this same smiling prospect.

Men were so wonderful, he could not fail to be impressed, when he looked about his father's great state and the Quaker City, in a similar way that he had been impressed by any large town since his careless days in Yokohama. When men could be so wonderful, why were many of them such hopeless derelicts? This early he was exhibiting a penchant for inviting secrets from the most furtive and cryptic human sources. In his life's periodical " prowlings," done out of driven curiosity to see how society was managed or mismanaged, many a woman of the street or brothel who earned her price with a surprised willingness, by merely treating the friendly searcher to a correct study of causes she had hidden with a reticence that had been her one pride.

As he held up and turned inside-out before his mind the unlovely confidences to which this sympathetic faculty made him. confessor, Jack was blest if he could see where

he himself had anything on most men in the matter of opportunity. Some, indeed, had been maimed — they did not count in this strain of reasoning. And yet, and yet, come to think of it, they did count, at least a large per cent. From that night in Sacramento when he, the novice, had left behind him some two-score professional hoboes, one of whom had been cut in two, he had noticed how man after man was beaten by inefficiency at his business of run ning away from useful efficiency. Jack's own survival could not be all blind luck, he thought. The others must be failures from aforetime, hereditary inefficients. He got the phrase reading of afternoons in free grassy parks, where he loafed and warmed up after a chilly or wakeful night, and invited knowledge from book, or newspaper he had "frisked" by dawnlight off some doorstep. Book or folded paper formed his sleeping pillow. And of course — always of course, it seemed — there was the toll of alcohol's vanquished. His own luck apparently resided in the inheritance of a good body that was informed by a good brain — a brain at least of ability to withhold him from becoming permanently a piece of the floatsam of mankind with whom he now drifted.

Moreover, time and again he met hoboes who were from the first ranks of a culture he had only glimpsed, as when with the poetess-librarian friend of his childhood, Ina Coolbrith. From these abodeless ones, who had lapsed to a plane that seemed scarcely related to the every-day world of men, he learned of the arts or professions that had been their callings, and was stirred afresh to his own ambitions. The majority of the decayed gentlemen who slouched within his radius, he could not reason clearly otherwise, were foreordained wrecks. One had been a Philadelphia attorney, university graduate and the rest, and upon his intellect of many facets Jack sharpened his own while they traveled together. Oddly enough, it was in this companion ship that he fell into the only serious difficulty he encountered in trampdom.

Something that had disturbed him for long; something definite, hard and fine, yet palpitating warm and tender, was coming into being in his heart. And though he knew it not, it was Love, the most selfless of all loves — nor love of blood, nor for woman, but the brother-love for the unlovely and unloved forsaken of men, which was destined to break that heart of his in the end.

But not yet was he possessed. It was a hell of a note, to be sure; but what could a fellow do? So he went on his way, "a beggar gay," rejoicing in glorious well-being and freedom, in his stomach "that could digest scrap-iron," and in his own fortune generally. He took chances with that luck, in a manner that challenged weary outwitted brakemen and even policemen who had not forgotten their youth or else remembered their sons who were chips off the old block, challenged them to implore him not to commit suicide. This they argued he was bound to do if he persisted in riding two fast-freight cars at once, as a circus rider divides himself between two or more horses in the sawdust ring. Many the officer he drove to incoherent very despair of wrath, until he would give up to Jack's uncapturable agility or the eloquence or humor of his ready slanging. But his supreme wide-awakeness guarded the young wilful from extermination, even upon

that night he took out on a freight from Philadelphia in fashion so precarious that for once he "had enough, and then some."

The wonder-city of New York held him spellbound; but no astonishment nor admiration could slow down the heated mechanism of his brain. What he saw only caused its wheels to move faster. If he was impressed by the spectacle of the city's incomputable wealth and power, he was stirred even more deeply by the reflection that so mighty a capital should permit the wretchedness of its own East Side.

What must conditions be if New York's cold of winter were as severe as was this smothering torridity, which drove him to spend long afternoons in a green square that gave on Newspaper Row and the city hall? It was some years before he learned for himself what New York winter meant to the submerged.

He rather enjoyed "battering the main drag" of a morning for nickels and pennies, and found the public not ungenerous. Meantime it was great sport seeing all he could of the promenading bon ton of America. With the money solicited, he lived well, largely on milk, never spending a cent upon liquor unless obliged in chance company. In fact, during all his tramp experience, he avoided drink as much as was compatible with the men he picked as the most worth-while companions. As usual, the crying pity was that the lives t and keenest, most individual and adventurous, were the drinkers. It was proved to him an inescapable truth; and he did not let them know the radical point where they and he differed, which was in his personal antipathy to alcohol as a beverage.

He had enough money left over to buy books from itinerant push-cart men, who vended imperfect volumes culled out by publishers. The serious incident before mentioned, that divided his New York visit in two sections, made him more avid than ever for reading matter. In narrational sequence this incident belongs here; but I have reason for moving it to the end of the chapter.

In that shady square, little booths did a cool trade in sterilized milk and buttermilk at a penny a glass, and we have Jack's word that he "got away with from five to ten glasses each afternoon" in the "dreadfully hot weather," which goes to show where his throat's refreshment lay rather than in alcohol. That he did not surfeit that throat for life I have ample evidence. Particularly do I remember a soft-drink "hole-in-the-wall" in Sydney, where, in 1909, strolling home from theater or organ festival in the great town hall, Jack would stop for a long draft, maybe two or three drafts, toward his unslakable thirst for ice-cold milkshake or buttermilk, in frank preference over any drink dispensed in the mezzanine of the Hotel Australia close by. Only once in New York did he suffer from contact with the police; and, just as fate would have it, the club thwacked upon his unsuspecting and blameless skull without rhyme or reason that he was ever able to fathom, he being a mere detached spectator of a street-corner row. "Was it always to be that way with — him that he would "get away" with real things he set out to do, and then run into punishment when he happened to be innocent? He could only class the riddle of this New York cop's landing upon him along with that of the Temescal harridan who had taken after him with a butcher knife. Tom Sawyer's

Aunt Polly oiled her conscience and saved her face by declaring it wasn't a lick amiss, when she once thrashed her nephew undeservedly. But so tireless was Jack in digging to the bottom of human enigmas, that even so trivial elusions as these two bothered him.

The railroad journey to Boston was as full of mishaps as any short trip he made in the East. For one thing, he started in the blaze of a hot Sunday afternoon, catching a freight at Harlem, after bidding farewell to the Bowery and the friendly City Hall Park. I have before me an article entitled "Jack London in Boston," written in Oakland about 1904, and never published in book form. It was the Old Colony Railroad, he thinks, and he was systematically thrown off section after section by zealous shacks, until finally he came to rest inside one of a load of huge iron pipes on a flat-car, "gondóla" in tramp parlance, where he "curled up and read the New York Sunday papers, and, as the light waned, dozed off and regained the sleep lost the previous night in the company of a pessimistic printer out of a job." But the stow-away had been observed by a busy shack who awaited his own convenience to strike the ringing iron and forcibly invite the trespasser to "hit the grit." Jack goes on:

"As behooved a tramp of parts, my mastery of intensive adjectives and vituperative English was such as invariably to move men in my direction. This was what I desired, and this the shack proceeded to do by crawling in after me. On the outside he controlled both exits (a pipe having two ends), but once inside he surrendered this tactical advantage. So I withdrew by the opposite end, while I bandied words with the man, criticized his general make-up, and dissertated upon the vascular action of the heart and the physiological cataclysms caused by intemperate anger. I also commented upon his ancestry and blackened his genealogical tree.

"I found the town in which I had alighted, on my own feet, which is a nicer way to alight, all things considered, to be Attleboro, a place where the inhabitants solved the scheme of life by manufacturing jewelry. As a traveler and a student of economics and sociology [he had become both by now], it was perhaps my duty to visit those establishments, but I preferred going around to the back doors of the more imposing residences. After breakfasting with a pretty and charming matron, to whom I had never been introduced and with whom I failed to leave my card, I returned to the depot. It was raining, and I sought shelter on the covered platform and rolled a cigarette. This action, being essentially Californian, at once aroused attention, and forthwith I was surrounded by a group of curious idlers. This was in 1894, so I suppose they have in the interim grown sufficiently degenerate to roll their own cig arettes. Nevertheless, I often wonder if any of them recollect the lad with the gray suit and cloth cap, smooth-faced and badly sunburned, who taught them how to do the trick.

"I must be treated leniently if it chanced that I saw but the surface of Boston. Remember, I was without letters of credit or introduction, while my only entrée was the police station. Entertaining peculiar tenets regarding cleanliness," he describes the reputation of Boston jails of the period, "it is not to be wondered that I avoided this place and sought a park bench instead. I wandered hit or miss till I came to the Com-

mon.” He comments upon the raw September wind that blows in The Hub around 2 a, m., and says that he shivered and shook, collar pulled up the cap down, vainly trying to sleep, till a policeman tapped him. “Always placate the policeman,” he advises the penniless wanderluster. “He is at once the dispenser and obfuscator of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. He shapes the destinies of lesser creatures, and free air or dungeon lurk in his gruff ‘Move on,’ or ‘Come on.’“ Jack drew upon his histrionic abilities, and simulated mumbling in his sleep. “What?” the officer peremptorily demanded, and Jack answered, Oh, never mind. I wasn’t awake yet, and I was dreaming about Ueno Park.” He asked, “Where’s that?” and Jack replied, “Japan.” Then he tells how for two hours he led that policeman’s interest uphill and down dale, in Yokohama and Tokio, or Fujiyama, through tea houses and temples the narrator had never seen, bazaar and marketplace, till his listener forgot the municipality he served and the malefactors who feared him. “At the end of that time he discovered that my teeth were chattering, said he was sorry he hadn’t any whiskey about him, gave me a silver quarter instead, and departed — he and his club.”

Having feasted upon the juicy steak and “Java” the silver quarter made possible, the young rascal spent the rest of the night in the winding streets, trying to get back to the Common, which eluded him for two days. Meantime, he found himself on the bridge to Charlestown, and fell in with one of his fraternity, looking for a residence section that would furnish breakfast.

“‘You’re no gay cat,’ he remarked, after a comprehensive glance.

“I signified in the appropriate terms that such was not my rating, and we unified our pace.

“‘New to the town, eh?’ he asked. ‘How’d you find the floppings? Pretty crimpy, eh? Well, I know the old jerk like a book, and I’11 put you wise.’“

Yet this tramp was an erstwhile gentleman, Jack soon found out, “with more knowledge and culture under his rags than falls to the average man who sits in the high places.” Two days they spent together, and, “discovering an affinity of tastes and studies, discussed the possibilities of a reconciliation of Kant and Spencer, and talked Karl Marx and the German economists, until, in a sort of bashful way, he announced the possession of antiquarian propensities. Thereat I was haled across the bridge to the North End, where he resurrected all manner of architectural antiquities and fairly bubbled with the histories of the old buildings. Needless to speak of my delight in all this, for I was fresh from the ‘new and naked lands’ of the great West. But I lost him one day, as men will lose comrades on the Eoad, and next picked up with a Dissolute Plumber’s Apprentice of Celtic descent and cursed with the Curse of Reuben. He had read Arthur McEwen’s ‘San Francisco News Letter,’ and my heart warmed to him. He was possessed of the modern spirit, exulted in modernity in fact, and bent his efforts toward showing me the latest achieve ments and newest improvements. I remember he took me to the public gymnasiums. And he it was who led my erring feet back to the Common.”

But winter was coming on, and Jack's eye was fixed on Montreal and Ottawa. One night Boston turned bitter cold, so he "beat it" for Lawrence, where he forsook his tenets "and slept in the police station" for warmth and shelter.

Tramping for recreation in summer weather was all very well, but once he was in autumnal Canada, neither gorgeous scenery nor new cities could restrain the thinly clad homing vagabond from making the best westward speed consonant with prudence. At Ottawa he succeeded in partly outfitting with an eccentric assortment of winter garments, but the difficult process and unsatisfactory yield filled him with disgust and haste to be gone from so uncharitable a "burg." It was, he declared, second city to Washington, D. C., where he had for a fortnight vainly begged a pair of shoes. The day in Ottawa he swears he walked forty miles, the reward of his "work" being "shy" of a shirt; while the pair of trousers acquired was tight to absurdity and showed "all the signs of an early disintegration." It was equally hard for a "bo" to extort food; but finally this one obtained a surprisingly large parcel. When hungrily opened in a vacant lot, it turned out to be inexplicably composed of more kinds of cake than he had ever thought possible of man's — or woman's — ingenuity; Cake being the pet aversion of the blowed-in-the-glass stiff, he owns to fairly shedding tears over that "multitudinous pastry. Not yet having cut his eventually large and cavernous sugar-tooth, he declined in choicest idiom to partake of the saccharine muchness. However, at the very next house, his appealing orbs bought him an entirely edible setdown from a beautiful French woman.

Across from Canada he stole passage, the determined train crews granting little margin of repose. It amused him, those thousands of miles of the ten thousand he computed that he covered that year, to attempt overtaking one hobo whose "monaker" of "Skysail Jack," carved with its latest-passing dates along the route, aroused sleeping sea memories. Himself now long since a "comet" and "tramp-royal" in his own right, Jack managed one night to pass the other and keep ahead all across Manitoba, carving or painting his old monaker of "Sailor Jack" for the other's benefit. Then "Skysail" went by also at night, and led across Alberta, always a day in advance. Again our Jack, in company with a member of the old Boo Gang of Oakland who had fallen upon evil times, nearly caught the fleeing "Skysail" somewhere along the Fraser Eiver, in British Columbia; but when he reached Vancouver the jaunty, elusive sailorman had taken ship across the Western ocean, and never did the two meet.

"Truly, Skysail Jack," his brother-tramp Jack London rendered honor, "you were a tramp-royal, and your mate was the wind that tramps the world."

A week after Jack had crawled out from under a passenger coach in Vancouver, British Columbia, he, too, took passage on his homeland coast waters, stoking his way southward on the Umatilla to San Francisco.

And now for the account of the interruption in his New York sojourn. I place it here in order better to illustrate Jack London's outlook upon his return to California, in relation to immediate issues as regarded their telling weight upon his whole future.

This happening was but the climax to inductions he had already made as corollaries of his entire history to date. It set immovably certain malleable stuff of his being, impelling him to synthesize, out of an extraordinary practical knowledge for one still so young, a simple, forthright philosophy of economics. At least, it appealed to him as the most applicable of any he had found to the anarchic social scheme that had arisen and persisted through Capitalism, and which he could contemplate only as man s shame to man under the free light of heaven.

Jack and the aforementioned fallen member of the Pennsylvania Bar had left Gotham together for a side-jaunt to Niagara Falls. And no one was ever more rapt than Jack London over the incomparable cascade. "Once my eyes were filled with that wonder-vision of down-rushing water, I was lost," he says. Afternoon and sunset, he could not tear himself away. "Night came on, a beautiful night of moonlight," and still he lingered upon that sounding glory of waters. Near midnight, dinnerless except for the feast of beauty, he pulled himself together and looked about for a place to sleep. The night being warm, without covering he slept in the grass of a field. Waking at five, too early to "batter" for breakfast, still mazed with the splendor of what he had seen overnight, he thought to return to the falls for a couple of hours. In the silent town of Niagara Falls he saw walking toward him three men, apparently hoboes. Two of them were so, and one of the two at close range he knew for his lawyer friend, who had separated from him at the falls in the evening, in the (to him) larger interest of "grub."

Alas for the close range that brought Jack within recognizing distance of the rueful ex-attorney. It was also within nabbing reach of the central figure, an industrious "bull" who, because Jack was unable to name a hotel in a town unfamiliar to him, promptly took him into custody, despite his glib lie that he had just arrived. Into the city jail the trio were marshaled, and searched and registered. Jack's case was the most dubious, for the name he gave, Jack Drake, did not tally with some letters in his pockets that happened to be addressed in his true name. He was never able to recall which was recorded on the blotter.

So far so good, he thought — the town was strict in the matter of vagrants, and he had been hauled in through his own carelessness. He felt a bit sheepish to recollect his mother's warnings. But in court, where he made one of sixteen prisoners, there were no official personages save a judge and a pair of bailiffs — no counsel, no witnesses, NO CHANCE. Simplicity of procedure was all very well; but this clockwork execution of justice outdistanced his utmost dreams of efficacy. The judge called a name. A hobo stood up. A bailiff droned, "Vagrancy, your honor." "Thirty days," enunciated the court, and the hobo sat down while another rose to his name.

And Jack, even he, no milk-and-water stripling innocent of the careless injustice of the world at large, could not believe his ears that were still ringing with the thunderous organ music of Niagara River. He thought of his American school history; of Sir William London's sacrifices in the cause of freedom; of all his male progenitors down the fighting line for democracy. He reviewed what he could remember of the Constitution of the

United States as he had studied it for recitation; and then he dropped back with a thud to the cold, irrefragable fact that his turn was approaching in this chamber of relentless practises. . . . Bosh, he brought himself up presently; these hoboes were dubs, and deserved all they'd get of the city jail. Hell! he'd show them a few. His ideals recrudesced warm and bright. One of the liberties those ancestors of his had scrapped for was the right of trial by jury. A demand for this could not be denied in any court of law in the Republic of America. Could it not? Why, his own "trial" was ended and the next hobo's begun before Jack could realize that the judge's peremptory "Shut up!" had cut short the blossom of his first sentence that had burst simultaneously with the court's utterance.

He was dazed. "Here was I, under sentence, after a farce of a trial wherein I was denied not only my right of trial by jury, but my right to plead guilty or not guilty." — Habeas corpus! there, he knew about that. So he asked for a lawyer. They laughed at him in the jail corridor. Well, they had him — that judge was the quickest man he had ever tried to talk against. But wait till he got out of jail. He d be good as gold while inside — it paid; and he was a diplomat, even if he did sometimes nap. But let him once get out, and there'd be the biggest noise and odor of a scandal that ever was let loose in the uninformed press of the U. S. A.

Jail? It turned out to be not mere jail but Penitentiary stripes for all the sixteen, the only offense of the most of whom had been homelessness. Jack, erstwhile patriotic son of a patriotic veteran, was handcuffed small white wrist to big black paw of a huge, happy-go-lucky negro, equally guiltless of felony, and placed in the very vanguard of the beaten procession that marched to the train for Buffalo.

Please, I beg, picture it, just once and honestly, anyone of you who fought to impede Jack London, man and artist, every hard-won, invincible inch of his way until your tardy homage only bent at last to tired eyes and lips closed in death. Just once and honestly, I beg, put yourself in the fine skin of that burning young patriot being unmade because men were needed for the rock-pile. Then, just once and honestly, do you marvel that patriotism took on new lineaments in his ideal? For the rest of his life, until Mexico and Germania threatened his country, Jack London's only tender connotation of the word patriotism as applied to capitalist civilization was the fact that his father and mine were single-minded veterans of Abraham Lincoln's victorious forces.

Talk about sudden conversions at the Mercy Seat! He had pretended them, even striven to experience them, more than once at revivals, but had emerged spiritually untouched. But here in New York State there was no mercy. And the ruling class of America, finally, upon that day of ultimate outrage to his logic and his sensibilities, through its own uncaring stupidity forfeited that which might have become an ornament to itself, what of Jack London's temperamental leaning toward the excellence of strength. It was of such a being as this exuberant, protest ing boy, that one who has been acclaimed Dean of American Letters, many years afterward, even in the face

of favors received, declared: “Jack London is a self-confessed felon, and ought to be behind the bars to-day.”

That he was not made into a dangerous criminal, as were many of his chance mates, was not due to the masters. His brain and eye missed no iota of cruel wrong of the penal institution in itself and in its administration. His common sense that made him from moment to moment follow the lead of the wiser convicts to the playing of politics that in short order created him a trusty — these faculties enabled him to convert the month of durance into a powerful ally of mental growth. With customary abandon he gave himself to the game, and went observing instant by instant.

Here, to be sure, he might have been deflected into a consideration of the wisdom of eliminating the unfit, which would have led him to the pursuance whole-souled of oligarchy’s high awards. It was the hot heart of him that interposed before the cool weighing of his reason, and he would make no terms with the enemy of the underdog. But true to his quality, that abiding saneness just as uncompromisingly determined that he scale the social shambles he saw butchering the careers of unprophetic or indolent comrades. Although he honored the martyrs of old, their method could never be for him. He would himself first climb out of the pit, that he might live to reach a hand to the fellow who could not rise by himself.

One may thank that princely ego of Jack London’s which triumphed to serve, that there was any boyhood left in him when he had doffed the stripes and emerged shaven headed from the great gray house where he had been consigned by the majesty of Niagara Falls police court. And he had learned how best to serve both himself and those still incarcerated, which was by making himself, upon his release, very small in the matter of immediate protest. Loud mouthed ones discharged during his own occupancy of a cell, had shortly returned very silent and very sore. So he walked exceeding soft; exceeding quietly he stole under the first New York and Pennsylvania train bound southeast. More carefully than all else did he avoid coming within tagging reach of any cop in Buffalo, for amongst other teachers in the “pen” were the men who had served their thirty days for vagrancy and run forthwith again into the winnowing arms of the same or other officers. Some had been committed a second and third time, according to their degree of stupidity.

Remembering the monstrous cruelties of the penitentiary in the course of administering criminal “justice,” Jack not unnaturally concluded all State prisons were alike. It became almost second-nature for him to take to nimble heels whenever a policeman hove in sight. In the “pen” he had soon ceased from cursing his failure to jump out that morning in Niagara Falls, because of the tremendous eye-opener the prison was to him upon the nether-scenes of society. Nothing could better exhibit the rottenness of the social structure than this mad manhandling of human potentialities, in need rather of wise physicians for mental as well as physical deficiencies. Jack, being essentially healthy, shook himself free as of yore from the unnormality of the thing, and went on his way rejoicing in escape. But this time it was with a deeper difference than ever before. Read in “The Road” his two sections entitled “Pinched” and “The Pen,” for a

hint of what he calls the “unprintable” details of what with his own eyes he saw in the Erie County Penitentiary in 1894. “They were unthinkable to me until I saw them,” he avows, “and I was no spring chicken in the ways of the world and the awful abysses of human degradation.”

“When Jack this time passed homeward through the Golden Gate of the West, it was eyes front to the exigencies of his future; and there was a new look in those eyes — wide, grave, imperious. He had figured it out, once and for all. He had been wont to glorify his beautiful youth’s muscle and “silk.” Where had it got him? What had it bought him? Where would it land him? Tell him that! Each time he had tried it out, he, fit among the fit, had been exploited for a paltry wage — or none, when it came to a penitentiary rock-pile. Being obsessed with love of life that should go with such a physique, he confessed terror as to what would happen when he grew older and had lost his silk, whenas he should be “unable to work shoulder to shoulder with the strong.” The vaunted dignity of manual labor, as he had heard it expounded by teacher and preacher and politician, suffered a total eclipse. He had informed himself as to the doings in the cellar-pit of society. These had shown him that the men without trades were helpless, and the ones with trades were obliged to belong to unions in order to work at those trades. Unions were forced to maintain constant war with employers unions, which came back at them in turn. Therefore, no trade for him and no criminality either. He would work up out of the pit, but not with his muscle. In short, brains paid, properly used, and not brawn. His economic interpretations sanctioned the decision, for himself, that brain, and brain only, would he sell.

Here he might have switched to the track taken by the hero he created in “Martin Eden,” and become technically an aristocrat, with little care for those he was easily superior enough to leave in the shambles. But no; he would use his potent intelligence to double purpose. His choice, and the use he put it to, are the most eloquent illustrations of his nobility and integrity.

High School

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XIII 19th Year

WHEN Jack London, too late to enter at the beginning, jumped midway into his first High School term, he was “driving many horses,” to use a favorite expression. One was Book Education, another Socialism, a third the requisite Job, the fourth Social Usage, and so on, with all their intricate harness.

With very unorthodox views on labor and capital, he was still orthodox enough to believe that the success he craved must rest upon classical learning. Even before the Lily Maid brought her refining influence to bear upon his training, he was soaring along in his High School classes toward Berkeley’s academic eucalyptus groves. It will not do for any woman, or man, either, to rise after Jack London’s death and say, “It was I who educated Jack London, or started him to educate himself toward college; I

put the idea into his head. I taught him the English that made him famous. In short, I made Jack London." There has been a tendency on the part of a few self-advertising souls to hint such claims; but any one truly acquainted with any part of Jack's makeup must in all honesty realize that, no matter what the helping hand, he "made himself," upon rigid lines that he had established for himself, until of his large ness he spread the lines to embrace all attainable life and erudition. He was by far too unique to be influenced vitally or permanently by any single restraining or even propelling touch.

Relentlessly, as the illuminating months went by, head high he repudiated convention after convention of belief as it proved non-essential to his advancement; still, he held to the belief that "education" was indispensable. Fellows who did things, big things, must finish their schooling first; he heard it on every side. Schooling it should be, from its first word to his last degree at the University. He had not meditated the apt query as to why some of man kind's brightest adornments had neglected to march up the grades in the way properly constituted individuals are supposed to march; nor had he then spurned what he came to scorn as "the bourgeois valuation put upon the university pigskin." This I take from a letter written to a schoolgirl two years before his death. But in the year 1894, to be called "a college man" was his ambition as guaranty of unquestionable excellence. So far there had not dawned upon him the priceless worth of his first-hand experience to a writing career; or, if this treasure did suggest itself as part of the equipment, it was in secondary measure. At least, it must pass through the alembic of rule-of-thumb culture.

Upon Jack's return to Oakland from The Road, his good luck it was to find John London improved in health and holding down his situation as special officer on the police force, with pay sufficient for the little household. This left the boy, all on fire to study, at liberty to concentrate.

He set about forming work-habits that clung all his life. In the pretty white cottage on Twenty-second Avenue, between Sixteenth and Seventeenth Streets, his mother fixed up a roomy bed-chamber for his "den." In the matter of a bed, he asserted himself in favor of a large and comfortable one — "Because I shall spend much of my time in it, keeping warm while I study," he planned. Since good beds were a weakness of his mother, the wish was gratified without protest, "I always have good beds in my house if I haven't anything else," was her boast.

Opposite the big bed, squarely against the window-sill, Jack set a plain table large enough for study books and writing materials, to buy which Eliza had advanced him money; and by the bed a small stand to carry a reading-lamp, one of the "student" variety, with books, scribble-pads, and pencils. In one corner a dresser, of the style with a long mirror, two large drawers, and several small ones rising on the right of the glass, took care of his meager wardrobe and shaving outfit.

The furnishing was completed by a chair at the table which at night supplemented the small bedside lamp-stand to hold a dish of fruit and his cigarettes and matches. And woe to any who should from a motive of whatsoever virtuous orderliness misplace an item of his paraphernalia. After his mother had been possessed of one of her "cleaning

streaks" in his absence (who of us has not agonized from this uncomprehending and indefensible madness in one's elders!), Jack would rage through the cottage, storming that he couldn't find a damned thing. Flora, in self-defense, learned to intimate mildly that "Eliza was over, and thought she'd tidy up a bit," because, forsooth, he never dared storm at Eliza. As he admitted: "I knew better than to yell at Eliza, for she'd talk back at me twice as hard."

Here in the den, air blue with smoke of cigarettes, he made his smashing offensive on the books, and prepared himself for "exams," picking up where he had left off when he had been graduated years before from Grammar. When exhausted from bending unheeded hours over the table, he retreated to the wide bed where, propped on huge pillows, he continued to "dig" until dawn. Night after night, a well meaning neighbor, Mrs. Aldridge, seeing the light, worked herself into a state of pity for Jack's mother, poor worried soul that she must be, sitting up all hours waiting for a wastrel son to return. Finally she and her daughter walked over one evening to make Mrs. London's acquaintance and, if agreeable, to sit up with her, only to be informed by Flora that the lamp illumined the pages of her student son.

But he must have some sort of exercise, and the loan of a bicycle by another neighbor gave him something to cope with bodily. It was one of those fearful and wonderful pioneer objects comprised of a wheel of expansive diameter with another and tiny one behind — the old "ordinary" of painful memory. Before an early breakfast, that he might practise unseen of delighted passers, Jack proceeded to master the thing with vigor and dispatch. "At first," Eliza relates, "he was most of the time sprawled about the ground; and he'd come over to my house for breakfast — bruised, dripping wet and red in the face, his curls all tousled, fighting mad, and explaining carefully what slow work it was getting the best of the "infernal machine!" Then he'd burst out laughing at the idea of how he must look when he tangled up and went down in a heap with it."

When he started going daily to the "Oakland High" on Twelfth between Jefferson and Clay Streets, Eliza presented him with a latest model of the low "safety wheel." Speeding to and fro, bent above the handle-bars, he sometimes looked aside wistfully to the estuary that several blocks down paralleled the Avenue, wishing he had leisure for a sailboat. But the days and nights were all too short for the multitudinous activities he had engaged in. There were shadows beneath his eyes from lack of sleep and pallor under the vagabond brown. In addition to class work, he wanted to contribute stories to the High School paper, The AEgis. One of these, done in the medium of colloquial road-kid diction, appeared in a February 1895 issue, entitled "Frisco Kid's Story," and its fresh tone and touch of sincere pathos created a breeze in school circles. The yarns I wrote at that time drew little upon my imagination, but were more relations of real incidents than anything else," he described them.

With an instinct for live diction, the dead, formalized instruction worked a bepuzzlement in him. Miss Mollie Connors, instructor in languages, gives the following example:

"One morning," she relates, "I noticed Jack sitting at his desk with a gloomy, heart-breaking look on his face. In front of him lay a manuscript that had been so marked

with a criticizing pencil that it was difficult to read the original. It's no use, Miss Mollie, he said in reply to my inquiry as to what ailed him. I'm going to quit. I came here to study English because I thought I could write; but I can't — look at this! I managed to read the article, corrected by a teacher to whom pure English meant so much more than talent: 'Never mind, Jack,' I said. I'm going to tell you a secret: 'The only trouble is that you can write, and she can't. You keep right on."'

He had deliberated earnestly upon a pursuit for which he should qualify, and it seemed that he must definitely abandon music, and poetry, and other alluring ways of what he had thought of as "the wide joyfields of art." The more he pondered, the more convinced he became that fiction writing would pay the best, bringing to him the means of good living for himself and others. In writing he would still be creating art, which seemed necessary to a full realization of himself. It would not take him long, he figured, to get where he could incorporate art and beauty into form that would sell for several dollars a column, if rumors were dependable.

From one ancestor of his mother at least, Jack London inherited stern fixity of purpose and perseverance. This Wellman had "blown in" his own bank and all others of his interests for the construction and maintaining of what was in its time the largest blasting furnace in the iron districts; but, like some of Jack's ideas, it was in advance not of its need but its recognition. I cannot refrain from wondering if he had not set up for his motto Washington Irving's "Great minds have purposes; others have wishes."
"And no brother of mine is going to take any chewing tobacco into High School in my town," Eliza announced her disapproval of an unsavory habit he had brought home from his tramp society. Whereupon Jack submitted the excuse that he had to keep chewing incessantly, when he was not smoking incessantly, to prevent his teeth from aching. Suiting action to his defense, he opened his square jaws and exhibited an array of cavities, in every tooth that the Kelly's Army dentist had spared from his forceps.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself — you needn't have had a mouth like that if you'd taken half-decent care of it," Eliza scolded full righteously. He owned she was justified, and then proffered the bargain that if she would get him some new upper-fronts, and have the cavities filled, he would abandon the abhorred "chewing." Which he did, except on one or two surreptitious occasions when, sailing and fishing up-river for a rest, alone or with some unregenerate compatriot, he renewed acquaintance with "plug cut."

"Well," he remarked when the plate had been adjusted, "here I am with my first store teeth and my first toothbrush I ever bought — I got them both at the same time, at nineteen years of age."

"Well, it's nothing to be proud of," his sister flashed back with rising color. "It's your own fault, because you knew better. I didn't bring you up that way! And I wouldn't brag about it before anybody. It's no credit to you."

For quite beyond her it was that he, always shouting for bath and towels, "nice woolly ones, you know," or brush and comb and razor, and who used a whisk-broom assiduously on his shabbiest suit, should have slipped up in this matter of caring for

his teeth. He had no excuse save "Oh, I was always busy, or reading, or interested in something, and forgot it!"

Jack's first mishap while he and the new plate were be-coming accustomed, was upon a day when he rode the spic and span "safety" to call upon a girl schoolmate. Coasting down hill, a violent sneeze ejected the teeth, and in his lightning effort to catch them midfall, they and he and the wheel went down together. Although his sensitiveness was acute, he would hide it at such times under a bold brusquerie. Once, I remember, at the Piedmont Swimming Baths in Oakland, he lost his plate in the tank, and failing to recover it by crawling along the bottom in eight feet of water, he finally gave up secret methods and offered a dollar to the boy who would find it for him. Great hilarity ensued, in which he as noisily shared, and there followed a mighty splashing and engulfment of small divers. And when one strangling brat had emerged successful, the owner concealed his blushes under water while he slipped the teeth into place. "Be a good sport, no matter how it hurts," was the word.

Already Jack was conspicuous in propaganda work for the old Socialist Labor Party. Yes, he had some time back discovered the name for what he had become: Socialist — though he had been made aware from his fearless start that the word was a grief in the ears of "nice" persons regardful of bourgeois peace and order. But, born rebel against anything less than a square deal, and personally ambitious into the bargain, he subscribed in effect to the maxim that "Satisfaction with existing things is damnation." Eager though he was to benefit mankind, early in the game, to the questions "You hope to cure social ills with socialism! Do you think it will be long in coming?" Jack replied: "I don't know; the student quits prophesying early in the action.

Now this particular steed in his speeding team, Socialism, did not seem to step precisely with sedate ethics in the High School; but he had much information to plunder, and would not worry. Blithely would he remove obstacles as they arose, and it should be easy enough. He would reduce all difficulties to their simplest forms — which indeed often abolishes difficulty — and proceed to handle the same as simply. In a fine degree Jack had that consciousness which Wells has said is discord evoking the will to adjust itself.

No Laodicean, Jack. His facing to the world must be direct and unmistakable, though composed of many and mobile features, for the countenance of his soul was not created rigid except in the basic integrities. Rampant individual was he, in every fiber. But how about the next fellow, his brother or sister individual? Evidently, from his observation about the world, just the right chance was not accorded them all. He happened to be husky and could make his own berth, though even he had to strain unduly to survive, and he had come to see that countless ones were unable to endure the race. He thought of child-labor as he had known it and as he saw it progressing in the land. And the mangling mercilessness of commerce — the industrial accidents, the scrap-heap of cripples and mendicants; for the unprotected machine, since he had worked at it, had not been improved upon. He did not have to take the say-so of others: he had his own experience to tally by. The boy's heart beat for poor blind humanity;

and perhaps, after all, the higher-ups did not know how wrong things were, just as the cannery owner's daughter, lying in the cushions of her rumbling victoria with its silver-clanking high-steppers, could not possibly have dreamed of the conditions in the converted stable cannery.

So he founded his early and persistent hopes upon the latent nobilities he felt were leaven in the human of all classes. These classes should be got together. He groped for the best way of helping. The spreading of Socialism was the best solution that presented as he reared in protest against the injustice of life — and of nature, too: never did he cease to marvel at the slight consideration of nature toward her children. There seemed to be so much wrong all down the line. Justice appealed as such a simple thing, if only everybody could agree on ways and means. Why could not every one perceive what was right and what wrong? Surely, any veriest boob could see that it was not fair or even sensible for an unformed child of school age, or an invalid female of whatsoever age, to be obliged to do hard work for bread and meat! It was worth fighting for, to try to bring things right. He would do his part in showing them what he had found. But why should he, particularly he, who was so very busy, have to do the fighting? Why were not those with leisure and money doing the work of balancing things? Why could not they see for themselves, without being shown? And, worse, he found that some who were convinced, actually took the opposite tack, and fought against the obvious right. It was not as if the down-and-outs he had known had originated from the slums. Quite the reverse; in his travel he had learned that more often they were drafted from the more sensitive ones, well above the slum class, while many were far above it, and then some. Besides, there ought not to be any slums.

So it should be Socialism for him. "And socialism, when the last word is said," he saw it, "is merely a new economic and political system whereby more men can get food to eat. In short, Socialism is an improved food-getting efficiency." One must have food, and plenty of food, to attain to other kinds of efficiency. From his first socialistic conceptions, there was never anything of the soft-headed genus of humanitarian about the boy. His small feet were rooted in the soil of practicality, the while his young head plotted emancipation of the common man who was his blood-brother under the red banner of democracy. The anarchists made him laugh — every man for himself, and devil take the hind most; anarchy would abolish law, and mankind could not thrive socially without law and obedience to the same, for the good of the many. He had played ducks and drakes with some pretty good laws himself, laws he had known were fairly just even in his trifling with them. That had been in youth's free prankishness, and in protest against laws that had already been broken over his own back; so he could not take his past evasions too seriously.

Very well, Socialism, as flatly opposed to Anarchism, stood for law, more law, better law, and law enforced as it should be — for everybody, employer and employed, for man, and woman, and child. His old diffidence cropped up, and he did not then or ever like to speak publicly; but he would enter the lists in the holy cause of propaganda for this lofty religion that had come to him.

With eloquent tongue preaching, and eye, rejoicing in the smack of the game that entered into his every activity, slanted on the listening, closing police, he was promptly arrested for street speaking. Thus he scored the first telling notoriety that accompanied bringing his politics into prominence.

And then he, clarion trumpet of law-building Socialism, was contrariously and ignominiously dubbed by the capitalist papers as Anarchist, red-shirt, dynamiter, and what not! He could only foam at the mouth over the impotence of justice and the unfairness of destiny. Oh, well — it was all right; he had expected too much at the beginning. Anyway, he had done something toward waving the sacred blood-red flag of the Brotherhood of Man, and would keep on waving if he died for it!

Jack's efforts on curb and soap-box did not make for any especial popularity with Mr. McChesney, principal of the High School, nor with the teachers; any more than did certain baffling fallacies he introduced into algebraic problems for his own entertainment and their undoing. His general progress was meteoric enough to command their respect and forgiveness, however. Those photographic retinas of his wide eyes, together with an alert brain that missed nothing, and long-pursued omniverous reading, made most of his studies mere play and granted much time for further reading which a half-dozen family-cards helped the old public library furnish him. He has told that it was possible for him to repeat almost word for word a column once gone over, say of a newspaper; but except in sofar as it served to facilitate recitations or entertain socially, he soon gave up developing the faculty. "That sort of thing, carried to excess, is a detriment to larger functioning," he once explained me his view. "I made use of it for skimming the cream from pages, as you see me do. Before long, I had fixed the habit of making written notes of details, in order to save my brain for general principles. If one forms and retains principles, the details can be reconstructed easily enough." When Jack London's elder daughter, Joan, entered High School precociously early, remembering his own youth he modified a disapproval he had harbored as to cramming young minds too full and fast:

"If her brain works as rapidly and effortlessly as did mine," he capitulated, "it's all right for her to go ahead this way if she wishes, so long as her body is being properly nourished and cared for. I learned so quickly that I had time on my hands at my school desk, and if I did not have a book handy, I fretted and fumed at the sinful waste of time."

Another interest during his first term was the stimulating one of argument, not only with the instructors but with the members of a club that met under the name of the Henry Clay Debating Society. There he also became acquainted with girls who did their hair high and who wore longer skirts than those of little Haydee. He found himself invited into some of their pleasant and cultured homes, for these young women did not make casual street friends with men. While he oriented himself, he often thought of his wild and woolly past on land and sea. And in the long run of his days, there in Oakland and in more glittering ranks of society about the world, he founded his

agreement with Kipling, that "The Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady are sisters under their skins."

Some of the well-raised maidens' brothers were prone to look askance upon the "Boy Socialist" who was attracting altogether too much unflattering comment about town. But in spite of prejudice, they and their sisters could not fail to admire the arresting personality of the bright, incessant young student, the beauty of whose well-set-up body with its free sailor-shoulders could not be hidden even under ill-fitting, shiny-seamed cloth. Still, I have met one elegant matron who remembers him principally by his "untidy clothes."

He kept them "guessing" every minute by the poignant charm of voice and manner, even if it sometimes lapsed in polish, for it was hard to discern where self-confidence gave place to a suspected clever bluff born of old sensitiveness and timidity; and his adroit tongue was apt to prove a wily snare to their best laid arguments.

But let him once come under the empery of serious thought, and he was transformed into a commanding figure. I have seen Jack London enter a room full of people, wearing that half-diffident smile of lips and eyes that so disarmed them all — just a human boy, all human, all boy — until some question set the keener mechanism of his brain in movement. Instantly! the whole man changed, a mind appeared to take the place of the human personality, a mind sure, insolent with surety, a very autocrat of minds. He impressed the onlooker as removed, set above, exalted over common thought and thing. The usual engaging expectancy of his justly featured face changed into lines of stern imperiousness, the very repose of which seemed to mark him as a consecrated vessel of some austere purpose.

To return: He "dallied with little home clubs wherein were dicussed poetry and art and the nuances of grammar." The socialist local kept his wits on razor edge with study and oration upon philosophy, political economy, and poli tics state and national. He wrote letters to the Oakland Times, The Item, and other papers, which were published under leaded titles such as: "Is against single tax; Jack London disagrees with John McLees: claims it will not regulate present difficulties. " And again: "Socialistic views on coin. Jack London takes issue with the Populists. Where he thinks them weak. The small capitalists trying to ride on the backs of laborers." When the People's Party in Oakland offered a prize for the best essay written by a pupil of the schools, Jack's was the winner. It was entitled "Direct Legislation through the Initiative and the Referendum," and was given publicity in The Item. Two stories, "Old Baldy," and "An Old Soldier's Story," were printed in a magazine, Evenings at Home; and a Socialist article in The Amateur Bohemian.

As if he had not already assumed enough to wear down that Titan energy which made possible his fame, want of money urged him into an assistant janitorship in the school. That position was an eminently convenient one though it did strain even his breadth of beam and buoyancy of endurance, when added to myriad other tasks and interests.

"Poverty made me hustle," he wrote long afterward, and included this among the items of what he called his "vast good luck" — others being "good health; good brain; good mental and muscular correlation." So he turned his beautiful muscle to stoking the furnace, and his blithe walk to account upon wooden miles traversed in the course of cleansing floors and wainscot and furniture of the educational pile that was a stepping-block to college. Still furthere to eke out his earnings, he kept an eye for unmown lawns and dusty carpets, putting in chance holidays and spare evenings at this kind of exercise, to a further lessening of closely-scaled sleeping hours.

The securing of the janitor work came about through his sister. Soon after entering High School, Jack had noticed that the janitor, Jacob Winkler, seemed to have more duties than a veteran of the Sixties could well accomplish. He had once been the Commander of Lyon Post Number Eight of the G. A. E., and Eliza Shepard simultaneously having been President of the Woman's Auxiliary Belief Corps, Lyon Post, Department of California and Nevada, Jack went to her. In his behalf she manipulated such strings as she could, and despite her brother's political leanings, got him the berth. It was slyly whispered that Winkler's advancement to a "better and easier place" in another school was coincidentally an expression of the School Board's disapproval at the appointment of the handsome young firebrand in unmodish garments over the head of a boy previously named. Years later, after delivering a lecture on Socialism at the old Dietz Opera House in Oakland, Jack was approached by the selfsame Jacob Winkler, who wrung his hand with the assurance of his warm sympathy with the Cause.

To his daughter entering High School, again Jack wrote, in order to circumvent possible ill-advised snobbery due to his renown, adjuring her never to forget that her daddy once swept the very woodwork upon which she was now treading.

One afternoon, to her stepdaughter Jessie Shepard — she with whom Jack had played piano duets at school and church concerts in earlier East Oakland years — Eliza declared:

"There! I know I've just seen that girl Jack's been raving about lately, for she exactly fits his descriptions. She's a pretty little wisp of a thing — big blue eyes, hair yellow as spun gold — you know, the perfect blonde. Pale, though, and looks delicate. She was all tricked out in fluffy white things, with a wonderful picture-hat, and had an English bull-pup on a chain — and she was laughing at the way it was leading her . . . I know she's the girl!"

(The occasion of Eliza's introduction to the young lady, however, was somewhat undignified, if gallant. Jack had taken the Lily rowing upon the estuary. Anchored off the Derby Lumber Yards, while she read aloud he fell asleep in the bottom of the boat. He awoke to find the tide had ebbed until they were high and dry; and so, removing his footwear, he "packed" his friend through the oily ooze to the shore, where Eliza met them.)

Eliza had made no mistake. It was she, Jack's Lily Maid of Britain. He thought of her as the Lily Maid, although he had never read "Idyls of the King." And she might have hailed from Astolat or any other romantic hamlet in her English isle, for all he

knew or cared. In the exquisiteness of her appeal she was the Haydee of his riper youth, a patrician Haydee, imperious of homage in her dainty femininity, and he was all a-fevered to compass the ways of chivalry that would command her smile and the touch of her well-groomed white hands. He acknowledged no frailty of chin or of that pale profile against the Rembrandt velvet brim she wore. Frailty, in her, was delicacy. She seemed set apart from all the other girls in the Henry Clay Society — so lofty-cool sweet, so superior, so spirituelle compared with his rougher masculine clay. It was her complementing unlikeness to him, in whatsoever the unlikeness consisted, that made him lift worshiping eyes to her fairness, white woman of his own breed, clay of his clay, though clay sublimated.

Her brother had invited him to dinner. In her home he found no snobbery, no slanting glances at his well-worn ready-made suit that pulled into wrinkles across swelling muscle of shoulder and back — only helpfulness and a likable courtesy. They were real people, he decided, the sort he had dreamed about in his aspiring ideals. Before he had grown intimate enough to pit his mind against their minds, he betrayed some awkwardness, especially when it turned out that the daughter of the house was in the University. The experience began in pleased wonderment, for little did he credit any sense which might have whispered that he him-self was of closer-fibered integrity than she or her family, more subtly fine than any woman he had yet gazed upon or perhaps should ever meet, He adored her culture and herself who guided him so sympathetically to the books she loved, who opened for him sublime gates to a higher world of poetry and art. He was wrapped in a new gladsomeness of existence that kept him company while he dusted, swept, and scrubbed the big schoolhouse or beat germ-laden breadths of brussels and monstrously floral carpeting in obscure back yards.

When there showed weaknesses or thinnesses of quality he had glamored as almost virtues in her porcelain delicateness, he still brushed them lightly aside; they should not be estimated as faults, but rather components of a tem peramental daintiness — somewhat in the way certain tiny pellets and potions out of slender vials seemed part of her fragility. Why, maybe she was right — he was eager to grant when they had clashed, as clash they did — and he, from his mere clayness, coarsely in error. Thus he felt his tentative way into the labyrinths of culture, from the nice ties of table etiquette to a mental etiquette he presently hesitated to employ, sensing its restrictedness.

Meantime the Lily Maid's drawing room was his oasis of refinement where intellectual converse, or so it then appeared to him, with well-bred deportment was carried on in modulated tones. Here he laved his thirsting soul in the best poetry, and was at liberty to take away with him any book he wished. He fell deeply interested in the science of chess, playing with the Lily's brother, though he noticed it was hard to concentrate if his lady were near. She and he were as different as the poles and their very difference charged the atmosphere with sparks of living fire. She could not have told why she vibrated so thrillingly in the presence of this unconventional boy who was apt, in any moment of mental excitation, to throw to the winds the example set him of gentler conduct, and "talk with his hands," rumple wildly his adorable sun-gilded

curls and fling himself about all over the place. And only too often he was showing a tendency to flout with merry tongue and baffling, teasing eyes, her most cherished ikons that she had chiseled as changeless deities. But the sheer inexplicableness of his magnetic attraction preserved its charm, and she ceased from troubling to reason "about it and about," but gave herself true womanly to her due of the palpitant sweetness of loving, blushing herself warm with the secret and unmaidenly desire to lay her two hands about that muscular tanned neck which in its smooth round shortness was like a tender baby's, notwithstanding its power.

How distant glimmered the days and deeds of the old water-front and river life. Occasionally Jack ran into one or another of the men, and these could detect no alteration in his breezy comradeliness, although he confessed to having "cut out the booze, you fellows — water-wagon for me now — got too much to do; no, not even one!" For a year and a half on end, he never took a drink. Drink did not enter his mind. A different thirst had taken hold, a purely mental appetite. With his studies, janitor-duties, and "innocent amusements such as chess," he had no moment for unprofitable idiling in saloon society. Such was the passion of his exploration into the new world he had entered, that the former destructive one held no inducements even to trifle on its margin. In fact, the only public-house threshold he stepped across was that of The Last Chance, and this to solicit a loan from the ready friendliness of Johnny Heinold, against pay-day for janitor-work. Not a single drink did he take to "wet the transaction." Heinold was an understanding man; and the ringing gold eagle Jack borrowed on several occasions was the only article that passed across the reflecting polish of the bar into the hand of the resolute disciple of concentration upon large issues.

The dreams of his father and mother, that made them invest in irresponsible "securities," knew no abate as the years waxed. The money went somewhere — "God only knows where," Jack and Eliza would disclaim all comprehension. To the Lily Maid, referring to High School struggles, in 1898 Jack in a fit of despondency wrote:

"Do you know what I suffered during that High School and University period? The imps of hell would have wept had they been with me. Does any one know? Can any one know? Oh the hours I have eaten out my heart in bitterness! You say Duty? I fought it off for two long years without cessation, and I am glad. You knew me before those two years did they do me any good?"

Excess of application is an exhausting process, and Jack nearly broke beneath the load, added to the nerve-strain of inadequate sleep and financial cramp. At the end of a year he sat down by himself and mulled his progress and prospects. There were two full years of High School yet to go before he could be graduated into the first of four long years at college. Six years! — and he was close upon twenty. It couldn't be done. He must devise a short cut. An obvious drollery occurred to him — that fate should matriculate certain hare-brained, financially carefree and equally uncaring fellows into the university; while for himself, with a self-recognized serious future at stake, the way was made so difficult. But he wasted no time in repining, for he must be up and doing.

He had heard of a “cramming joint” over in Alameda, Anderson’s I think he said it was, that bridged the spread-out years of High School. Unfortunately, it was an expensive academy, and where was the money to come from for the advance fee? Eliza — but could she spare so much at one time? She had multifarious uses for the money she earned in partnership with her husband. He would find out. She did have the needed amount, and was glad he had come to her.

Jack bade farewell to his classmen and women who were going into Junior High School without him, and daily pedaled his wheel back and forth over the Webster Street bridge to Alameda, too introspective to grant more than a reminiscent glance to the passing show of the pictureful estuary he spanned.

He began in the senior class of this “prep” school, “scheduled to graduate right into the university at the end of four months, thus saving two years.” In other words, he had a third of a year in which to do the final two years work of High School. Night and day he crammed for five weeks. And then, out of a clear sky, a curious and hurtful blow fell. The reason was that his speed had become a matter of dissatisfaction in the classes, and it would raise a scandal for any preparatory establishment to permit a student to enter college who had annihilated two years learning in twelve weeks. The master of the academy said he was sorry to lose so splendid a pupil, but the universities were growing more severe in their accrediting of prep schools, and he had to consider the reputation of his own.

The shock to Jack was not dissimilar to that inflicted by the city visitor to the little old Alhambra at Livermore. But he was proud and angry now, and departed without a word. His face in such crisis, when recourse was out of the question, was masked with a baffling sweetness, a trifle pale, the pain so withdrawn behind quiet unflinching eyes that an onlooker was conscious of it only after he had passed from sight.

Eliza’s money was paid back intact, and the boy shut himself in the den, where without laboratories or coaching of any sort he dug and clawed with renewed ferocity into chemical formulas and simultaneous quadratic equations, so as to be ready for the entrance examinations at Berkeley. His vitality was taxed almost to bursting. His muscles twitched as once before they had nearly twitched into St. Vitus dance. Even those dependable sailor-eyes wavered and quivered and saw jumbled spots, but as always through life, he won out. Twelve weeks at nineteen hours a day, with rare moments off, he maintained the killing pace. Reviewing the period, he thought that he may have been a bit “dotty” toward the last, for he caught himself believing he had unearthed the formula for squaring the circle, though he would defer advertising the fact until he had passed the exams that were to put him inside the college portals. When the day of handing in his papers had come and gone, he collapsed with brain-fag, at least to a degree where he “didn’t want to see a book . . . or to think nor to lay eyes on anybody who was liable to think,” too utterly tired to be even interested in waiting to learn the report on his examination sheets.

The next he knew he was drifting upon a morning ebb in a loaned Whitehall boat, toward the great free medicine of that island sea beloved of all his years. Quintessential

seaman that he was, his ills fell from him when the clean white spritsail sphered in the outside breeze. I have had to ask about that canvas — whether it was a spritsail or a leg o'mutton. One friend who had sailed with him, tells me either canvas is used in a Whitehall, but adds: "Jack always liked a spritsail." So much for the seaman who may read.

The first of the flood up the main bay set him fairly on his course into the San Pablo waters, where Carquinez Straits were ripping against the incoming tide; and now the released burner of daylight and candle-wick sang hail and good-by to this and that reminding landmark, left astern in his white flight. The sea was up and the wind was whistling and he would keep right on across Suisun Bay and up the San Joaquin. Nothing could stop him except a drop in the wind in league with turn of tide when he could anchor or tie up to the river-edge tules, songful with blackbirds.

As Benicia grew larger on the port bow, he got to thinking of Young Scratch and his dreadful death that in this very town had stretched out the giant shoulders for the last sleep. He wondered were any of the old Patrol crowd there now. It seemed as if he had been upon another planet a weary space in eternity, and had heard no tidings of the good comrades of other aeons. What was the matter with stopping off for an hour or two and hunting them up? The wind showed no sign of easing, and he could resume the drive and surge through the smoking combers he wotted of in Suisun Bay. And what he needed was an old-fashioned glass of whiskey. For once it would do him nothing but good to invite a mild jingle — you know, just to let down tension after that awful overdraft of study he wanted to forget. Besides, he was close to twenty now, and not an infant blind to consequences.

By the time he had opened the bight of Turner's Ship yard, the notion of the drink had intensified into a real desire — the first instance of such in his not unbibulous youth. As his Whitehall rounded the old Solano's long wharf, he grinned at the recollection of his suicidal death-chant on that inebriate midnight in the not so long ago, and surged along abreast of the patch of tules and the clustering fishermen's arks" where he had cronied and reveled deep with the bunch. Lord! Lord! what a lot he had seen and done since then. How could any man work always at one job?

He sailed in, made fast, and poked about among the arks. Good it was to find them there, all the survivors of the "old guard," and gladdest of all to welcome him, Charley Le Grant himself, who positively embraced his old friend, assisted by a capacious and motherly wife. And when Charley hit across the railroad tracks for Jorgenson's Saloon of dizzy memory, Jack yelled gaily after, "No beer for me this time, Kid! Whiskey's my tea for this afternoon!"

Quite deliberately, with purpose throughout, Jack proceeded on a thoroughgoing "jag," drinking every treat and his own treats in return. Many old acquaintances dropped in, among them Clem, once partner of Young Nel-son of the unreefed Reindeer, and Jack listened, weeping, in the too-sudden slackening of his nerve-cords, to the tragic account of the violent passing of his Berserker friend. There were sorry tales of other friends who had passed or even worse. "Nearly all my oyster-pirate comrades

are long since hanged, shot, drowned, killed by disease, or are spending their declining years in prison," he once pointed what he insisted was his own good luck in escaping disaster.

While Jack held high jubilee with the old "push," Charley went out and worked hard shifting the Whitehall outfit into a roomy Columbia River salmon boat that was a boat, and stretched boom and sprit scandalously for such a breezy day; but Le Grant knew his friend could sail as long as he could see. No urging succeeded in staying the migrating bird over night, not within hearing of the clash and slash of the upstanding seas of that fierce strait-confined run-out which hurled against the brave west wind now filling his ears with its shouting. And this time the receding tule-marsh echoed to a different music from his funeral song of years gone, as now he voiced unmeasured disdain for the bitted elements and all books and institutions of learning. Together with maudlin spoutings on higher mathematics, economics, philosophy and art, he rendered such airs of his riotous, swashbuckling memories as "Black Lulu," "I Wisht I was a Little Bird, Little Bird," and a dozen more, including a rare medley of sea chanteys.

Much fun he had in later years, attempting the old ditties for my benefit, two fingers to his temple, or vertically on his scalp-lock — a little mannerism when cudgeling memory under embarrassment. The verse which came easiest was something as follows:

"O treat my daughter kind-i-ly,

And keep her safe from harm;

And I will leave you

My house, my farm, and-all-the-little

chickens in the gar-den." The pulse of his life roared like a gale in the rigging. He nearly sailed the salmon boat under in his renewed enthusiasm of battling with wave and wind. When at even tide, sobered with the beauty of the lagoon-like river delta and the velvet rose and fawn of the Montezuma Hills across a pearl-gray flood, he laid alongside a friendly potato sloop at Antioch, above Black Diamond, he was kneedeep in sloshing, washing brine. And his was a glorious sharp appetite for black bass fried in olive oil, meaty stew redolent of fresh garlic, and crusty Italian loaf that taxed his precious "front plate" near to cracking. Aboard the sloop, in a dry bunk that was pressed upon him, he and the boys "lay and smoked and yarned of old days, while overhead the wind screamed through the rigging and taut halyards drummed against the mast.

With his unexcelled resiliency of brain and body tissue, a week of cruising in the staunch salmon boat restored him to where the fearful toll he had exacted of himself for a score of months was as if it had never been, or so it seemed. Who is to prove that super-normal effort does not weaken the whole structure of a growing lad?

That one revel he had permitted himself was the last; but the determination to keep it so cost him much in that he must avoid looking up any more old chums. That was the perfect hell of sobriety — just the live, "breedy, chesty" men one wanted to mingle with as a tonic for brain-fag were the ones with whom it was necessary to

practise this injurious custom. So he held, all his student days, to an almost puritanical abstemiousness, through expediency coupled with want of desire when among people who were strangers to alcohol.

At the University of California

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XIV 1896-7

AND here he was, in the fall of 1896, after all his struggling, two years ahead of his High School classmates, at last "a college man," fellow to the Lily Maid's brother, and James Hopper, and a Henry Clay Club friend, Fred Jacobs, with others he had known previously, albeit they were Juniors and he but a verdant "Freshie." High time, too, for in January he would be twenty-one, though to save his soul he could not figure how the four years were to be managed on the slim and uncertain income he had little leisure to pick up outside of study and lecture and reading hours. But he was a-thrill with having won to a paramount desire. It was worth all the striving and scrimping.

James Hopper, '98, and Jack met one day on the Campus, for the first time, knowingly, since they had played marbles, and scrapped together in the Cole Grammar. Mr. Hopper's notes on the meeting, written the day after his friend's death, compose one of the most sympathetic pictures I know upon the radiant subject; and from them I draw a few lights:

He possessed already then a certain vague reputation among us boys as one who had done man things and wild things and romantic things. . . . His latest exploit that of passing the University entrance examinations after three months vigorous cramming while stoking the furnace of the Oakland High School — was in many mouths. His already was a colorful personality, and when the boy who had been telling me about him said suddenly: 'There he is, see? Coming down the steps,' I moved up and braced him.

"But — but — well, I hate to say it. Perhaps if I explain carefully people will understand. You see, he was a newly-entered freshman . . . and I was a full-fledged junior, and on the football team and editor of the Occident, also holding a well-defined place in a very regular organization a bit of a bourgeois prig, in fact. So that when I went to Jack London, I did so — God forgive me — thinking consciously how nice and democratic this was of me!

"If he felt my condescension — and he must have, for under his sturdiness ran a fine net of fine nerves — he did not show it. I may say right here that the dominating quality of Jack London's character was bigness. 'Attend to the big things and let the little things go' — if he ever made for himself a motto it must have been that. He let the little things go that time, and met my advance with an open frankness that was like a flood of sunshine.

"Sunshine — the word leaps of itself to the end of my pen. . . . He had a curly mop of hair which seemed spun of its gold; his strong neck, with a loose, low, soft shirt,

was bronzed with it; and his eyes were like a sunlit sea. His clothes were flappy and careless; the forecastle had left a suspicion of a roll in his broad shoulders;" — and here Mr. Hopper appreciates the notable beauty of the man: "he was a strange combination of Scandinavian sailor and Greek god, made altogether boyish and lovable by the lack of two front teeth, lost cheerfully somewhere in a fight."

As for Jack's irrepressible enthusiasm: "He was full of gigantic plans — just as, indeed, I was to find him always whenever I came upon him later in life. . . . He was going to take all the courses in English, all of them, nothing less. Also, of course, he meant to take most of the courses in the natural sciences, many in history, and bite a respectable chunk out of the philosophies.

"And as he unfolded his intentions to me, there in the sun in front of North Hall, radiating himself at least as much light and warmth as the sun, I, all of twenty years old and hence disillusioned, frozen (lightly frozen) in a gentle pessimism, polished with a worldly skepticism, I listened to him and smiled, and tried to make my smile just a bit ironical and withal kindly. You see, I had taken some of the courses of which he was going to take all, and I found there — well, not all I had sought. Three or four times I came near telling him that. But his enthusiasm was so in trepid, so young and touching, so pure and vibrant — that I didn't have the heart."

Jack concentrated especially upon the English branches and biological sciences, and took other things by the way, one of them French; but I retain the impression from a reference he made to me that for some reason he did not continue long with the latter "extra." Probably, in the super-urgency of his state, he weeded it as a non-essential if graceful perquisite toward the English literature he felt he was to father into being. In fact, he never seems to have laid stress upon the value of etymological intricacies. Rather the reverse, it strikes me, as I recall uncompromising utterances on the wisdom of eliminating Latin and Greek and Sanskrit and what not, made to his own offspring and to other youth of both sexes who flocked in quest of advice for the shortest cut to a career of letters. This is the more surprising because of his strong predisposition toward investigating basic components of whatsoever interested him — from subduing to saddle or harness an incorrigible "outlaw," to overcoming on the high sea loftier mathematics of navigation seldom disturbed from musty repose by professional masters, or in possessing himself of the colorful why and wherefore of opals bought in the Antipodes for his wife.

For all it had absorbed, his brain was as a perpetual dry sponge — impossible of saturation in its myriad folds. The instruction he sat under, far from appeasing, impelled him to the library, where he read volume after volume, each leading indefinitely on to other volumes over and above recommended collateral reading. "I can do the work quicker than they can teach me, he once put into the mouth of an autobiographical character; and I have heard him seriously hold forth that the method and content of university education were of slight benefit to him. This estimate and library cramming were the chiefest bestowments of the university upon his particular ego. His abiding belief was that he could have done as well without those months of attendance. To be

sure, he did not always try to discourage others from seeking their training in this way; but in his own case he claimed he had "succeeded in spite of it, rather than because of it," what of the to him untenable formalizing process upon "the wheel of university subservience to the ruling class," as he wrote his daughter. And of course he came to respect Experience as the Teacher of Teachers.

The following exploit has been told, as instance of Jack's clear-headedness and daring: The college advertised for a steeplejack to furbish up the flagpole which stood midcenter of the campus. Weeks elapsed, and none volunteered. Then, one morning, students on the way to early classes were amazed to behold their curly-headed freshman slowly working his way earthward from the lofty golden ball, meanwhile plying a paintbrush dipped in the pail on his left arm. He had grown impatient at the sight of the weather-soiled eyesore on his campus, and with the breed of youth that had not learned to "shinny" heights. There was a norther blowing, but his experience as sailor made the work real play — it felt good to wrap his long-unaccustomed legs about the swaying land-mast that had once been a storm-swept living pine, like the sturdy stick of the Sophie Sutherland, and to feel the high breeze humming through his hair. When the thing was done to his taste, he rolled his paint-soaked overalls in a bundle, and unlimbered his cramped legs quick-stepping to classrooms.

In the month of his twenty-first birthday, the first half of the freshman year at his back, despite the growing if grudged apprehension that college was not yielding quite all he had hoped of it, Jack went about preparation for the second term. And if it had not been that he was unable to spare enough time from study to coin the where withal for a living, he would doubtless have seen through at least the one year of university work before finally discarding it as to him a telic non-essential.

Hunched over the inky, ashy table in his den, with might and main he cut loose and embarked upon the career of fiction he had chosen. I have heard him laugh to recall the madness of desire to arrive at a style that would serve his ends. "Never was there such a creative fever as mine from which the patient escaped fatal results. . . . I wrote everything — ponderous essays, scientific and sociological, short stories, humorous verse," — and all other metrical and irregular poetic matter from triolet to lugubrious blank verse and "elephantine epic in Spenserian stanza." Steadily day by day he composed at the rate of fifteen hours out of the twenty-four.

During these weeks of nerve-wracking application, in his brief family contacts Jack was about as soothing a house-mate as a ruffled porcupine, and irascible at the racket of his sister Ida's two-year-old boy, whom Flora was tending for a consideration while its mother, now separated from her husband, went out to work. But at last, neat sheaves of manuscript were mailed with importance by the expectant author to eastern editors, who made use of Jack's return stamps with a celerity that modified his hot confidence to a not uncheerful hope. Not one single line of all the output of devoted days and nights elicted one single line of approbation from the stony-hearted men who, tilted in swivel chairs back in New York, Boston, and Philadel-phia, controlled the food supply of literary aspirants. It was incredible. He wondered what an editor really was like.

He had never seen one and felt a colossal awe that was in inverse ratio to the regard with which only too soon he began to favor the phenomena of their own disappointed intellects.

Almost his only recreation was an occasional game of chess at the Lily Maid's house. Although he continued resolutely to pluck his deportment and tongue of roughnesses in her presence, he could not be "good" all the time, and out of immediate earshot relaxed vigilance. For example, one afternoon, he was deep in a game with her brother in the garden. Oversure, Jack suddenly realized as the other quietly reached for the next move, that he had tripped in his calculation, and faced disaster. Tipping back in his chair, he coolly and dispassionately gave unhurried vent to a selection of eight words, choice, succinct, most unsaintliest of his unsaintly sea-and-road expletive.

As the last syllable issued close-clipped but deliberate from betwixt his teeth, a horrible certainty overtook him that the two men of them were not alone. A queer smother ing look spread upon his opponent's face, in which embarrassment struggled with mirth. Then all doubt vanished as a stray zephyr from behind Jack wafted a wisp of white mull within eye-tail vision. Let us drop the curtain as the balancing front-legs of his chair come slowly to the grass.

What really hurt most, though, in this blank failure of immediate victory over grateful magazine staffs, was the associated failure to shower upon his father the shining gold returns; for he had allowed this beloved and patient friend of all his singular fortunes to feed him, which had been done with a willingness that John could ill afford, and in natural expectation of the needed reimbursement.

One ray of light that always struck athwart Jack's darkest hours, was his father's quiet, persistent faith in him. "Don't you worry about Jack, mama," he would say to his wife. "He'll win out, I tell you — he was built to win, and nothing can stop him from winning, nothing at all," firmly he met Jack's own dependence upon his ability to pull through in the big way.

At first appalled by untempered condemnation from every invaded sanctum on the Atlantic coast, coldly expressed by prompt rejection slips, the author then reëxamined his prolific pages. This was not done alone in appraisal of their quaint appearance resulting from his brother-in-law's old "boiler factory" that typed only in capital letters, but from the severest critical standpoint of rhetorical construction; and finally, and what should be of gravest importance, thought and subject matter that would be acceptable to panderers of a misguided public. He could not help laughing at the first consideration — the unrelieved capitals were weird enough to put the most amiable editor in panic fear of losing his eyes and reason. As for the other two, Jack suddenly came to see a lengthening road of endeavor to be traversed ere he could hope to command attention. He thought of the easy money earned from that prize-story in the San Francisco Call, but realized that he had won out then by an unvarnished narrative of events eye-witnessed; whereas, in his present difficulty, he had tried to be erudite, to infuse his own subjective processes, without sufficient preparation. He was fair and modest enough to feel shame that he had ever had the nerve to try putting over such

amateurish practice-stuff upon men old in the game. He would not again be so hasty in his judgment of them.

On the other hand, no acknowledged rawness could shake a divine trust in himself, for he knew his thinking and his writing were not all worthless. He refused to be discouraged. Success was merely delayed for further preparation, and he went about it, reading and studying mightily. But all too soon there was no blinking that things could not go on this way. John London, while uncomplaining, was not well — that war-ravaged lung gave increasing trouble; and the mother was oppressed by temperamental foreboding. Jack surrendered to pressure of necessity and innate affection, and capitulated to manual labor, little as he favored it since he had harnessed his wagon to a star. He must eventually make his brain pay, and pay well. Others did it; he must and would do it. Therefore it was an aching distress to waste precious, fleeting time for the small wages to be gleaned by bodily strain — all for the want of a few niggardly dollars that the predatory rich could so easily spare and never miss. Notwithstanding, he asked no alms of them. Fair field and no favor for him no — matter how unfair he esteemed the race to be.

A young man of his acquaintance, an expert launderer who needed an assistant, opened the way to a job in the country — oddly enough, down on the "Peninsula," not many miles from the old San Mateo County ranch. This unfamiliar work was in the model steam laundry of a military school — Belmont Academy; and for "long sizzling weeks," all day and part of many a night of rest for all the institution except these two, Jack sweated as laundryman for the munificent sum of thirty dollars per month. Just the same, it was a sort of vicarious pleasure to work hard, when the prize hung high, at even so uncongenial a shift as cleansing other people's dirty linen. Indeed, for all that his ideal of university value had been partially undermined, it was of the laundry experience that he wrote: "This was the only time that I worked because I loved it," in view of continuing at college. When he should have earned enough money to go on, he would have to shorten time in making up what he had lost by enforced absence from the classes of 1900.

As summer came on, the space in eternity consumed ironing the white ducks of the students nearly broke him body and spirit. So heavy was the work that even the up-to-date appointments of the laundry and the combined expertness of the two boys in cutting out waste motion scarce made possible the handling of it. "What I don't know about mangling, and handwork, bluing and 'fancy starch' — which was what we called the faculty's wives' thin waists and fine embroidered and lace-trimmed linen — would make you weep," Jack told me; "and so help me God, no circumstances could ever make me touch an iron again if I died for it! The only ray of fun we two sweating fools got out of the whole brutal toil was a silly vengeance we took on all creatures of unearned luxury. This was by starching stiff the dainty linen of the women — and of course the comicalest appeal of the naughty prank was that we could securely depend upon their hide-bound conventional modesties to seal their lips from complaint against us. Lord,

Lord, when I think of the boards we made of those garments . . . " he exploded into a wicked giggle.

The worst of this work-orgy, as with former harmful outlay of strength for an insufficient living-wage, was that no snap was left in him to respond to the trunkful of books he had begged and borrowed, and which formed his main luggage. By the deferred bedtime he was so played out that try as he might his eyelids would not stay propped open. He would drop asleep from exhaustion, cigarette on relaxed lips, until some profound falling sensation, or singeing forelock or insistence of the electric light burning through closed lids, jumped him awake. Then he bestirred to fasten again upon the blurring print, and repeated the performance of falling unconscious a couple of times — habit of long-enforced concentration — until finally, with a swearing sigh, he laid down the futile volume, turned off the irritating bulb, plumped into the air with the loosened covers wrapped about him, and sank into dream-driven slumber which was interrupted for the new day's steaming task that began under artificial lighting.

He gave over trying to cram the heavier subjects — biology, jurisprudence, political economy — and substituted history as lighter and more arresting to a drowning attentiveness he could not fix. No use — he would just read the novels; they would hold him awake longer and at the same time guide to what was expected of an author in the manufacture of fiction. This method failing, in blue disgust he threw the books back into the trunk. I know the deep dented "picture corners " of his mouth that sagged with a pathos he could not hide from his own soul and the smolder of hurt and disillusion that darkened the depths of his tired eyes. Why were things made so difficult for a fellow who really wanted to get ahead?

Damn it all! It was the same old fight over again — the slippery rock wall that reared before a man who submitted everlastingly to manual labor. It was a long time since he had coal-shoveled himself into a state of cool irresponsibility on the Road. Meanwhile money and time had been spent upon equipping himself for a profession . . . but now look at him! — once more a stupid human animal bound to longer hours than any horse, too wearied to exert his superior intelligence for compensations much above those of the horse.

But he was no quitter. His time would come. Better and better socialist all this made him. And there should be no more vagabondage, he thought, though the rosy hands of adventure waved temptingly toward the wide free highway that he knew slanted ever downward. He must stick it out, earn enough to tide over another period of writing-practice and digging which would fit him to produce that which should make editors sit up and take notice.

Then one day it occurred to him that no alleged perfection of labor-saving apparatus but could be questioned and improved upon. Here was tonic for one's inventive ideas that might lighten the back-breaking, torrid afternoons of ironing or running articles through the revolving mangle. I wish I had made notes at the time he explained to me his device to relieve some of the more arduous laun-dry tasks. It was so simple he laughed to think he had not sooner happened upon it. When attached to whatever

mechanism it was intended to control, he could regulate it by one foot from the chair where he rested and read, with an occasional eye to the accelerated progress of work theretofore done by hand.

A tyrannical ancestor of my own, no shirker himself and a rabid dissuader of leisure for others, whenever a child of his made bid for praise in the quick accomplishment of a set duty, would sardonically grin: "Well, that's fine, now; and I guess, since you're so smart in saving time, you can do about twice as much to-morrow in the time saved."

Which is by way of illustrating how Jack lost his place, or at least declined to lapse into time-squandering methods. Vaguely I recall his intimating that his superior in the laundry, though rendering a grudged appreciation of the invention, got word of it to whosoever had upper charge of the department, but who seldom meddled so long as there was no complaint about the work turned out.

Either Jack was "fired," or else his logic was too outraged by the demand that he forego this progressive social contribution to mechanics. At any rate, incontinently he left, rode his neglected "bike" to San Jose before wheeling northward for Oakland, and in a large bottle drank confusion to all sightless subservience to stupid custom. The bottle furnished a relaxation that was indulged in by choice — as others take drugs for their ills — before he should bury himself in another sober stretch of hard graft whatever it be. He acknowledged no harmfulness in this day's mellow forgetting, alone under a grand old oak in a pasture with the China-blue valley sky over-arching, where he was not even setting an example to weaker brethren. And of course he did not for a moment reckon with any insidious foe that might lurk behind this unusual desire to recuperate in solitude. He hated to think what that bottle had cost; but a man must "pay for his fancies," and he had denied himself fancies of all sorts for a long, long time. Indeed, that altogether delightful, comradely jingle in Charley's ark was the sole instance when he had punished the booze since he could clearly remember.

He scorched up to Oakland, and dug himself once more into the den, writing furiously.

Into Klondike

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XV 1897 — 21st Year

IF Jack London's roving feet had failed to be drawn into the Klondike stampede of 1897, his future audiences would have ceased not from asking why. But of course he could not fail of response to the lure of this golden adventure — accent on adventure. With all the naïveté of previous self-justifications when yielding to his passion for boating, the material treasure-trove in itself formed but an adjunct that made all at ease with his conscience.

It was Klondike or bust. But how, how, HOW? — he beat at the obstacle poverty. The steamer Umatilla, of recent memory, carrying the great jam of mad gold-seekers, was to sail in four days on the irresistible tide of the enterprise. Klondike or bust —

oh, he would somehow get to go; but there was not a cent in sight for grub and gear, and his practical sense warned of meager welcome for the unprepared in the bleak Northland.

Two days moved swiftly by, while he hustled about Oakland to find some one reckless enough to grubstake him into the Arctic. He even called upon Joaquin Miller; — blockhead! why hadn't it occurred to him sooner! There was a man, a true sport who would understand. Would he! He had understood so well that when Jack reached the door, the Sweet Singer of the Sierras had already pulled out on his own hook "The son of a gun!" Jack ruefully appreciated.

As the hours lessened, he grew reckless; he would depend upon strength and luck, and chance the thing, outfit or no outfit. Unavoidably, he had thought of his sister; but this was an expensive undertaking, and she had done much for him of late without his having proved he could make good. For once he could not bring himself further to burden her.

Yet it was from her household that help emanated, although from an unanticipated member. Jack was stricken dumb when his brother-in-law fell as sudden and hopeless — or hopeful — victim to the gold-fever as any youngster in his unlicked teens, boldly announcing his own intention of Klondike or bust. He furthermore declared that if Jack would trade the benefit of his youth and experience and see him through, he should be grubstaked in partnership. Jack, with shrewd judgment born of bedding with hardship by land and sea, was markedly unenthusiastic in view of the slender and ailing veteran's age and other disqualifications. Still, he was up against a disappointment he could not brook; it was Klondike or bust, and he could ill balk at such last-moment opportunity. Upon the instant he decided, as was his habit in crises.

The elder man's generosity of a grubstake consisted in sinking his own earnings of the firm of Shepard & Company, along with his wife-partner's in addition to the hundreds she promptly realized by mortgaging the home, which was her own. Then, having bowed her sensible head to the impregnable fusion of their juvenile insanity — "both as crazy as loons, one no worse than the other!" — she abetted with might and main. Since they were minded to make idiots of themselves, they should have the best outfit that could be purchased with money; moreover, she would shop with them to see that it was complete in every detail. And the following year her brother was able happily to assure her that nothing to beat it went over Chilcoot that fall of 1897.

Jack shot back across Lake Merritt bridge on his wheel, to start rustling the books he would not sail without, Eliza and her husband to meet him in town a little later. On the way, Captain Shepard's senile excitement precipitated a heart-attack that brought on a deadly faint. The conductor of the street car helped Eliza lay him on a lawn, and some passer-by ran for a doctor, who ordered the patient to bed for two weeks. But next morning he was up and away to San Francisco, with his wife and Jack on either side supporting him through a shopping tour that revived all their spirits.

Such a buying jamboree Jack had never enjoyed. Eliza's hundreds flowed like water: fur-lined coats, fur caps, heavy high boots, thick mittens; and red-flannel shirts and

underdrawers of the warmest quality — so warm that Jack had to shed his outer garments packing over Chilcoot Pass, and blossom against the snow a scarlet admiration to Indian and squaw. The brace of gold-seekers agreed upon the advisability of raw materials for the construction of dog-sleds — runners, thongs, and tools. The average outfit of the Klondiker also must include a year's supply of grub, mining implements, tents, blankets, "Klondike stoves," everything requisite to maintain life, build boats and cabins. Jack's dunnage alone weighed nearly 2,000 pounds.

I have no way of knowing how the Lily Maid regarded this latest goose-chase of her strange swain who refused to forfeit the independence of his soul for sweet love or pity or any other meek consideration. There is no record of protest; but if her mother's letter to Jack is any criterion of the girl's opinion, it shows the reverse of a high estimate of his wisdom. I cannot refrain from quoting the cheerful document and she called him John:

"July 22nd, 1897.

"Dear John:

"We have just received your letter with the awful news that you are about to start for Alaska. Oh, dear John, do be persuaded to give up the idea for we feel certain that you are going to meet your death and we shall never see you again. What your object can be in going we cannot even think, but we feel as though we should never see you again. John, do give up the thought for you will never come back again, never. Your Father and Mother must be nearly crazed over it. Now, even at the eleventh hour, dear John, do change your mind and stay. With lots of love to all and hoping to hear better news, I remain, your sincere friend."

The day following the buying orgy, July 25, 1897, two hours late because of the heavy traffic, the Umatilla carried the ill-assorted pair away through the Golden Gate and set her northwesterly course. Aside from a feeble and vaporing "sidekicker," there was but one drawback to Jack's perfection of bliss — his father's condition, which was very poorly. He had lain for weeks in what proved his death bed several months later. With unshed tears in the patient gray eyes, he had even begged Jack to take him along; he could go into Alaska on a sled as well as not — "Why, if you could only get me up there in the snows, Jack, I'd get strong right off." And Jack with a sob in his voice cried to Eliza: "God! — if I could only take him!"

They never saw each other again, those two good pals. By the first mail in after the spring thaw of '98, word came to Jack of John London's death on October 15, and how to the last he had hoped that he might be spared to see Jack come home triumphant from the gold-fields. Faith in his boy still burned with unwavering flame. "He'll come out all right, you watch his smoke," he would beam with quiet surety upon doubters; "and come out big, mark my words." After Jack had gone North, his father foretold not once but many times, "Jack is going to make a success out of the Klondike — whether he digs it out of the grassroots or not."

Only in the last fortnight did his mind blur to a hallucination. Before that he bravely held to it that he would soon be up and about. But later on he would beg Eliza to sit

the first-night spell with him, since he could depend upon her unsleeping help in that nightly tug-of-war with the man at the other end of the stick. If he could fall to sleep by one o'clock, before she went home, the danger would be over the man could not get him, and he could live through till morning; anyway, till Jack came home.

Captain Shepard, after one good stare at Chilcoot Pass, had turned his back on all such rigors, leaving his stuff for Jack to dispose of. Much improved from the vacation, he arrived in Oakland shortly before the death of his wife's father, and resumed his part in the pension-claim work, which during his absence Eliza had borne. And now, out of her own earnings, she paid the bills of her father's funeral.

At Port Townsend, the Umatilla's hordes had been transferred to the steamer City of Topeka, which arrived at Juneau on August 2. Forty-two miles farther northwest, they reached the end of their crowded voyage and stretched themselves on the beach at the Indian village of Dyea, a mere cluster of huts above the reach of high tide on the Chilkoot Inlet of Lynn Canal. The party — now swelled to five, for Jack and Captain Shepard had formed a partner ship with Fred Thompson, "Jim" Goodman, and one Merritt Sloper — found the beach a shouting bedlam of goldrushers amid an apparently inextricable dump of ten thousand tons of luggage. Many of the arrivals were like lunatics, fully as responsible as newly headless fowl in this scramble into an unpitying frozen land. (It was in this same Lynn Canal, in 1918, that the steamer Princess Sophia foundered, with the loss of all on board — miners and their families coming south for the winter.)

Although a-tingle with his own excitement, a large share of which was from the stirring spectacle on the beach, Jack's level head had counseled speedy withdrawal of himself and his elderly charge from the mass of humans that appeared to be falling over one another. With open eye and ear to every hint from the knowing ones, he applied his faculties to getting hold of the outfit and pushing onward toward the Chilkoot trail. The more he listened, the better he realized that there was no moment to lose if they were not to be left behind all winter in the impending freeze-up. Only the most alert and fittest could obviate such unthinkable misfortune. How his sister's husband could make it through was the question. Not unnaturally the young man was in terror of losing his own chance through the other's insufficiency.

But that night they slept on the Flats five miles above Dyea, at the head of canoe navigation where the Dyea River narrows to a torrent bursting from a snowy canyon, fed by far glaciers. For once Jack was willing to own that he was dead tired. Captain Shepard, of course, was of negligible worth as a draft partner, and Jack, soft from the inactivity of long days on shipboard, ached in every muscle and in his scarified shoulders, from towing their thousands of pounds of belongings up-stream.

Every one had been confident, from reports, that the loading up-trail would be done by Indians for sums within reason. Imagine the chagrin, consternation to many, when the Indians, awake to their own idea of a gold-rush, imperturbably demanded thirty cents a pound shoulder-portage for the twenty-eight miles between Dyea Beach, across the Pass to Lake Linderman. Six hundred dollars a ton! Beaten at the outset, vast

numbers of the cruelly chilled enthusiasts watched the few physically equipped, born to victory, attack the first stage to Happy Camp. Sheep Camp, some miles upward, was the next stop; thence on, scaling the whole of Chilkoot s tragic trail, along whose margin the weaker ones fell and expired. One sour-dough assures me Chilkoot is "the worst trail this side of hell."

It was one of the happiest moments of Jack's life when Captain Shepard of free choice abandoned the venture, and the two parted in good feeling. Now he was quit of encumbrance other than the deadweight of luggage. He has told me how he experimented with adding to and shift-ing his pack, readjusting straps, and padding the raw sections of his strong but tender-skinned back and shoulders until he outpacked in honest pounds any white man who made it through to Lake Linderman, and surpassed many an Indian. Indeed, such feat was a boon to the men who could afford Indian assistance to the summit, as could Fred Thompson; for Jack's example put the sly aborigines on their mettle not to be outdone by this puffing, steaming, white human engine in scarlet flannels. I give his own version.:

"This last pack into Linderman was three miles. I back-tripped it four times a day, and on each forward trip carried one hundred and fifty pounds. This means that over the worst trails I daily traveled twenty-four miles, twelve of which were under a burden of one hundred and fifty pounds."

The men had to ford swift and icy rivers, and a swamp that some sardonic wit had yclept Pleasant Valley, where the weight of a pack would drive one to the knees in freezing ooze and muck. The earlier stretches of the trail ascended a long mountain slope largely covered with tundra, which did not afford solid footing. This was superseded by sharp and broken shale. Beaching "The Scales," at the actual foot of the steepest aspect of a mountain wall which looked to topple over backward, Jack found himself preparing for the most grinding test of endurance. For sheer as was the terrific rise, it was yet not sheer enough to prevent huge boulders from finding lodgment in the path, which formed serious obstacles. "A man's job" it was, and Jack London could do no other than make good as a real man among real men.

Of all the anecdotes of this bitter climb that he told in my hearing, only one stands out — the incident of a man bearing a great load, who, in sitting down upon a fallen tree to catch breath, had been overweighted and fallen backward, head and shoulders deep in the snow so that he could make no outcry. Jack, plodding painfully upward, happened to glance aside to where his keen eyes saw a pair of feet above the log. In curiosity he turned and backed up to the log where carefully, slowly, lest he be outbalanced, he rested his pack and freed arms and chest of the straps. Then he plucked the victim, red and spluttering with gratitude, out of his unprogressive posture which, though comical, was of extreme danger; for it was by merest chance that any heavily-laden miner, bent only upon topping Chilkoot's rise, should have spied his snow-crusted boot-soles.

At the summit, the young men faced a fierce driving rain, then negotiated a glacier that descended to Crater Lake; after which a chain of small lakes compelled detours

over rugged hills, or the hiring of boats, of which they availed themselves. The last lake, however, before reaching Linderman, was shallow alongshore and could be waded, soft deep mud on the bottom adding to the difficulties of travel. Little marvel that Jack London ever afterward eschewed protracted walking. (I think it was Frederick Palmer, writing of the hardships of soldiers on the Flanders front, who said that one who had crossed Chilkoot in the fall of 1897 would have a fairly comprehensive idea of what the Tommies were up against.)

Eight or nine miles up-river from Lake Linderman, where the timber was good, the boys whipsawed their own lumber and in company with another party constructed two boats, Yukon Belle and Belle of the Yukon. In this capacity Jack and Sloper were in their element, for the latter knew ship-carpentering and building from keel to main-truck. It became the pride of the owners that never were their well-stored cargoes of supplies removed, though they shot every rapid on the perilous route. Jack, ready shoulder-to shoulder in any sort of emergency, was yet especially in valuable when aqueous portions of the way were encountered. He loved to tell the story of how he navigated the infamous Box Canyon and White Horse Rapids, that sank and drowned crew after crew of doomed men.

By unabating zeal the boys kept just ahead of the for bidding freeze-up that set a bar of iron to the progress of the less forehanded. Lakes froze on their flying heels, so slim was the margin. Jack learned what it meant to pit one's raging impotence against the imperturbability of nature. Never a waking moment did they lose, and allowed no more time for sleep than was absolutely required. At the head of Lake Bennett, news from before was of famine, and that the Northwest Mounted Police stationed at the foot of Lake Marsh, where the gold-hunters entered Canadian territory, refused to let past any man not fortified with seven hundred pounds of grub. The rest were sent down river and interned at Dawson.

Their sternest battle was across Lake Le Barge, the freeze-up of which threatened in the gale. Three days they had been thrown back by cresting seas that fell aboard in tinkling ice. On the fourth Jack said: "To-day we've got to make it — or we camp here all winter with the others." They almost died at the oars, but "died to live again" and fight on. All night, like driven automatons they pulled, and at daybreak entered the river, with behind them a fast-frozen lake. And their pilot, from what I know of him, I can swear did not realize half his weariness, so elated must he have been to be thus forward — one of the very few who had made it through.

Undaunted, without wasting precious minutes in discussion, the trio pushed on as one man. The blizzard luckily moved into the south, and they ran before it under a huge sail Jack had devised. With the heavy ballast of outfit, he dared to crack on sail Nelson-fashion when moments so counted. Luck was with him when they came to Caribou Crossing, for a shift of wind at the right time sent them humming down the connecting link between Lakes Taggish and Marsh. Nothing could stop them, and Jack, his experienced mittened hands nearly frozen to the tiller he had rigged, held on in high fettle across the menacing Windy Arm, where in a stormy twilight he saw

two other boat-loads of men turn over and miserably perish. It was sickening to be unable to lend a hand; but the very law of life in this inimical cold-crystal sphere of the Northland was to keep one's head in just such temptation. And three other souls beside his own depended entirely upon his sailor competence.

Sixty Mile River, really a head reach of the Yukon, flows out of Lake Marsh, its greatest breadth a quarter of a mile. Deep and swift, it suddenly narrows with a curve into Box Canyon, only eighty feet in width, rocky walls towering on either side. The suddenly confined volume of water gathers terrific speed, marked by great boilings and stiffly upthrust waves, and its action against the canyon walls causes the water to rise in a sort of hog-back in the center.

It was owing to a blinding headache, for liquor had been cut out of his calculations except for medicinal use, that Jack had accepted a drink of whiskey before undertaking to shoot the bad water. Tying their boat, Yukon Belle, in the eddy above the Box, the four partners walked ahead to investigate, meanwhile consulting a book written by Miner W. Bruce, Alaskan pioneer. They discovered that hundreds were portaging outfits on their backs. "Nothing doing," Jack scorned. If he took the chance and ran through by water, in two minutes they would save two days of severest toil. According to their custom, a vote was called, which was unanimous for the two-minute route. Jack, as captain, placed Merritt Sloper in the bow with a paddle. Fred Thompson and Jim Goodman, confessed landlubbers, sat side by side amidship at the oars. The boat, twenty-seven feet in length, carrying over 5000 pounds in addition to its human freight, did not possess the buoyancy desirable for such an undertaking.

Jack's head whirled from the unwonted alcohol upon an empty stomach, and he caught himself wondering if that head would serve in his need, where again lives hung upon the perfect coordination of his faculties. But the instant the bow swung downstream into the jaws of the Box, and his lashed steering-oar bore against the cork screwing anarchy of waters, something went cool and calm through him, and he rose to the work. Afraid that the rowers might "catch a crab" or otherwise fumble disastrously, he ordered in the oars. "Then we met it on the fly," and he went on to picture how he caught a passing glimpse of spectators fringing the brink of the cliffs above, and another glimpse of serrated walls dashing by like twin express trains. Then his undivided energy was centered upon keeping atop the racing hogback. The deep-laden boat, instead of mounting the waves, went dead into them. Despite the peril, Jack could not help giggling at poor Sloper, who, just as he let drive for a tremendous stroke, would quite miss the water as the stern fell in a trough, jerking the bow skyward. "But Sloper never lost his grit," he praised.

In a transverse current Jack threw himself against the sweep till it cracked, and Sloper's paddle snapped short off. They nearly filled, yet went flying downstream breakneck, less than two yards from the rocky wall. Another instant, and they took a header through a smoking comber and shot into the whirlpool of the great circular court that widens midway of the Box, thence spilling over into the second half of the race.

Jack and his crew then walked back and brought through the outfit of a man and his wife, a Mr. and Mrs. Ket. That done, they baled out the Yukon Belle and essayed two miles of ordinary rapids to the head of the White Horse, passing several of the Box Canyon wrecks in which lives had been lost. Save for a few who had been drowned, no one had tried to run the White Horse in late years; but our quartette looked it over, and then, with an audience of a thousand souls, went down. Jack nearly lost his boat when he tried to buck the whirlpool, not knowing he had come within its coils; and again Sloper had his paddle snap off. When they had reached the friendly eddy below the Rapids, they returned as before, and piloted down the Rets' boat.

Not until October 9, when the Stewart River was reached, did the invincibles halt. I have obtained the date through the courtesy of Mr. Fred Thompson, of Santa Rosa, who has lent his Diary. On Upper Island, one of two islets off the eastern bank of the Yukon, half-way between the Stewart and Henderson Creek, and eighty miles above Dawson, they set up housekeeping in one of a group of log cabins that had been abandoned by the Bering Sea fur traders. The fact of empty quarters is indicative of Jack and his crowd being among the first over Chilkoot. Lower Island was inhabited mostly by Swedes, and Jack jocularly referred to it as "the slums."

I think it must have been within the restricted four walls of this little fortress against the Arctic cold, that there was born in Jack London that vision of hospitality which animated him all his unpenurious days. It could not consist of wastefulness as regarded food, but of warmth and shelter, and, inestimable comfort to a certain few who gathered about the red-hot stove, converse of long nights that was the sole entertainment of the frozen-in gold prospectors from all points of the compass.

Studying Mr. Thompson's journal, I find that on the 12th Jack and several others went up Henderson Creek, and staked their claims. Four days later, the party was on its way to Dawson City in the Yukon Belle, to record claims and freshen up with news of the country. Camped near the cabin of Louis W. Bond, of Santa Clara County, California, they made the acquaintance of the dog Buck, subsequent noble hero of "The Call of the Wild." They did not leave Dawson until December 3, on the 7th arriving back on Upper Island.

Dawson City — Metropolis of the World to the World's Adventurers! — its snow-packed thoroughfare crunching under the muclucs of the motliest crowd that ever congregated from the remotest arcs of the planet, and splendidly policed by the heroic "yellow-legs," as the Mounted Constabulary was called from the hue of its leggins. And what Jack London's ductile mind took unto itself of the gorgeous romance enacted under the Union Jack that dominated the log-built capital of the Northwest Territory, is free to all who will read between the boards of one or another of a dozen-odd books he devoted to its diverse picturings.

A prize has come to me for the asking, in the recollections of one sympathetic mind that measured blades with Jack London's in the log-cabin on Upper Island — Mr. W. B. Hargrave, of Coif ax, Washington — "Bert" Hargrave, or "Kid," as the younger with winsome irreverence bridged a disparity of years. Mr. Hargrave has also furnished

me a chart illustrating the geographical situation of the camp, upon which he has jotted: "You must imagine high hills sloping back from the river banks, buttressed by an occasional ridge that had been cleft by the stream, leaving precipitous walls. Forests of spruce, of dense growth in the ravines and along the streams. The islands flat and also covered with spruce timber. A mantle of snow of the average depth of four feet in the lower latitudes." From his letters to me since the death of his friend, not only have we a valuable presentment of both the physical but the mental Jack London of that season:

"It was in October of 1897 that I first met him . . . No other man has left so indelible an impression upon my memory as Jack London. He was but a boy then, in years . . . But he possessed the mental equipment of a mature man, and I have never thought of him as a boy except in the heart of him . . . the clean, joyous, tender, unembittered heart of youth. His personality would challenge attention anywhere. Not only in his beauty for he was a handsome lad but there was about him that indefinable something that distinguishes genius from mediocrity. Though a youth, he displayed none of the insolent egotism of youth; he was an idealist who went after the attainable; a dreamer who was a man among strong men; a man who faced life with superb assurance and who could face death serenely imperturbable. These were my first impressions; which months of companionship only confirmed.

"He was one of the few adventurers, of the thousands whom the lure of gold enticed to the frozen fastnesses of the Klondike, whose hardihood and pluck scaled the summit of Chilkoot Pass that year. His cabin was on the bank of the Yukon, near the month of the Stewart River. I remember well the first time I entered it. London was seated on the edge of a bunk, rolling a cigarette. He smoked incessantly and it would have taken no Sherlock Holmes to tell what the stains on his fingers meant. One of his partners, Goodman, was preparing a meal, and the other, Sloper, was doing some carpentry work. From the few words which I overheard as I entered, I surmised that Jack had challenged some of Goodman's orthodox views, and that the latter was doggedly defending himself in an unequal contest of wits. Many times afterward I myself felt the rapier thrust of London's, and knew how to sympathize with Goodman.

"Jack interrupted the conversation to welcome me, and his hospitality was so cordial, his smile so genial, his goodfellowship so real, that it instantly dispelled all reserve. I was invited to participate in the discussion, which I did, much to my subsequent discomfiture.

"That day — the day on which our friendship began — has become consecrated in my memory. I find it difficult to write about Jack without laying myself open to the charge of adulation. During the course of my life . . . I have met men who were worth while; but Jack was the one man with whom I have come in personal contact who possessed the qualities of heart and mind that made him one of the world's overshadowing geniuses.

"He was intrinsically kind and irrationally generous. . . . With an innate refinement, a gentleness that had survived the roughest of associations. Sometimes he would become

silent and reflective, but he was never morose or sullen. His silence was an attentive silence. I have known him to end a discussion by merely assuming the attitude of a courteous listener, and when his indiscreet opponent had tangled himself in the web of his own illogic, and had perhaps fallen back upon invective to bolster his position, Jack would calmly roll another cigarette, and throwing his head back, give vent to infectious laughter — infectious be cause it was never bitter or derisive. . . . He was always good-natured; he was more he was charmingly cheerful. If in those days he was beset by melancholia, he concealed it from his companions.

"There were not many of us that winter in the little mining camp on the Yukon; but the isolated group of cabins housed some lovable and adventurous souls. I will tell you about them, because it was about them that Jack London wrote, and because there is hardly one of them whom he has not immortalized in his writings.

"There was Louis Savard, a French-Canadian. So reticent was he that it was almost impossible to get him to utter more than a monosyllabic answer to a categorical question. He had a pronounced French-Canadian accent, the drollness of which so delighted London that he never ceased in his attempts to draw Louis into conversation. It was Louis who owned 'Nig,' a dog that showed a striking Newfoundland strain, and I have thought it was Nig's antics that gave Jack his inspiration to write 'The Call of the Wild.' Louis once took the dog on a 'hike' up Sixty Mile, and when Nig saw his master preparing for the return journey he deserted and came back to camp alone, leaving to the indignant Louis the task of hauling a loaded sledge some thirty or forty miles. Savard was so incensed that he threatened to kill the dog, and it was only Jack London's eloquent appeal that saved Nig from a dishonored end. One of Savard's partners was Elam Harnish. [Elam Harnish's nickname was "Burning Daylight," and he formed the basis of the hero of Jack's novel by that name.] . . . And there was Carthy (his name was Courthè, I believe!). . . . London mentions him, I think, by name in one story. . . . Peacock was another, a Texan. He was one of the few among us who realized the golden dream of the Argonauts. . . . Then there were John Thorsen, Prewitt, and Keogh, a giant Irishman. . . . And a professional gambler, Hank Putnam by name. . . . And Judge Sullivan he was one of my partners, as was Doctor Harvey. I must not forget Stevens, because he, perhaps, has been used in Jack's Klondike stories more than any of the others."

"Inasmuch as Louis Savard's cabin was the largest and most comfortable it became the popular meeting place for the denizens of the camp. Louis had constructed a large fireplace, and my recollections of London are intertwined with the many hours we spent together in front of its cheerful light. Many a long night he and I, outlasting the vigil of the others, sat before the blazing spruce logs, and talked the hours away. A brave figure of a man he was, lounging by the crude fireplace, its light playing on his handsome features — a face that one would look at twice even in the crowded city street. In appearance older than his years; a body lithe and strong; neck bared at the throat; a tangled cluster of brown hair that fell low over his brow and which he was wont to brush back impatiently when engaged in animated conversation; a sensitive

mouth, but lips, neverthe-less, that could set in serious and masterful lines; a radiant smile, marred by two missing teeth (lost, he told me, in a fight on shipboard); eyes that often carried an introspective expression; the face of an artist and a dreamer, but with strong lines denoting will power and boundless energy. An outdoor man — in short, a real man, a man's man.

"He had a mental craving for the truth. He applied one test to religion, to economics, to everything. 'What is the truth?' 'What is just?' It was with these questions that he confronted the baffling enigma of life. He could think great thoughts. One could not meet him without feeling the impact of a superior intellect. Once in a cabin I saw a man who had presided for many years as the magistrate of a high court, and a surgeon who had achieved more than a local reputation — each Jack's senior by many years — sitting in his presence like children facing their school master, while he expounded some of Herbert Spencer's complex theories. And I remember that Jack once engaged Dr. Harvey in a discussion on the immortality of the soul. The Doctor was an educated and brilliant man, unorthodox, but absolutely convinced of the certainty of a future life. Jack, with eager and incisive questioning, was demanding from him a positively scientific corrobation of his belief. The Doctor had a logical mind, and his inability to comply with Jack's request vexed him much, although he gave far better reasons than can the average man. On September 23rd of this year , in answer to a brief note I sent to Jack apprising him of the Doctor's death, he wrote on the fly-leaf of 'When God Laughs' and sent it to me: . . . 'Hurrah for Doctor Harvey! He was a good scout, and he's scouting ahead of us now, though he never sends back a report.'

"Many and diverse were the subjects we discussed, often with the silent Louis as our only listener. Our views did not always coincide, and on one occasion when argument had waxed long and hot and London had finally left us, with only the memory of his glorious smile to salve my defeat, Louis looked up from his game of solitaire (which I think he played because it required no conversation) and became veritably verbose. This is what he said: 'You mak' ver' good talk, but zat London he too damn smart for you.'"

It was Jack's irrepressible entertaining that caused friction between himself and Sloper and Goodman. The good and thrifty souls could not look unmoved upon generosity of grub to a "siwash" when flour was worth $120 a sack. It appears that seldom did the three sit to dine in absence of a visitor or two, for when the beans and bacon and "dough-gods" were ready to serve, Jack, who if he had thought about it would have starved himself rather than be inhospitable, would bid every one to join the family at table. This in the face of Sloper's eloquent frown and Goodman's mild expression of disapproval. The boys be longing to the camp usually declined to participate, know ing Jack's weakness — often a weakness of their own — which but endeared him to them. The domestic atmosphere did not clear, and matters came to a head through a laughable incident that involved Sloper a favorite ax, which with other treasured carpenter tools he kept in spic and span order.

Jack, by mistake, one night laid hold of Sloper's ax to chop the ice from the water hole. The chopping of this particular hole had been so many times repeated, with the repeated freezing of whatever water was left from each successive chopping, that the river at that spot was frozen to the bottom, leaving a shaft through the ice from its mean surface to the bed. Jack, unaware in the dark that the hole had been "worked out," drove the nice edge of Sloper's ax full and fair into the gravel. When the fellows in the cabin heard him calling, they ran out to find him peering into the hole. "Say, boys," quoth Jack, "did you ever see ice so hard that it would strike sparks from an ax?" and again he struck fire with the ax. Sloper, suddenly suspicious, sprang into the hole. Sure enough, it was his ax — the apple of his eye. By common, unspoken consent, partners and guests adjourned to the cabin where the row could be held without their freezing to death. On the way Hargrave whispered to Jack: "Why did you do it?" And Jack: "Well — I broke off the edge of that ax before I knew it was his, and I thought that was the best way to let him know it!"

Arrived at the cabin, the aggrieved Sloper started in on a comprehensive job of cursing, which disconcerted Goodman, a religious man, far more than it did Jack, although he felt much worse over what he had done than he was able to express. He lighted a cigarette and listened, almost respectfully, answering nothing. But there was a glint in his eye that warned Sloper to stop just short of the fighting phrase. And that night Hargrave, shortly bound for Dawson, told Harvey he would better "hook up with London." So Jack moved over for the rest of his stay on Upper Island, for the Doctor had told Hargrave: "After you, I'd rather have Jack London for a partner than any man on the river."

Hank Putnam, the gambler, had gone to Dawson, leaving his outfit with Doctor Harvey. Presently a stranger appeared in camp, claiming to be half owner of Putnam's belongings. The claimant, being refused by Harvey for lack of written authority, called a miners meeting to adjudicate the dispute. Very few sour-doughs were left in camp, their places being taken by "chechahcos" or newcomers. These sustained the stranger by vote, and demanded that the Doctor turn over half the goods to which it later developed he had no right. The Doctor consulted Jack: "What shall we do!"

"Fight!" advised Jack.

So they hastily converted the cabin into a fort by knock-ing out chinking in several places, for loopholes. The chechahcos descended in a body, but when in response to their summons the two defenders of the fort each shoved a thirty-eight fifty-five through a loophole, they withdrew to discuss a plan of campaign.

Of all persons, it was the unloquacious Savard who settled the bloodless fray. Suddenly his cabin door flew wide, and Louis issued with a wicked looking Winchester.

"By gar! you go!" he barked, covering the enemy.

They went. There was no more trouble.

Another there was whom Jack London loved, and admired to the extent that he recurred to the memory of him with the superlative sentiment: "Emil Jensen is one of the very rare persons in this world to whom the word noble can be applied. I put some

of him into my 'Malemute Kid.' I wish I knew where he is, for I'd give anything to see him again, and have him come to the Ranch." After Jack was dead, Emil Jensen wrote to me, but gave no specific address. I replied to General Delivery, San Francisco, and the letter was returned. I want Mr. Jensen to know how Jack esteemed him. If his eye should happen upon these pages, it is my earnest hope that he will write me once more.

Then there was his friend Del Bishop, whom he has used by name in Klondike yarns; and Sam Adams, and Mason, and John Dillon. Good sour-doughs all, these beardless youths. Illustrators are wont lamentably to adorn the visage of a sour-dough with "sufficient whiskers to stuff a horse-collar," as one long-suffering veteran complains. The public never, at this rate, can be made to realize that the Klondike was no place for old or even elderly men unless they were very exceptional ones, as say Joaquin Miller and a few others who escaped deportation by the authorities. I do not think Jack ran across Miller; but Hargrave, one day, laboriously coaxing a sack of flour over a trail that had melted into a bottomless bog from Dawson up to "Number Five Below" on Bonanza, came upon a picturesque figure, long-haired, bearded, resting on the bank of a creek. And Hargrave sat there and listened to his discourse of the far future, when the ice-locked land — they were in the "lower sixties" — would be the scene of great cities, marts of commerce reached by tracks of steel that would conquer the now untrodden valleys and mountains. Not until an hour had passed did young Hargrave learn that he had been audience to the Poet of the Sierras.

But speaking in general of whiskers, the less of this sort of incumbrance the better, for the same ensnared dampness, and dampness had a way of freezing. It was bad enough to have one's eyelashes and nostril-fuzz congealed. So a razor and its accessories were given place in every kit, though it was often difficult to put one's hand upon a mirror.

Of course, nothing would do but Jack must achieve bread that would be second to none in his neighborhood, and to his last day he boasted of his prowess in turning out proper sour-dough loaves. But, as with exhausting "fancy starch" of old, or foot-blistering hiking, and other manual efforts that he came to repudiate, in later years he swore he had had enough, and would always travel with helpers who would make his "roughing" smooth, so that he could devote working hours to the brain-toil he had elected to pursue instead. Strange — some of his nearest and dearest could never compass his viewpoint, but persisted, to his impotent wrath, in trying to explain away his statement, about "running away from bodily labor," on the grounds of fictional license.

Many and altruistic were the services of young men thrown so closely together in a common need. One of Jack's acts — and I never heard it from him — was in the spring of '98 before the ice went out, when he broke an arduous trail eighty miles each way, in company with Doctor Harvey, to bring in a moose for "Kid" Hargrave, who had sorely suffered with scurvy from the many months lack of fresh meat.

There is no telling how long Jack London would have stayed in Klondike, nor what treasure he might have wrested and panned from the detritus of his claims, could he have obtained green vegetable food from time to time. As ill luck would have it, the scurvy undermined him to such extent that he was forced to move out of the country as soon as the breaking ice would permit. He did not leave the region by the way he came in. It was characteristic that he seldom retraced a road, though this did not apply to the water routes of his travel.

It was during May, he and Dr. Harvey, with whom he had been bunking for some time, dismantled the latter's cabin (Hargrave had already gone to Dawson for his scurvy), and constructed a raft from the logs, which they floated down the Yukon to Dawson. Here the two realized several hundred dollars from the sale of the raft to the sawmill. The trip was fraught with incident, for their lives, and the raft which represented their fortune, were momentarily threatened in the break-up of the mighty stream. During Jack's brief visit in Dawson, he and the Doctor made better than miner's wages — $15.00 — per day picking up logs from out the Yukon, and towing them by rowboat to the mill, where they brought a fabulous price. One accident of the raft-voyage had been the grounding of the craft on a bar. During their strenuous efforts to get it afloat, Jack cracked the big sweep they had fashioned with much labor, which provoked this comment from the disgusted sailor: "Doctor — I don't know who made this world, but I believe I could make a damn sight better one myself!" — "which," the Doctor was fond of repeating, "was the most blasphemous thing I ever heard."

Far greater treasure than yellow dust of Eldorado or Discovery or Bonanza to Jack and Harvey, were a raw potato and a lemon they shared as medicine for their ravaging ailment. I have heard one of them descant with great feeling upon the miraculously quick benefits from the half of a raw potato and as for his part of the lemon, words failed. Jack's case became so alarming that he was advised in the little hospital at the foot of the hill that it would be well for him to get out to fresh food without delay. But ill as he was, this did not withhold him from renewing acquaintance with the places he had known and the social life therein. How good it was to see a woman's face again even if at the bar or in the dance-hall of the "M. & M." Saloon, or in Frank Helen's gambling den, and "Monte Carlo," or in the questionable show houses. Jack admired the "grit of women" who, for any reason, had entered the frozen territory.

There were all sorts, of many lands and breeds and mixed-breeds. Freda Moloof, dancer, and alleged Grecian, touched his imagination brightly enough later to employ her romantic personality as a note of color in this tale and that — and, in a much transmogrified form, probably due to a lavish introduction of Lucille's characteristics, as the astute heroine of the play "Scorn of Women," which is based upon his short story of that name.

Jack once wrote me from Oakland: "And who, of all people, do you suppose I ran into last evening, when Eliza and I was rummaging around the street-fair in Oakland? — Freda Moloof, fat and forty doing the muscle dance in the Streets of Cairo! It was good to see her and talk over old times when I, all doubled up with scurvy, used to

admire her dancing and her plucky spirit in Dawson. I've promised to send her a book I mentioned her in." Which promise he redeemed, and her letter of thanks is pasted in his copy of "The God of His Fathers."

And Lucille, she of patrician features, beautiful speaking voice, and versatile tongue that could converse in his own language with almost any foreigner in Dawson. No one knew her history; but more than one scurvy-ruined unfortunate or lung-frozen pneumonia patient well knew the heart of her. Passing along the main street one day in her magnificent furs, she heard a man tell another that his "pardner" could not last long.

"Some one sick?" she inquired.

"My pardner," replied the one addressed, "dying of scurvy."

Lucille stepped quietly into his house, shed her furs, and fell to mothering the sick boy. When she rose to go, he clung and whimpered like a baby. Just before he died, "May I kiss you?" he said. Lucille, like a merciful death angel, nothing loath, folded him scurvy and all to her splendid bosom. I can imagine that Jack London liked her well.

Not at all, except as they represented their tribal differences, was he entangled by the brown maidens of the Indian peoples, nor, personally, in the half-and-less breeds who were sometimes very and elusively beautiful and unusual. Again, as usual, he drew the line. Once, privily, after hearing his familiar insistence, to some pilgrim, that he wrote mostly of what he knew at first hand, I mischievously queried: "You've written considerably and most wonderfully about the squaw-man and his psychology — as well as that of the squaw herself! How about it?"

"Silly!" he broke into his delicious giggle, "thought you had me that time, didn't the wicked woman, who knew better? — No, my dear, I never was a squaw-man. When I make the statement that I write only of what I know, I must not be taken too literally, of course — an artist must have some latitude to spill over into."

At the close of the first week in June, that year of 1898, Jack bade farewell to Hargrave and Harvey. With two companions, Taylor and big-bodied, big-hearted John Thorson, in an unsubstantial mere row-boat, he left Dawson City for the Outside — a traverse of 1500-odd miles of the Yukon, which swerved northward till it touched the Arctic Circle before bending down toward Bering Sea. The Doctor and Hargrave followed a month later, and though they made diligent inquiry at the few sparsely settled camps on the icy river, no trace of the three who preceded them was picked up until Holy Cross Mission gave information. The priest there recognized their description and gave assurance that Jack's boat had gone safely through.

Out of Klondike

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XVI 1898

I HAVE often heard Jack say that he had no idea of using the Klondike as a literary asset, until his dream of gold fell through and he was bound out of the country, penniless to all intents and purposes. It must have come suddenly to him that the adventure had been sufficient in itself, for he had been smitten with discouragement, before leaving home, as to any success in the coveted direction of a writing future. But now, floating half-frozen down the river of defeat, as the gray and white Yukon seemed to him in his predicament, his assertive buoyancy of brain could not help reviving what he had seen and done and felt in the year just past. Surely something could be realized out of it all, to enhance his chance of making a name, earning a voice in the affairs of men.

The idea grew. Meager as the notes appear, he cheered up and went on with a penciled diary started on the day he and the boys had swung into the current out of Dawson and begun to drop downstream. I can do no better than give the entire Journal, dating from June 8 to 30 inclusive. In view of his vaulting achievement at no far distant day, it is amusing to note that at this time his ambition ventured no higher than Outing Magazine and The Youth's Companion. Also, that in spite of pitiable suffering those three unsheltered weeks in a frail open boat in the mush-ice, only one reference is made to his scurvy crippled body and limbs. Here is his lean ac-count of the voyage:. The ONLY NOTES he kept on the Klondike experience:

"Tuesday, June 8, 1898.

Steamboat anticipation.

We start [from Dawson] at 4 P.M. for Outside — last words — sailor and miner friends parting injunctions, "see so and so, & such, a one" — love and business messages frankly expressed envy of many who had decided to remain Dawson slowly fading away.

Pitched camp at 10 P.M. — no bunk in boat slight rain. Day light & broad day light all the time.

Indian Camp at 12 mile Creek. How we were fooled — "Come back Dawson two days ago."

Wednesday, June 8.

Arranged bunk & pulled out at 11 A.M. Reached 40 Mile at 3 P.M. Place practically deserted. Found that the small river steamer May Mist — Mayor Woods — had passed us the night before — with 6 tons of whiskey aboard — hot time in Dawson as a consequence. Fort Cudahy likewise deserted. Saw W. A. & T. store and Barracks.

Thursday, June 9.

Arrangement of watches — Taylor cook — objects to watches as has been accustomed to regular hours.

2 A.M. — my watch on deck, sighted the A. C. Co. Steamer Victoria, 9 miles above Eagle City — loaded with hardware — no passengers possible.

3:30 A.M. — arrive at Eagle City — once again in Uncle Sam's dominions. 50 people in town, engaged in bucking faro layout and waiting for some steamer to take them to Dawson — short of grub.

9 A.M. — Moose incident, excitement.

Mountains rugged & sternly outlined — few islands in river — stiff 6 mile (average) current.

4 P.M. Passed steamer Wears, W. A. T. & T. Co.

10 P.M. Hailed, hospitality a passenger for C.

Friday, June 10.

6:30 A.M. — Passed Seattle No. One — Mayor Woods high and dry on a bar with 170 passengers. How they started last summer — frozen in 100 miles below Minook — etc., etc. Some discouraged & starting for St. Michaels by our method.

Circle City 8:20. Stopped & laid in tobacco — same as 40 Mile, no sugar, butter nor milk. Deserted — Mosquitos make a demonstration in force — now, just inside the terrible (so called) 300 miles of Yukon flats. All mountains, after receding & growing smaller above & to Circle City, now utterly disappear.

Description of Flats — not Thousand Islands of St. Lawrence nor "thousands of thousands," but thousands of millions — mosquito's, woods, sloughs, immense piles of drift, all kinds of life what we had been told about, geese & goose eggs, our experiences, the shot gun, etc.

Saturday, June 11.

11 :45 to 12 :15 no sun, 23 hrs. 30 min. sunshine, warmth at mid night, intense heat at noonday — sweltering in a tropical temperature under Arctic Skies. Cross the Arctic Circle at 3 A.M.

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Governor Stoneman hard and fast. 98

John driven out of bed by mosquitos episode at A. C. Co.'s

Cache. 146

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Fort Yukon 4 A.M. Bella (W. A. T. &T. Co.) emptying cache. Description of Indians working at stevedoring. Indian Squaws & children. Very warm in the sun, more likely some holiday festival at 3 in afternoon.

Capt. Ray defense of caches incident. Nearly all engaged have sledged to Circle City or otherwise disappeared.

Smudges burning on every hand. Mosquito Rig.

9 A.M. Passed steamer Hamilton (W.A.T.&T.) 5 hrs. run from Fort Yukon.

Porcupine enters on right.

Scattered Indian camps, deserted log cabins; woodyards.

(Outing) [Must have had the magazine in deliberate mind]

Beauty of the night — drifting down the river, midnight & broad daylight, robins & other song birds singing on the islands; partridges drumming tern, sea-gulls & loons discordant crys echo-ing across the glassy river stretches; kildees, plover, ducks, foolish or silly cries of wild geese. Martins, owls, hawks.

Heat of sun, sleeping on top blankets at 12 P.M.

Only country where Indians work; wood choppers, deck hands, etc. Big prices for moccasins, moose meat, furs, etc., at Dawson. River-pilots get from $5 a day to $1800

a gradually all year round. Big husky fellows, & — here and there plain traces of white blood apparent.

Sunday, June 12.

All day, Yukon flats. Fun shooting goose. Loaded 4½ drams, with 15 large buckshot; kicked John's arm.

Water sluggish. Evening burned smudges. Mountains becoming visible again.

Monday, June 13.

A.M. Arrived at Fort Hamilton, none but Indians left, every body else gone to Dawson 65 miles to Minook.

12 M. Coal mine on right 25 miles above Minook.

R. E. Russell of Seattle & an Ohio (Toledo) man working it — cabin, coal bunker, etc., carried away & mine flooded by high water. Sell to steamers $25 per ton. Faces covered with clay, hard job fighting mosquitos. Bid them farewell amid clouds of the same personified ubiquity.

Arrived at Minook at 4 P.M. The first man to greet me as I climbed ashore was Chestnut & old acquaintance & a university man. Had had a rough time coming in. All about barge, Gov. Stoneman, etc., to buying men out $50 a piece. All hands to hoist anchor at 4 A.M. Getting out on bank and lining steamboat & cargo, etc. Minook gold (Little Minook) runs $18.75 per ounce. Probably, at favorable estimate, Minook district will turn out $85,000. Some company faking a number of creeks here and selling stock on outside at $1.00 per share — 1,000,000 shares.

Introduced to Capt. Mayo — Thirty years in country. Getting stout — very pleasant to converse with. About 500 people in town.

All along river asking for news — war — football, Sharkey, Jeffries, Corbett, Fitz — Did Durrant really hang — what did he say, etc. Went through Rampart.

11 P.M. Ran Rapids. Tuesday, June 14.

Passed Tanana River & stopped at Tanana Station just above St. James' Mission & situated at the Indian town of Muklukyeto, at the junction of the Yukon & Toyikakat Rivers. The camp was large and the Indians had arrived from the Tanana & were in full force, waiting the fishing. Dance in progress, white man's dances — low room in log cabin.

Effect — In the crowded heated room, discerned the fair, bronzed skin & blonde mustache of the ubiquitous adventurous Anglo Saxon, always at home in any environment.

5 A.M. & everybody was up, children playing, bucks skylarking; squaws giggling & flirting, dogs fighting, etc. Soon all will be asleep, for they sleep all day, and work and play at night.

Banks lined with birch bark canoes, nets in evidence everywhere, everything ready for the fish. Put up netting & fooled mosquitos.

Wednesday, June 15.

Went on watch at Midnight — mosquitos thick. Chant of Indians from miles down river. Arrive at camp (100 miles below Tanana) at 1 :30 A.M. Bucks singing, women

dancing, raven hair, etc. Skylarking, etc. Pointing at mountain, "When sun appears, fun ceases and all go to bed."

Lafcadio Hearn & Japanese Half Caste — Beautiful, half-breed woman saw here, Caucasian features, slender form, delicate oval of face & head, describe her environment. How much harder her lot than the Japanese Half Caste.

Ubiquitous Anglo Saxon White man from Sacramento living with them, brother-in-law, etc. They also waiting fishing, chopping cordwood & jumping price of same.

Pull out at 3:30 A.M.

6 A.M. Passed Steamer Alice bound up river & much enquired about, & followed by the Marguerite. Many thought Alice lost in the ice.

2:30 P.M. W. C. Merwin.

8 P.M. White man, starting a store. Indians, camps, etc.

10 P.M. Indian village, only old people left. The perpetual cry for medicine. Stoicism of the sufferers. Traces of white blood among the papooses everywhere apparent.
Thursday, June 16.

3 P.M. Stopped at temporary camp of N. A. T. & T. Co.'s station. Station flooded and people camped on hillside. Bought whitefish.

Party preparing to go up the Koyokuk River.

6 P.M. Indian camp. Squaw three quarter breed with a white baby (girl) (2 yrs.) such as would delight any American mother. Unusual love she lavished upon it. An erstwhile sad expression. Talked good English.

"I have no man."

Father of child had deserted her." Good natured joking, "I'11 be your man — I go St. Michaels, come back plenty flour, bacon, blankets, clothes & grub of all kinds. You marry me."

Ring in saving bead work for Charlie.

"Maybe I be married when you come back."

"You marry Charlie?"

"No, I marry Indian, white man always leave Indian girl."

Mountains from Toyikakat have been getting quite snowy, & now, even those with a southern exposure are no exception. I take for a sign of greater snowfall & that we are nearing the coast with its climatic conditions so dissimilar to those of the interior.

9:30 P.M. Nulato. More men preparing to go up Koyokuk. First heard talk of Koyokuk & Minook. Two small steamers are getting ready also. Is looked upon as coming Alaskan Clondyke.

Visited Roman Catholic Mission during service. Shrill chanting of Indian women combining with the basses of the father and brother — weird effect. Delicate features of the mocassined black-stoled priest officiating at the altar.

Father Monroe, make acquaintance. Cultured Frenchman who has devoted his life to his task. For 5 years has labored at this place zealously.

Indians have better appearance — always do around missions.

Educational work of missions.

Between 6 & 700 miles to St. Michaels.

Friday, June 17.

Uneventful. Evidences of the ice run all along the line, but here more plentiful than ever and more striking. Whole islands swept clear of trees. Some of mainland in many places. Early Spring & greatest high water known in many years, as a proof, flooding of old established towns, stations & native villages.

Geese have long since disappeared but ducks becoming quite thick as we near the mouth.

Indian camps fresh bear skins hanging in the sun.

Indians all along the line spoiled by rush. Demanding all kinds of prices for their labor or products. Steamer Co.'s will raise grub in proportion. If this will not do will bring in own men under contract. Indian seems unable to comprehend the fact that he can never get the better of the white man.

Passed the steamer———at 2 P.M.

IMPORTANT FEATURE — Indian graves along Yukon banks. Do not bury in trees like many N. A. tribes. Older graves more roughly made (palings), later, neatly made, often pointed. Shed rain. Once in a while a curiously carved totem pole. Catholic missions seem to get bulk of converts — else what becomes of protestant graves, as all in evidence have crosses. But the more impressive ritual of the Catholic service, so pregnant with mysticism to the barbaric mind, as opposed to the bare meetinghouse puritanical mode of protestant, may doubtless explain away some of this, but beyond a doubt, much is due to the indefatigable efforts of the fathers.

Saturday, June 18.

Among birds, woodpeckers, swallows, kingfishers, sea-gulls (many could not classify) Remember "Outing" "Youth's Companion.

Large trees uprooted or literally sawed in two by ice. Small trees tender bark stripped, and stand stretching their bleached limbs heavenward, mute witnesses to the Ice God's wrath.

Drifting the boat along the low, flooded banks during midnight watches while comrades snore under the mosquito netting, gun in hand, & dropping the wild fowl as they rise or metaphorically blessing the crazy gun for snapping. I will always recommend such a gun for amateurs. Always a reliable object at hand to lay bad markmanship to.

Sun rises like a ball of copper.

Mosquitos — One night badly bitten under netting — couldn't vouch for it but John watched them & said they rushed the netting in a body, one gang holding up the edge while a second gang crawled under. Charley swore that he has seen several of the largest ones pull the mesh apart & let a small one squeeze through. I have seen them with their proboscis bent and twisted after an assault on sheet iron stove. Bite me through overalls & heavy underwear.

A deserted malemute dog swam off to us. Injured in hind legs. Gave him away at Anvik.

Indians come off in canoes to trade. Made Anvik at 10 P.M. Town under water. Pressed by Episcopal missionary to stop over & spend “at least one Christian Sunday.” Traveling west and setting our watches back. Pulled on to station. Pickett in charge. Hearty welcome we received. Given some fresh potatoes & a can of tomatoes for my scurvy, which has now almost entirely crippled me from my waist down. Right leg drawing up, can no longer straighten it, even in walking must put my whole weight on toes. These few raw potatoes & tomatoes are worth more to me at the present stage of the game than an Eldorado claim — What wots it, though a man gain illimitable wealth & lose his own life?

How they got the potatoes? Quite a sacrifice on their part.

White through and through.

Left at 11:30 P.M.

Icogmute next stop.

Sunday, June 19.

At Anvik, Yukon, on 38 ft. Spring rise & 40 miles wide. — Shagluk Slough, etc. Get into a slough ourselves. Hoarse croak of the raven, blackbirds.

In afternoon made Holy Cross Mission, headquarters Catholic Missionary work in Alaska. From here four sisters have just been sent to aid Father Judge at Dawson.

At first sight — make homesick — Grassy hills, etc., fences, farm, etc. (Would give 4% for a cow) Indian girls playing in school yard. Homelike.

Trading with Indians. Ducks, Grouse, Goose & Duck eggs, berries, fish, etc. All busy doing something. Making nets, birch barks, rope, peeling slender rods for fish traps, etc. etc.

How make bark rope. Bark off roots — slit into strings, wetted in water and braided into a three stranded rope, very strong and durable. — How squaws work at all such things, tanning leather, making nets, nmc luc, mocassins, etc. etc. Weaving grass matting, minding dogs, papooses, etc. etc. Getting among Malenmtes now.

Monday, June 20.

Bad weather, went ashore 1 P.M. Pitched Camp.

Tuesday, June 21.

Native village Malemutes — holes in the ground, fire place in middle, hole in roof, etc. etc. Deck of cards for Russian Cross.

6 P.M. — Icogmute Russian Mission. Very sleepy, flooded, etc. One Russian, could not understand English. Very miserable place.

9 P.M. Native village king salmon 2 cups of flour.

Wednesday, June 22.

Trading native villiages. Nothing important.

Thursday, June 23.

Long stretches of flats. Once in a while river strikes bluffs of low barren hills — the same lined with Malemute villages — then flats again. — Raven’s hoarse croak —

11 P.M. Andreasky. 2 miles.

Up Andreasky river. Native villiage at confluence. How miserable their condition yet how happy. How they come out & sit on bank, naked legs, bodies, etc. in chill north wind. Trading for curios, etc. flour for fish and game. Method of trading.

At midnight, Malemute paddling kyak & singing — weird effect. They seem never to sleep, are always up.

At Andreasky last low hills are left, save to the south beyond Kusiluf, a snow covered jagged mountain — a land-mark to avoid. And we enter the great Yukon Delta, for a 126 mile run to Kutlik.

Threading the maze, keeping to right, etc. Took no guides at Andreasky, avoiding said custom. Fishing villages all deserted. No signs of human life. No white man since Holy Cross Mission, where sick steward of Str. Hamilton was down. One Russian at Icogmute who could not speak English.

Terrible racket maintained by wild fowl between 2 & 5 A.M. Above Andreasky had our last experience with eggs — large goose eggs — Beautiful king salmon, cool, firm flesh fresh from icy Yukon.

Friday, June 24.

Threaded Yukon Delta all day. Aphorn Mouth. Saturday, June 25. Hamilton Station

Last N. A. T. & T. Station, 11 :30 A.M. Learned that we passed the Str. Healy lying at Andreasky. Inquired after war news — had the latest.

Up to 16th no ocean strs. had reached St. Michaels.

Indians all absent hunting seal in the south channel.

8 miles on passed Bill Moore's. Settled down with Indian wife (years in country) satisfied to remain — ambition lost — hurry-scurry devil take the hindmost competition of civilization has no attraction — sure thing for the rest of life — but how bleak and blank his existence. Pride of Indian in calling him brother-in-law.

Kutlik in evening — low tide — round bottom sea boats — first smack of old ocean.

5 miles on the mouth of River — Slept with open sea in sight.

Sunday, June 26.

N.W. wind. Point Romanoff in sight. Sailed till on shore. Beached boat. Episode of Taylor & Roubeau. (Also at Eagle City on being awakened.)

Monday, June 27.

Off Point Romanoff pick up Father Roubeau on edge of surf in 3 hatch kyak or as Russians call it, Bidarka. Take him aboard — how unlike a father on first sight. Sits alongside of me while steering — ask him if smoke objectionable — on contrary pipe in bidarka. So all light up and are content.

Quite a linguist. French, Italian, Spanish, English, Indian dialects, etc. A native of Nice. Pleasant anecdotes of Jesuit brotherhood. Obedience, poverty, chastity. Alaska 12 years. Reducing Innuit language to a grammar — pride of his life. Revel for hours in eulogy of same, moods, tenses, genders, articles, adverbs, etc. fill the air.

First coming aboard, argument over day, Sunday or Monday.

Dress — fur cap, coarse blue shirt, muc luc sea boots, etc. etc.

Possessed of fatal faculty of getting lost.

Camp, beaching boat in afternoon.

11 P.M. turned out, etc.

Tuesday, June 28.

Midnight — southeast wind blowing — squally, increasing, splash of rain. Dirty sky to southard. Quite a task of running boat out through surf. Shorten down to storm canvas & rush on before it. Big sea tumbling after. Bidarka in tow performs strange feats.

Looking for canal. Spots it. Small boat in mouth. Men asleep. Jibe over sail and run in.

Laugh at us. Keep a-going. Stay so long they finally follow. Fooled. 7 hours lost.

Run on and make canal at 1 P.M.

Father at an oar or on the towline.

5 P.M. Father bids good-by & goes on. Never heard of again — lost in some back slough most likely.

How misleading maps [here torn and cannot make out word — Follows something that looks like Towing now.]

Wednesday, June 29.

Camp at mouth of canal.

Thursday, June 30.

St. Michaels early in morning — Find it to be Wednesday 28.

Russian priest seen no sign of Jesuit. Tanned skin, brilliant black eyes, of Italian quickness of speech, vivid play of emotion so different from the sterner, colder Anglo-Saxon.

Leave St. Michaels — unregrettable moment.

Jack stoked his steamship passage from St. Michaels to British Columbia, thence proceeded steerage to Seattle. So it will be seen that his homecoming from the fabulous region of names to conjure with — Eldorado and Dominion, Bonanza and Sulphur — was the reverse of spectacular, and with a few twinges of scurvy still within him to remind of the unlucrative year.

He found his widowed mother in a tiny cottage on Sixteenth street between Nineteenth and Twentieth Avenues, and worrying about the rent, although in face of Eliza's assurance that she would help out. Eliza was absent on a much-needed vacation, camping in Monterey; but she hurried home to greet her brother, whom she saw bronzed and bigger-muscled than ever, showing marked physical gain from his rough experience.

Klondike Lily Maid Letters

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XVII 1898-9

WITH John London removed by death, Jack must buckle to in earnest to support his mother and the little nephew in whom she was entirely wrapped up — an infatuation which never abated. There was no question of choice as to what work he should do.

There were unpaid bills of his father's which he felt in honor bound to discharge — petty sums in themselves, but hugely troublesome in Jack's creditless plight. He must snap up the first job that came to hand, and that quickly. It sounded simple, if uninspiring; but the fact is there was no place offering to an unskilled laborer for hard times were on.

His only trades were those of sailor and laundryman. The long absences of seafaring did not fit in with his domestic responsibility, and he could not uncover any opening in the laundries of Oakland. Writing was not to be thought of. He must be sure of roof and grub, and a decent suit of ready-mades, before he could raise eyes again, if ever, to the literary heavens.

Five employment bureaus and advertisements in three dailies failed to land a situation of any sort, and he be gan pawning his few personal effects — the silver watch Captain Shepard had given him for the Klondike, the bicycle Eliza had bought, and a raincoat much prized by his father, whose dying wish it had been that Jack inherit. Some curious newspaper items were followed up, but nothing came of them. He owns to having proffered for studio-model his one hundred and sixty-four pounds of well set up, twenty-two years growth of brawn, but some one of several fine-bodied fellows likewise out of employment won the prize. And of course, as he reminds us, along with such frivolous occupations he was trying with might and main to become wop, lumper, or roustabout. The surplus labor army, with winter not far off, pressed hard upon the scarcity of work. "Also I," Jack adds, "who had romped along carelessly through the countries of the world and the kingdom of the mind, was not a member of any union."

While preforming small odd tasks he took civil service examinations for mailcarrier, and passed in the lead, only to face disappointment in that no vacancy existed. Awaiting his chance he penned an article, "Down the River," describing his Yukon voyage. The San Francisco newspaper on which he tried it, neither acknowledged nor returned it. This was not encouraging; but he set that square jaw and launched into a 20,000-word serial especially designed for The Youth's Companion. It was completed, even to typing, in one week. "I fancy that was what was the matter with it," he afterward surveyed, "for it came back." To the Lily Maid he wrote: "The art of omission is the hardest of all to learn, and I am weak at it yet. I am too long-winded, and it is hard training to cut down." But here enters a touch of faith in his star: "As yet, this prevents me from writing perfect little gems, examples of which your brother sometimes sends me."

He shortened his tools, focused more intently, and began hewing unique art forms, of unmistakable purity, cut from the blocks of empirical and idealistic material so long storing in the house of his mind against this inevitable day. Out of the stuff of earth, and flesh, mind, and heart, that he knew of his own contact, with head and hand he wrought the transmutation of the mass, molded it into restrained shapes that he felt were new — at least he had met nothing like them; shapes of beauty, or strength, or truth, as desire and his latent genius dictated. In the dynamic, dramatic power of his creation he dared but a hesitant confidence, because he had been unable to conform

to conventional patternings revered by those of his acquaintance not big enough in themselves to reassure him of the worth of their authority. He was still fearful of being on the wrong track, no matter how the gleam of it lured.

Even the Lily Maid, to whose perceptions he still rendered a measure of fidelity, failed him with wholly unintentional cruelty. Passionately anxious to polish his astonishing outlines, though sensing unquestionable beauties and excellences, she was overborne by the spectacle of her friend hollow-eyed and pasty-pale from lack of sleep and beefsteak. Moreover and most important to her possessive and protective femininity, he was unsuccessful financially. And so, by means of a tact that would have deceived and influenced a less perspicacious lover, with veiled promptings toward some position that would bring in a regular stipend, she chilled him with hopeful references to the mail-carrier opportunity. For she had distinctly approved of his taking the examinations; he needed steadying — some reliable outlook for the future.

More than vaguely was he now disillusioned. Perhaps his very tenderness increased in proportion as his recoil doubled back from her restricted horizon. She was so softly pretty, white woman of his own race — her eyes so blue and true, her long mantle of perfect golden hair as lovely as Lady Godiva's, when she let it ripple down for the pleasuring of his eyes. And then her delicate health made him shrink from wounding by determination to assert his own ego's imperious challenge. Yet it was in the fiber of him to be honest. Although he drained her culture of its last drop that could further the form of his work, in exorably he cast aside what his unerring senses warned him as weakening to it — leaving the pallid girl breathless with a bafflement due to her fate of not understanding.

She is dead, and he is dead. She did her best. But her mold was too narrowed to confine his best, though all the while Jack appreciated her effort to help. She was strong enough in no possible way either to restrain or to fly with the eagle she would have caged. Even in the days of her warmest attractiveness, he would find himself, quite with out forethinking, involved by the magnetism of a woman met in her very company, some one entirely her antithesis. Earlier, he marveled at the phenomenon — perhaps, he searched, the reason lay in his own imperfectness of refinement. But he learned about women from both of them. Then abruptly he would overtake the discovery that the Lily Maid's small, vivacious, quick-tongued mother, herself young, was more compellingly enticing than the daughter he had almost been sure was his accomplished dream of womanhood. He was learning about women from them all. His opportunities were of the best — not only in the drawing room, but out of doors on foot or wheel, even to the notoriously illuminating exigencies of camp life; for he made one of their party to Yosemite Valley, which included her immediate family and some outside relatives, as well as friends. And what Jack learned, he never forgot. If detail were lost, the broad principles remained, to play a timely part in maturing tenets and conduct.

Further, and finally, an apparently slight happening marked the passing of his old ineffable instinct of worship toward the girl. In reality it was a trenchant manifestation of essential frailty and lack of poise that forever lost the man to her.

It was an unconsidered climax of petty irritation to her vanity that he should spend hours of his rare play-time at chess, when they might be out on their wheels or otherwise enjoying each other's society. Right in front of him she flung her fateful bolt, out of a clear sky so far as Jack's mood was concerned. Shoulders hunched, brows drawn, he bent over the checquered board, his whole soul gathered in still ecstasy of calculation, unconscious of any universe beyond the problem represented by the carven images.

The slender, white-robed blonde angel stood beside the unheeding mathematician for one exasperated moment, then swooped, lightly in the flesh but oh! how heavily in spiritual consequences, and swept the table clean with her two small hands.

"What did you do?" I asked with bated breath, when years later in reminiscent mood over the Lily's death he recalled the garden tragedy.

"Nothing — what was there to do?" slowly he reconstructed his bleak state of mind. "I felt every bit of blood leave my face; and from her brother's expression, mine must have been something awful. The thing was unforgivable, don't you see? To me it was sheer, brutal, blind-mad outrage to every decency of human fair play. It was a sin against the Holy Ghost! It was a vicious act, to wipe a half-solved problem out of existence in that way — from small jealousy of a bloodless rival. . . . No, I did not say a word — then or ever. But when I looked up at her after what seemed a frozen century, and her frightened eyes met mine, she knew what had really happened." For a fleeting moment the young woman glimpsed the import of her pettish deed — that what she had done reached into the very body of their incompatibility. In the biology of things, no superior human entity of vibrating atoms, no matter how little ill-met, can perfectly complement any other entity of similar superiority. Jack, once at rest as to the fundamental largenesses in a given person, could generously discount incidental light qualities, except as they might indicate some abysmal vacuity. And in the Lily Maid he came to discern the stamp of an incomprehension too vast for the two ever to dwell together in mutual satisfaction of any kind. By now, for all the tenderness of what was become passionless, if staunch and lasting, friendship toward the loving girl, he still beat against the bars of her inadequacy, bars which she fain would have laid down had hers been the ability to do so.

If ever I knew how he came by the following letters written to the Lily Maid, all memory has fled. It is likely that at some stage of their long acquaintance — perhaps after his marriage in 1900 — the pair may have exchanged their old correspondence. Much of the matter in these letters was combed for the creating of Martin Eden's Ruth, as the author's blue-penciling bears witness. This proves what I had forgotten: that he had the letters with him in Hawaii and aboard the yacht Snark to Tahiti in 1907, since it was during this interval he composed the novel, which originally he had cynically entitled "Success."

Here is the first of the letters remaining in his files, typed by him at 962 East 16th street, November 27, 1898, and sent to the Lily Maid at College Park:

"Forgive my not writing, for I have been miserable and half sick. So nervous this morning that I could hardly shave myself.

"Everything seems to have gone wrong — why, I haven't received my twenty dollars for those essays yet. Not a word as to how I stood in my Civil Service Exs. Not a word from the Youth's Companion, and it means to me what no one can possibly realize.

"You seem to misunderstand. I thought I made it perfectly plain, that those squibs of poetry were merely diversions and experiments; yet you say — But always the same theme. Theme has nothing to do with it; they were studies in structure and versification. Though it took me a long while, I have learned my lesson, and thanks to no one. I made ambitious efforts once. It makes me laugh to look back on them, though sometimes I am nearer weeping. I was the greenest of tyros, dipping my brush into whitewash and coal-tar, and without the slightest knowledge of perspective, proportion or color, attempted masterpieces — without a soul to say 'you are all wrong; herein you err; there is your mistake.'

"Why, that poem on gold is one of the finest object-lessons in my possession. I was ambitious in that. With no more comprehension of the aims and principles of poetry, than a crab, I proposed or rather, purposed to make something which would be something. I would strike out on new trails; I would improve on the Spencerian Stanza; I would turn things upside down. So I tried what has been probably tried a thousand times and discarded because it was worthless; one Alexandrine at the end of the stanza was not enough; I added a second. I treated my theme as Dryden or Thompson would have treated it. My elephantine diction was superb — I out-Johnsoned Johnson. I was a fool — and no one to tell me.

"So you see, to-day, I am unlearning and learning anew, and as such things are merely principles, you can readily see why I don't care a snap for the theme. I have played Darius Green once, and if my neck is broken a second time it will be my own fault. I shall not be ready for any flights till my machine is perfected, and to that perfection I am now applying myself. Until then, to the deuce with themes. I shall subordinate thought to technique till the latter is mastered; then I shall do vice versa.

"I do not know when I can be down — I may be digging sewers or shoveling coal next week. Am glad to hear you are better. Give my regards to everybody.

"Good-by,

"Jack."

Three days later in blackest mood he wrote to her the letter from which I have already drawn portions from time to time as they fitted into my mosaic. I present the remainder:

'962 East 16th St. Nov. 30, 1898.

Dear — — :

"I do appreciate your interest in my affairs, but — we have no common ground. In a general, vaguely general, way, you know my aspirations; but of the real Jack, his

thoughts, feelings, etc., you are positively ignorant. Yet, little as you do know, you know more about me than anybody else. I have fought and am fighting my battle alone.

You speak of going to — — — : I know how well she loves me; do you know how? or why? I spent years in Oakland and we saw nothing of each other — perhaps once a year looked on each other's face. If I had followed what she would have advised, had I sought her I would to-day be a clerk at forty dollars a month, a railroad man, or something similar. I would have winter clothes, would go to the theater, have a nice circle of acquaintances, belong to some horrible little society like the — — , talk as they talk, think as they think, do as they do — in short, I would have a full stomach, a warm body, no qualms of conscience, no bitterness of heart, no worrying ambition, no aim but to buy furniture on the instalment plan and marry. I would be satisfied to live a puppet and die a puppet. Yes, and she would not like me half as well as she does. Because I felt that I was or wanted to be something more than a laborer, a dummy; because I showed that my brain was a little bit better than it should have been, considering my advantages and lack of advantages; because I was different from most fellows in my station; because of all this she took a liking to me. But all this was secondary; primarily, she was lonely, had no children, a husband who was no husband, etc., she wanted some one to love.

"If the world was at my feet to-morrow, none would be happier than she, and she would say she knew it would be so all the time. But until that time — well, she would advise to not think of it, to sink myself in two score years of oblivion with a full belly and no worry, to die as I had lived, an animal. "Why should I so study that I may extract joy from reading some poem? She does not, and does not miss anything: Tom, Dick and Harry do not, and they are happy. Why should I develop my mind? It is not necessary for happiness. A babble of voices, petty scandals, and foolish nothings, should satisfy me. It does Tom, Dick and Harry, and they are happy.

"As long as my mother lives, I would not do this; but with her gone to-morrow, if I knew that my life would be such, that I was destined to live in Oakland, labor in Oakland at some steady occupation, and die in Oakland — then to-morrow I would cut my throat and call quits with the whole cursed business. You may call this the foolish effervescence of youthful ambition, and say that it will all tone down in time; but I have had my share of toning down. (Here follows the paragraph upon Duty, already quoted, and the incident of the meat at school.) He goes on:

"You say, 'It is your duty, if you wish to hold the esteem of those whose approval or companionship is worth having.' If I had followed that, would I have known you? If I had followed that, who would I know whose companionship I would esteem? If I had followed that from childhood, whose companionship would I he fitted to enjoy? — Tennyson's, or a bunch of brute hoodlums on a street corner?

"I cannot lay bare, cannot put my heart on paper, but I have merely stated a few material facts of my life. These may be cues to my feelings. But unless you know the instrument on which they play, you will not know the music. Me — how I have felt

and thought through all this struggle; how I feel and think now — you do not know. Hungry! Hungry! Hungry! From the time I stole the meat and knew no call above my belly, to now when the call is higher, it has been hunger, nothing but hunger.

"You cannot understand, nor never will.

"Nor has anybody ever understood. The whole thing has been by itself. Duty said 'Do not go on; go to work.' So said others, though they would not say it to my face. Everybody looked askance; though they did not speak, I knew what they thought. Not a word of approval, but much of disapproval. If only some one had said, 'I understand.' From the hunger of my childhood, cold eyes have looked upon me, or questioned, or snickered and sneered. What hurt above all was that they were some of my friends not professed but real friends. I have calloused my exterior and receive the strokes as though they were not; as to how they hurt, no one knows but my own soul and me.

"So be it. The end is not yet. If I die I shall die hard, fighting to the last, and hell shall receive no fitter inmate than myself. But for good or ill, it shall be as it has been — alone.

And you, remember this: the time is past when any John Halifax, Gentleman, ethics can go down with me. I don't care if the whole present, all I possess, were swept away from me — I will build a new present; if I am left naked and hungry — to-morrow before I give in I will go naked and hungry. . . .

". . . . Frank [Frank Atherton, an old friend] has been play-ing the violin and Johnny the devil in the room while I have been writing this, so you will forgive its disconnectedness. . . .

"Yours,

"Jack."

The next missive is of December 6, 1898, and records the debatable success of a manuscript entitled "To The Man On Trail," which he had submitted to the Overland Monthly. The Uncle referred to in my Prologue as business manager of the magazine, from this time on began speaking of the remarkable work being turned in by "this boy, Jack London."

"Frank is at last gone and I can do a little writing. Why did you not send me what you had written? Were you afraid of hurting my feelings it seems your previous frankness, extending through several years, had precluded any such possibility. . . .

"Sent out in this mail, 'trailers' after articles I mailed last September, and which have vanished utterly. Received a letter from the Overland Monthly. This is the substance of it: We have read your MS and are so greatly pleased with it, that, though we have an enormous quantity of accepted and paid-for material on hand, we will at once publish it in the January number, if — aye, if you can content yourself with five dollars.

"There are between three and four thousand words in it. Worth far more than five dollars, at the ordinary reportorial rate of so much per column. What do you think of that for a first class magazine like the Overland? . . .

"We are getting ready to sue the Republican Club for our prizes. No word from Youth's Companion.

"If I could only come down. Hope this will find you in better health — I hate to think of you lying sick."

Jack had won first award for an essay in a contest held by the Fifth Ward Republican Club for campaign songs, essays, cartoons and poems, the song prize being taken by his friend Rev. Robert J. Whitaker. The Club seems to have defaulted in payment, and hence was sued by the various winners. On December 22, he wrote the Lily Maid:

"All this week and part of last I have spent in the superior court of San Francisco. One of my Klondike partners, Sloper, has returned, and because he had not struck it rich, his wife, to whom he had deeded over four thousand dollars worth of property before he left, has sued him for divorce, alleging desertion. I had to serve as witness on various points. It sickens one to find a woman can be so small and cold-blooded.

"No news from Republican Club. Overland has not paid five dollars yet. Youth's Companion yarn came back prime cause of rejection they state to be unusual length of each chapter, which length is never allowed, they say, 'except in very special instances.' In the beginning, in response to my queries, I was told that 3000 words made an average chapter, and in the end, none of my chapters exceeded that amount. I take it to be merely an alleged cause, or else a mistake on the part of the one who first advised me.

"Enclosed, you will find the successful Examiner story. [Jack's own contribution to this newpaper's contest had been rejected.] Please keep it, remembering that strength of narrative and originality of plot were demanded by those in charge of contest. Some day, when the MSS. I submitted are published elsewhere, I shall forward to you so that you may compare. Also, in the successful story I send you, please endeavor to find what plot there is, if any, or if it is a study, or pseudo-study."

The Christmas of 1898 was a blue one. He faced losing his typewriter, for want of its small rent, and the day brings up dreams that make him evince a trace of unthinking masculine cruelty to the deprived girl who loves him, in his picture of that ever latent desire for fatherhood.

"About the loneliest Christmas I ever faced — guess I'll write to you. Nothing to speak of, though — everything quiet. How I wish I were down at College Park, if for no more than a couple of hours. Nobody to talk to, no friend to visit — nay, if there were, and if I so desired, I would not be in position to. Hereafter and for some time to come, you'll have to content yourself with my beastly scrawl, for this is, most probably, the last machine-made letter I shall send you. . . . The typewriter goes back on the thirty-first of December. . . . Then the New Year, and an entire change of front.

"I have profited greatly, have learned much during the last three months. How much I cannot even approximate — I feel its worth and greatness, but it is too impalpable to put down in black and white. I have studied, read, and thought a great deal, and believe I am at last beginning to grasp the situation — the general situation, my situation, and the correlative situation between the two. But I am modest, as I say, I am only beginning to grasp — I realize, that with all I have learned, I know less about it than I thought I did a couple of years ago.

"Are you aware of the paradox entailed by progress? It makes me both jubilant and sad. You cannot help feeling sad when looking over back work and realizing its weak places, its errors, its inanities; and again, you cannot but rejoice at having so improved that you are aware of it, and feel capable of better things. I have learned more in the past three months than in all my High School and College; yet, of course, they were necessary from a preparatory standpoint.

"And to-day is Christmas — it is at such periods that the vagabondage of my nature succumbs to a latent taste for domesticity. Away with the many corners of this round world! I am deaf to the call of the East and West, the North and South — a picture such as Fred [Jacobs] used to draw is before me. A comfortable little cottage, a couple of servants, a select coterie of friends, and above all, a neat little wife and a couple of diminutive models of us twain — a hanging of stockings last evening, a merry surprise this morning, the genial interchange of Christmas greeting; a cosy grate fire, the sleepy children cuddling on the floor ready for bed, a sort of dreamy communion between the fire, my wife, and myself; an assured, though quiet and monotonous, future in prospect; a satisfied knowledge of the many little amenities of civilized life which are mine and shall be mine; a genial, optimistical

contemplation — —

"Ever feel that way? Fred dreamed of it, but never tasted; I suppose I am destined likewise. So be it. . . . The whole thing is a gamble, and those least fitted to understand the game win the most. The most unfortunate gamblers are those who have or think they have systems to beat the game — they always go broke. . . .

"I shall forsake my old dogmas, and henceforth, worship the true god. 'There is no God but Chance, and Luck shall be his prophet.' He who stops to think or beget a system is lost. As in other creeds, faith alone atones. Numerous hecatombs and many a fat firstling shall I sacrifice you just watch my smoke (I beg pardon, I mean incense).

"I started to write a letter; I became nonsensical; forgive me. I go to dine at my sister's. Happy New Year to all!"

The January, 1899, Overland published his story, "To the Man on Trail." I find part of a letter written about this time, containing a reference to the skepticism of the Black Cat concerning himself; likewise his discovery of the non-existence of inspiration:

"I, from a stylistic and constructive standpoint, have wandered afar after strange gods, and find it difficult to get back to the right trails. My conversation is still learning to walk, as you will have observed. . . . Don't criticize punctuation in my letters; I type them off as fast as I can think. . . .

"The only other reason of refusal by Youth's Companion, was loosely strung narrative, which I can't exactly see; at least the Companion is publishing much worsely strung, balder stuff every issue. So be it. . . .

"I have reached a conclusion: there is no such thing as inspiration. I thought so once, and made an ass of myself accordingly. Dig is the arcana of literature, as it is of all things save being born with a silver spoon and going to Klondike. The only

inspiration is that which comes to an orator when addressing a vast multitude which is in sympathy with him.

"Poor child! You took four guesses as to the fate of my wheel and missed it, every one — soaked with my Hebrew uncle. Also other articles too numerous to mention. Lots of fun working under such conditions. You are in luck to obtain this Overland. It's the only one I possess, and I had to borrow the dime to buy it. . . .

"The Black Cat writes me concerning an MS. submitted to them. They want references, as I am unknown. Then they wish to know if I wrote it myself, if the idea is mine, if it has ever been in print in part or whole, if it has ever been submitted else where, and if others have or will have a copy of it. . . . Wonder what they'll pay? It is a pseudo-scientific tale, founded on hypothetical chemical, biological, and pathological laws, dealing with the diametric converse of chemical affinity and the mysteries of protoplasmic coagulation. Very sorry, but can't forward definitions.

"I have Cyrano de Bergerac, but no stamps to forward; besides, I would vastly prefer reading it with you. . . . Would like to talk Ella Wheeler Wilcox over with you. You seem to misunderstand her. . . .

"'Magnificent.' No word bears exactly the same significance to any two persons. Barbaric splendor is magnificence to the barbaric mind. Two such specimens as Jack and Lucille, fur-dressed, be-moccasined, etc., may strike you as bizarre — it strikes me as possessing a crude magnificence.

"Yes, some of the qualities of Jensen go into Malemute Kid. But Malemute Kid is still something more. I shall tell more about Lucille, some day."

And here is a lovely fragment, treating of an expectant young mother, a mutual friend:

"I have seen a woman in such condition, but the feeling of wonder, of sacred mystery about it, never stales upon me. It's such a natural event, but somehow, I cannot bring my own practical self to view it exactly in that light — there's a something, a vague and intangible something over and beyond, which eludes the grasp. As reason is excluded, suppose it must be classified under the head of emotion, sentiment. Well, sentiment within bounds is one of the redeeming traits of the world."

Another fragment, January 13, 1899, attests his loneliness and restlessness:

"I doubt if you can understand how disappointed I have been — thirteen days since I wrote you, and no sign. At last I thought, 'Perhaps she remembers my birthday and is waiting so her letter may arrive on that day.' Yesterday morning I thought surely it would arrive. When it did not the afternoon became invested with an infallible certainty. Alas! The postman brought a dun!

"Well, yesterday was my birthday. I did not look for 'many happy returns of the day'; nor did I receive many. My sister was the only one who wished me that, or anything else. Thought I would break the tediousness of my endless prose writing and take a little holiday. . . . So I read the morning papers; answered a couple of pressing letters; stood off the butcher and baker to satisfy the absurd cravings of life; wooed the Muse;

and sat down to write poetry. The funniest part of the whole thing is that I did it from a sense of duty."

In the course of the next letter, dated January, 1899, again he takes up arms for Ella Wheeler Wilcox; and singularly enough the paragraph he quotes from the "sweet singer," as he termed her in later life, expresses what he had felt for the Lily Maid to whom he offers the paragraph with a challenge to criticize it:

"Right in the neck — don't mention it. Tisn't exactly right to ask for criticism, and then criticize — I understand that, but, well, I wanted to show the point of view by which I worked. I was wrong in doing it, and besides, did it rather rudely. Still, I believe you're none the worse for it. I wish I could talk with you; I might explain better.

"One other thing. I don't know whether you share this belief with your brother, but think you do — that I do not take time enough; do not let a thing cool; do not write and write and rewrite; do not, in short, exhibit the peculiar, or rather, exercise the peculiar methods of the lapidary. To this, I believe, you attribute the weakness of the characters I have drawn. Two other possibilities arise. First, as I stated before, the lack of effect may be laid to your egregious ignorance of such types. Secondly, the fault may lie in me, but not in the trick of the hand or phrase. The latter may do their work very thoroughly, admirably, and through no weakness on their part, produce a puerile result. This then, is due to insincerity of vision on my part; and all the polishing of the MS. will never succeed in bettering it. You see what I am driving at. I am sure what I have written reflects almost perfectly the thought, the image in my mind. I know, if I draw the complete character of Malemute Kid in one short story, all raison de etre of a Malemute Kid series ceases.

"Am very sorry to hear you are worse; and you had been so hopeful, too. Hope my last letter had no bad effects — if it stirred you up, as it evidently did your brother, it was really criminal on my part. Forgive me. Though I guess you know already what a rough-shod barbarian I am, even at my best. At least you cannot say I am anything but candid. Unless your brother mentions it, don't let him know you know I was lectured — it's only Jack, anyway.

"By the way, forgot to tell you in my last letter, that I stand first on the eligible list for carriers. My percent was 85.38. My postman tells me I stand a good show for appointment. At first one goes on as extra man, making about forty-five dollars per month. After about six months of that he becomes regular with sixty-five dollars. But the whole year may elapse before I get anything at all. . . .

"You are unusually prejudiced against Ella Wheeler Wilcox; your brother shares it with you; I am sure your mother does too; and hence, with no further search, you fan each other s distaste. Tell me what you think of the following — style and thought:

"'The effect of the sweetly good woman upon man is like the perfume of a flower that grew in his childhood's garden, or a strain of music heard in his youth. He is ashamed of his grosser appetites when he is in her presence. He would not like her to know of his errors and vices. He feels like an other man when near her and realizes that he has a spiritual nature. Yet as the effect of the strain of music or the perfume of

the flower is necessary, so often her influence ceases when he is absent from her, unless she be the woman who rules his life.'

"Speaking of marriage — the following is what Zangwill calls Spinoza's 'aphorism on marriage': 'It is plain that Marriage is in accordance with Reason, if the desire is engendered not merely by external form, but by love of begetting children and wisely educating them; and if, in addition, the love both of husband and wife has for its cause not external form merely, but chiefly liberty of mind.'

"John Keats wrote to Miss Jeffry: 'One of the reasons that the English have produced the finest writers in the world is that the English world has ill treated them during their lives and fostered them after their deaths.'

"What do you think of it? Don't harbor the idea for a minute that I deem myself in that category. I consider myself a clumsy apprentice, learning from the master craftsmen and striving to get my hand in.

"It's midnight, and I m going to mail this before I turn in. Your brother is over in 'Frisco, gone to the theater I believe. I shall read in bed till his return. If the Overland, Black Cat, and Republicans pay me next week, within a couple of days of each other, I may be able to come down. Good-night — — "

Follows the last of this correspondence in my possession, with its opportune dovetailing as will be seen in the final paragraph; into the Cloudesley Johns series of letters; letters which carry on the evidence of Jack London's unfolding in the crucial beginnings of his rapid elevation to prominence. In the closing paragraph one marvels upon the boy's perspective on his own work, from his heartstick reference to "The White Silence," that masterly story of which George Hamlin Fitch a year thence wrote: "I would rather have written 'The White Silence' than any thing that has seen the light in fiction in ten years.

"962 East 16th St. Feb. 28, 1899.

Dear — — — : —

"Yours came to hand not half an hour ago. Am very sorry to hear of your brother's illness, and can appreciate just about how well worn out every one is. Now as to my coming down. If absolutely necessary, telegraph, and I will be there. Yet much as I would like to, my hands are so full and there is so much to be done, that I could not be just to my family and myself did I come when it was not absolutely necessary. You know how we are living from hand to mouth, nothing coming in except what is earned, even yet much of my stuff is in pawn and bills running galore.

"And I wish to turn out some good work in this coming month, for I expect a call from the Post Office in April if not sooner. As to the good work I will explain. James Howard Bridge, editor of the Overland, has at last returned. He at once sent for me. . . . This is the essence of our conversation:

"While advising the majority of candidates for the magazine field to seek other pursuits, he would not do so in my case. I showed the proper touch, only needed bringing out. Different people had been asking about me, Sunday Editors of the Examiner, etc. He had bought the Feb. Overland on the train West, and was quite taken with my

'White Silence.' Said it was the most powerful thing which had appeared in the magazine for a year; but he was afraid it was a fluke and perhaps it would be impossible for me to repeat it, etc. Now to his proposition. The Overland prints forty pages of advertisements at thirty dollars per page, while McClure's print one hundred pages three hundred dollars per page; yet printing, plates, paper, mail service, etc. cost just as much for the Overland. The only thing the Overland could scale down was the writers, and these it had to. While not in position to pay me well, he thought he could give me most valuable returns for my work. If I sustained the promise I had given, he would give me a prominent place in the pages of his magazine, see that the newspapers, reviews, etc. puffed me, and inaugurate a boom to put my name before the public. You can readily see how valuable this would be — putting future employment into my hands from publications which could afford to pay well. Yet the best he could do would be $7.50 per sketch. It would take too long to go over all we said. I may be called over again some day.

"You understand my position, I hope; yet frankly, should it be necessary you know you can call upon me. As I expect it to rain this week, the roads will be impassible and I will have to have recourse to Ferry to Alviso. . . .

"From what I have told you above, you may see that things are brightening, only as yet in the future. I may not fulfil expectations, break down, and have to still further develop before I come out; and if I do not, even present success is a matter of much

waiting. Enclosed letter from Cloudesley Johns, return with what you think of it. Don't think I've got the swellhead. I was sick at heart when I read printed 'White Silence,' and I yet fail to see anything in it. Give my regards to all, not excepting a good share to yourself, and believe me ready to come if you cannot get along without me,

"Jack."

The Cloudesley Johns Correspondence

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XVIII CLOUDESLEY

JOHNS was the first person who ever wrote to me about my work, I have heard Jack say. Mr. Johns had read "To the Man On Trail" and "The White Silence" in the January and February numbers of the Overland, and was unreserved in praise. At the head of Jack's reply is penciled, for the guidance of some one to whom Mr. Johns may have sent it for perusal:

"I prophesied greatness, and told him not to disappoint me. He won't. "Cloudesley Johns."

Jack's reply is dated at 962 East 16th St., Oakland, February 10, 1899:

"Dear sir:

What an encouragement your short note was! From the same I judge you can appreciate one s groping in the dark on strange trails. It's the first word of cheer I have received (a cheer, far more potent than publisher's checks).

"If a strong chin and a perhaps deceptive consciousness of growing strength, will aid in the fulfilment of your prophecy, it may to a certain extent be realized. Yes, my name is Jack London — rather an un-American heritage from a Yankee ancestry, dating beyond the French and Indian wars.

"Thanking you for your kindness, I am,

"Very truly yours,

"Jack London."

With his second letter, Mr. Johns sent Jack a manuscript to pass upon. And pass upon it did Jack, with no uncertain touch. It is a pity I have not space to print his critique in full, the advice is so pertinent. As an example: "It's hard to explain what I mean. Thus, for the Mexican — Statistics are not emotional, when stated in statistical manner. Don't say the Co. treated the men this way, or cheated them that way. Let the reader learn these facts through the minds of the men themselves, let the reader look at the question through their eyes. There are a variety of ways by which to do this — the most common would be to have them talk with each other. Let them carambo! and speak out the bitterness of their hearts, the injustice they suffer or think they suffer from the Co., the hatred they bear their bosses etc., etc."

He is generous in extolling wherever he honestly can:

"Your style occasionally reminds me of Bierce," or "a true stroke and a strong stroke." And I smile, in view of the clamor that often arose from frightened editorial staffs anent Jack London's offensive redbloodedness, to read his uncompromising advice: "I would not be so ghastly with that intestine; strike out 'and hung down' — (my taste only, yet I appreciate such things for I have seen much of them)."

It will be noticed that Jack had not yet conquered his own over-niceness, for the word "intestine" is used, whereas not so long thereafter he would have employed the shorter and more commanding "guts," in grim defiance of horrified friends and public — who nevertheless continued to read and extoll him.

Jack softens his forthright rending of Johns's manuscript:

"I never did any criticizing anyway; so I just say what I think hence, you gain sincerity of me, if nothing else."

He continues:

"Thanks for tip to Western Press; I have some of my earlier, immature work with them now. Suppose I'll some day call my present work just as immature. . . .

"Will take advantage of tip to Vanity Fair. . . . As to photo of myself. You shall be one of a number of friends who wait and wait in vain for a likeness of yours truly. My last posed foto was taken in sailor costume with a Joro girl in Yokohama. Have but one. But I'll do this: tell you all about me. 23 years of age last January. Stand five foot seven or eight in stocking feet — sailor life shortened me. [He measured five feet nine inches at full stature.] At present time weight 168 Ibs.; but readily jump same pretty close to

180 when I take up outdoor life and go to roughing it. Am clean shaven — when I let 'em come, blonde mustache and black whiskers — but they don't come long. Clean face makes my age enigmatical, and equally competent judges variously estimate my age from twenty to thirty. Greenish-gray eyes, heavy brows which meet; brown hair, which, by the way, was black when I was born. . . . Face bronzed through many long-continued liaisons with the sun, though just now, owing to bleaching process of sedentary life, it is positively yellow. Several scars — hiatus of eight front upper teeth, usually disguised with false plate. There I am in toto.

"Tell me what you think of inclosed verse — get your mother's criticism too. Tender my thanks to your mother for her short note." [Mr. Johns' mother, Mrs. Jeania Peet, to whom Jack at intervals refers, is an exceptionally talented woman — writer, sculptress, and "artist of happiness" as Jack expressed it; mother of gifted sons, and once stepmother of our American poet Percy Mackaye.]

"Feb. 27, 1899.

"Dear sir:

". . . I cannot express the effect of hearing that what I have written has pleased others, for you know, of all people in the world, the author is the least competent to judge what he produces. . . . When I have finished a thing I cannot, as a rule, tell whether it is good or trash. . . .

"My life has been such a wandering one that there are great gaps in my reading and education, and I am so conscious of them that I am afraid of myself — besides, in the course of a sketch, I become saturated with the theme till at last it palls upon me.

"I appreciate, in a way, the high praise of being likened to Tourgenieff. Though aware of the high place he occupies in literature, we are as strangers. I think it was in Japan I read his 'House of Gentlefolk'; but that is the only book of his I have ever seen — I do not even know if the title is correct. There is so much good stuff to read and so little time to do it in. It sometimes makes me sad to think of the many hours I have wasted over mediocre works, simply for want of better.

"I can only thank you for your kindness: it has put new life into me and at the same time placed a few landmarks on the uncharted path the beginner must travel. Would you tell me of the error you mentioned? The compositors made some bad mistakes, the worst being a wilful change in the title, and a most jarring one. It was plainly typewritten 'To the Man On Trail'; this they printed 'To the Man on the Trail.' What trail? The thing was abstract.

"Yours sincerely,"

"My dear sir:

How I appreciate your complaining of your friends when they say of your work, 'Splendid,' 'Excellent,' etc. That was my one great trouble. The farther I wandered from the beaten track (I mean the proper trend of modern style and literary art), the more encomiums were heaped upon me — by my friends. And believe me, the darkness I strayed into was heartbreaking. Surely, I have since thought, they must have seen where I was blind. So I grew to distrust them, and one day, between four and five

months ago, awoke to the fact that I was all wrong. Everything crumbled away, and I started, from the beginning, to learn all over again. . . .

". . . I do join with you, and heartily, in admiration of Robert Louis Stevenson. What an example he was of application and self development! As a story-teller there isn't his equal; the same might almost be said of his essays. While the fascination of his other works is simply irresistible. To me, the most powerful of all is his 'Ebb Tide.' There is no comparison possible between him and that other wonderful countryman of his; there is no common norm by which we may judge them. And I see I do not share with you in my admiration of Kipling. He touches the soul of things. 'He draws the Thing as he sees it for the God of Things as they Are.' It were useless for me to mention all my favorites of his; let one example suffice. The Song of the Banjo, and just one line from it. Away in the wilderness where younger sons are striving for hearth and saddle of their own, the banjo is singing, reminding them of the world from which they are exiled: "'Hear me babble what the maddest won't confess:

I am memory and torment; I am town;

I am all that ever went with evening dress.'

How often, a thousand miles beyond the bounds of civilization, thirsting for a woman's face, a daily paper, a good book, or better music, — sick for the charms of the old life — have I had that line recalled by the tumpy tum of a banjo, epitomizing the whole mood. . . .

"No; I appreciate how educating my roving has been. At the same time I am sorry that my years could not have been condensed in some magic way, so as to have introduced an equal amount of the scholar's life. That's the trouble of having one's nature dominated by conflicting impulses.

"0 yes: I have children constantly footing it to the silent sullen peoples who run the magazines! The Overland . . . 'The Son of the Wolf' was sent to them a week ago; they will have it out in the April number, if possible, illustrated by Dixon. I have seen some of his Indian work and think he s just the man for my types. . . .

"Speaking of the Black Cat: sometime since, they accepted a pseudo-scientific tale from me. I want to warn you, in case it comes out in the next year or so, that it was written several years ago — so you will forgive it. I hardly remember what it is like. The title is enough — 'By a Thousand Deaths.'

"Another friend made the same criticism of 'sole speck of life.' I was saturated with my thought — on the relation of the soul to infinity, etc. — was dealing with the soul of Malemute Kid and did not at the time recognize the dogs. Such slips are liable, since, like you, I can't revise manuscript. My favorite method of composition is to write from fifty to three hundred words, then type it in the Ms. to be submitted. Whatever emendations are made, are put in in the course of typing or inserted with ink in the Ms. . . . Have at last learned to compose first, to the very conclusion, before touching pen to paper. I find I can thus do better work.

". . . And I warn you, I am as harsh on others as I expect them to be on me. This primrose dalliance among friends never leads anywhere. I once had a friend [this was

Fred Jacobs] — we went to college and did much of our studying together — with whom we could candidly discuss each other, holding back nothing. But he lies dead in Manila now. Yet once in a while even he got angry when I expressed my opinion too plainly.

". . . How are you off for humor? To save my life, while I can appreciate extremely well, I cannot develop a creative faculty for the same."

"Mar. 15, 1899.

"Dear sir:

". . . I agree with you that R. L. S. never turned out a foot of polished trash, and that Kipling has; but — well, Stevenson never had to worry about ways or means, while Kipling, a mere journalist, hurt himself by having to seek present sales rather than pothumous fame. . . . Kipling has his hand upon the 'fatted soul of things.'

". . . Speaking of humor — find enclosed triolets, the first, and also the last, I ever attempted. Perhaps there's no market for such things. Judge and Life refused them and I quit.

"So you have completed a novel? Lucky dog! How I envy you! I have only got from ten to twenty mapped out but God knows when I'11 ever get a chance to begin one, much less finish it. I have figured that it is easier to make one of from thirty-five to sixty thousand words and well written, then one three or four times as long and poorly written. What do you think about it?"

Mar. 30, 1899.

"My dear friend:

"Three or four months on the edge of the desert, all alone — how I envy you; and again, how I thank Heaven I am not in a similar position. What a glorious place it must be in which to write! That's one of the drawbacks of my present quarters. Everybody comes dropping in, and I haven't the heart to turn them away. Every once in a while, some old shipmate turns up. With but one exception, this is their story: just returned from a long voyage; what a wonderful fellow Jack London is; what a good comrade he always was; never liked anybody in all the world so much; have a barrel of curios aboard which will bring over in a couple of days for a present; big payday coming; expect to get paid off to-morrow — 'Say, Jack old boy, can you lend us a couple of dollars till to-morrow? That's the way they always wind up. And then I scale them down about half, give them the money and let them go. Some I never hear from again; others come back the third and fourth time.

"But I have the fatal gift of making friends without exertion. And they never forget me. Of course they are not of the above caliber; but I'd just as soon give them the money and let them go, as to have them eat up my time as they always do. Among my feminine friends I am known as 'only Jack' 'Nough said. Any trouble, tangles, etc., finds me called upon to straighten out. Since Saturday morning I have spent my whole time for one of them, and have accomplished what she and her friends failed to do in five years. This evening I shall finally have settled the whole thing to her satisfaction but look at the time I have lost. Of course, remuneration is out of the question; but

it will have so endeared me to her, that she ll call again the next time she gets into a scrape. And so it goes — time — time — time. How precious the hours are!

"But I should not be unjust. The other afternoon I met an old friend on the car. Delighted to see me; must go back to the 'society' again. I finally promised to go down the following night; but lo, he had spread the news among other friends who had not seen me for two long years. I really did not think they or people in general ever had cared so much for me, and I was ready to weep with sheer happiness at the sincerity of their delight. . . . Couldn't escape; the whole night was lost among them; supper had been ordered, other forgotten friends invited, etc.

"And to me, the strangest part is, that while considering myself blessed above all with the best of friends, I know that I have never done anything to deserve them or to hold them. Mind you, the crowd I have reference to in previous paragraph, has never received a favor of me, nor is bound to me by the slightest social, racial, or perhaps intellectual tie. And so it goes.

"But I have been isolated so much, that I can no longer bear to be torn away for long at a time from the city life. In this particular you will see my thankfulness at not filling your position. Yet you may keep in touch with the world with those trains ever passing.

"I suppose you see many of the genus hobo, do you not? I, too, was a tramp once. . . . I remember, one night, leaving a swell function in Michigan and crossing the lake to Chicago. There, the following morning found me hustling at back doors for a breakfast. That night I made over two hundred miles into Ohio before they finally put me off the train. I wonder what the young lady whom I took into supper would have thought, had she seen me anywhere from twelve to twenty-four hours after.

". . . How I chatter — all about self! . . . I cannot rewrite; but in turn, I write more slowly. I used to go at it like a hurricane, but found I failed to do myself justice. . . . After sending criticism, and being reminded by the same of Bierce, I dug up 'Soldiers and Civilians.' I notice in his work the total absence of sympathy. They are wonderful in their way, yet owe nothing to grace of style; I might almost characterize them as having a metallic intellectual brilliancy. They appeal to the mind, but not to the heart. Yes; they appeal to the nerves, too; but you will notice in a psychological and not emotional manner. I am a great admirer of him, by the way, and never tire of his Sunday work in the Examiner.

". . . A strong will can accomplish anything — I believe you to be possessed of the same — why not form the habit of studying? There is no such thing as inspiration, and very little of genius. Dig, blooming under opportunity, results in what appears to be the former, and certainly makes possible the development of what original modicum of the latter one may possess. Dig is a wonderful thing, and will move more mountains than faith ever dreamed of. In fact, Dig should be the legitimate father of all self-faith.

" . . . And by the way, what do you think of Le Gallienne? As a writer I like him. . . . I know nothing about him as a man. . . . In his version of the Rubaiyat, I was especially struck by the following, describing his search for the secret of life:

"'Up, up where Parrius hoofs stamp heaven's floor,
My soul went knocking at each starry door,
Till on the stilly top of heaven's stair,
Clear-eyed I looked — and laughed — and climbed no more.'

". . . My one great weakness is the study of human nature. Knowing no God, I have made of man my worship; and surely I have learned how vile he can be. But this only strengthens my regard, because it enhances the mighty heights he can bring himself to tread. How small he is, and how great he is! But this weakness, this desire to come in touch with every strange soul I meet, has caused me many a scrape.

"I may go to Paris in 1900; but great things must occur first. I like the story you sent. No sentimental gush, no hysteria, but the innate pathos of it! . . . Our magazines are so goody-goody, that I wonder they would print a thing as risque and as good as that. This undue care to not bring the blush to the virgin cheek of the American young girl, is disgusting. And yet she is permitted to read the daily papers! Ever read Paul Bourget's comparison of the American and French young women?"

To a warning from Cloudesley Johns, Jack had replied:

"I realize the truth in your criticism of ringing the changes on Malemute Kid. . . . But you will notice in 'The Son of the Wolf' that he appears only cursorily. In the June tale he will not appear at all, or even be mentioned. You surprise me with the aptness of your warning, telling me I may learn to love him too well myself. I am afraid I am rather stuck on him — not on the one in print, but the one in my brain. I doubt if I ever shall get him in print."

"April 17, 1899.

"My dear friend: —

"Am afraid you will suffer offense every time I write to you. I never wrote a letter yet without forcing myself to it, and I never completed one without sighing a great sigh of relief. As a correspondent I shall never shine. But O how dearly I love to read the letters which come to me from those who little know how I dislike answering. And I never would answer, did I not know they would also cease. . . .

". . . I see you are opposed to Jingoism. Yet I dare not express my views, for to so do myself adequate justice, would require at least one hundred thousand words. An evolutionist, believing in Natural Selection, half believing Maithus' 'Law of Population,' and a myriad other factors thrown in, I cannot but hail as unavoidable, the Black and the Brown going down before the White. I see, after stating that I would not express my views, I have done the contrary. Will shut up at once.

" . . . Town Topics has accepted a two eight-line stanza humor ous fancy. Have you ever dealt with them? [This was "If I were God One Hour," published May 11, 1899.]

". . . But enemies — bah! . . . Lick a man, when it comes to a pinch, or be licked, but never hold a grudge. Settle it once and all, and forgive.

"All my life I have sought an ideal chum — such things as ideals are never attainable, anyway. I never found the man in whom the elements were so mixed that he could satisfy, or come any where near satisfying my ideal. A brilliant brain — good; and

then the same united with physical cowardice — nit. And vice versa. So it goes and has gone. . . .

"It's a great thing, this coming to believe 'that the universe can continue to exist and operate in a satisfactory manner, without the perpetuation of one s own individuality.' I am an agnostic, with one exception: I do believe in the soul. But in the latter case, I can only see with death, the disintegration of the spirit's individuality, similar to that of the flesh. If people could come to realize the utter absurdity, logically, of the finite contemplating the infinite!

". . . Don't agree with you regarding your criticism of face torn away by bear. Had forgotten Kipling's 'Truce,' but anyway it does not matter. Many men are killed yearly, up there, and many more fearfully mangled. If we should allow the successful men to copyright any topic they once happen to camp upon, what the devil would you and I and a very numerous tribe do?

". . . Ran across these lines of Helen Hunt Jackson; have been haunting me ever since:

"His thoughts were song, his life was singing,

Men's hearts like harps he held and smote,

But ever in his heart went ringing,

Ringing the song he never wrote

"Yours, as ever, sincerely," "April 22, 1899.

"My dear friend:

"I remember 'Thomas the Doubter.' A friend of mine quoted portions of it one night, but I was just dozing off and failed to follow him. It is very good, and how one can, in the face of it, stomach such things as the infinite mercy of the most infinitely merciless of creators, is more than I can understand. Pardon the double superlative. . . .

". . . I sometimes fear that, while I shall surely develop expression some day, I lack in origination. Perhaps this feeling is due to the fact that almost every field under the sun, and over it too, has been so thoroughly exploited by others. Sometimes I hit upon a catchy title, and just as sure as I do I find some one else has already used it.

". . . Ha! ha! You demand comfort in place of conventionality, eh? Ditto here. To-morrow I shall put on a white shirt, and I shall do it under protest. I wear a sweater most of the time, and pay calls, etc., in a bicycle suit. My friends have passed through the stage of being shocked, and no matter what I should do henceforth, would, I know, remark It's only Jack. I once rode a saddle horse from Fresno to the Yosemite Valley, clad in almost tropical nudity, with a ball room fan and a silk parasol. It was amusing to witness the countryside turn out as I went along. Some of my party who lagged behind, heard guesses hazarded as to whether I was male or female. The women of the party were tenderly nurtured, and I hardly know if they have recovered yet, or if their proprieties rather have yet come down to normal. In fact, there was only one I failed to disturb, and he was the rugged old Chinese cook — nothing shocked him except the Mariposa Big Trees. Coming unexpectedly upon the first one . . . he blurted forth 'Gee Glist! Chop'm up four foot ties, make'm one damn railroad!' . . .

"As to evening dress, I think many a man looks extremely well in it. Of course, not all by a large majority. I like that clean feeling of well fitting clothes, etc. — which is strange for one who has passed through as many dirty periods as I have. But there are very few women I care to see in décolleté. . . . As to the breeding of cripples, I shall try to get something uncompressed before marrying, and then, if I have to take her off to a desert isle, I'll see that no compression goes on while she is carrying any flesh and bone of mine. Barrenness is a terrible thing for a woman; but the paternal instinct is so strong in me that it would almost kill me to be the father of a child not physically or men tally sound. Sometimes I think, because this is so very strong in me, that I am destined to die childless. I can understand a Napoleon divorcing a Josephine, even casting aside state reasons. At the same time, I could not do likewise under similar circumstances. I can condone in others what I haven't the heart, or have too much heart to do myself.

"How one wanders on!

"I also send you some of my schoolboy work. Stuff written years ago. . . . Through reading it you may gain a comprehension of one of my many sides, though of course you must take into consideration my youth at the time of writing, if you should try to weigh my presentation of the subjects in hand. People thought I would outgrow that condition and fall back into the conservative ways of thinking. I am happy to say they were mistaken. But believe me, while a radical, I am not fanatical; nor am I anything but normal, and fallible, in all affairs of reason. Emotion is quite another matter. The trouble is so few understand Socialism or its advocates. But I shall cut this short, else I will be delivering a diatribe on the dismal science.

". . . There is only one kind of infallibility that I can tolerate, nay, I can enjoy it, and that is the infallibility of the good-natured fool. As for cowardice in man: I can forgive the errors of a generation of women far more easily than one poltroon of the opposite gender.

"'In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud,
Under the bludgeoning of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.'

Such, in all things, is what I admire in men. The 'fine frenzy' of the poet can rouse no greater number of tingles along my spine than a Captain going down on the bridge with his ship; the leading of a forlorn hope, or even a criminal who puts up a plucky fight against overwhelming odds. . . . Say what you will, I love that magnificent scoundrel, Rupert of Hentzau. And a man who can take a blow or an insult unmoved, without retaliating — Paugh! — I care not if he can voice the sublimest sentiments, I sicken."

April 30, 1899.

"My dear friend: —

". . . I like the form of refusal you sent me. Here you will find a couple I received the middle of this week. Disagree with both as a matter of course. Can t see any other

ending, in the nature of things, to the McClure Ms., while Frank Leslie's well, that poor young American girl who mustn't be shocked, nor receive anything less insipid than mare s milk she seems to rule our destinies.

". . . So you, also, are a Socialist? How we are growing! I remember when you could almost count them on one s great toes in Oakland. Job Harriman is considered to be the best popular socialist speaker on the Coast; Austin Lewis the best historical, and Strawn-Hamilton the best philosophical. The latter has just gone to his old home in Mississippi, where he remains until December. Then he will go to Washington to fill a private secretaryship under some legislative relative. He spent 48 straight hours with me a couple of days before he went. He has a marvelous brain, one, I think, which could put that of Macaulay s to shame. He has served no less than twenty-nine sentences for vagrancy, to say nothing of the times turned up on trial, in the several years preceding his joining the socialists. As interesting a character in his way as your Holt, who, by the way, I would like to run across. The world is full of such, only the world does not generally know it. But I don t agree with you regarding the death stroke to individuality coming with the change of system. There will always be leaders, and no man can lead without fighting for his position — leaders in all branches. Sometimes I feel as you do about it, but not for long at a time.

"I see we at least agree about courage. A man without courage is to me the most despicable thing under the sun, a travesty on the whole scheme of creation.

". . . You misunderstand me. It was the very strength of paternal desire, coupled with the perversity of things, which made me feel doubtful of ever realizing it. The things we wish the most for usually pass us by — at least that has been my experience. He who fears death usually dies, unless he is too contemptible, and then the gods suffer him to live on and damn his fellow creatures.

". . . See Frank Norris has been taken up by the McClures. Have you read his 'Moran of the Lady Letty'? It's well done.

" . . . My mother also wishes to be cremated. I think it is the cleanest and healthiest, and best; but somehow, I don't care what becomes of my carcass when I have done with it. As for being buried alive — he's a lucky devil who can die twice, and no matter how severe the pang, it's only for a moment. I am sure the pain of dissolution can be no greater than the moment the forceps are laid upon a jumping tooth. If it is greater, then it must be stunning in its effect.

"Do you remember Robert Louis Stevenson moralizing on death in his 'Inland Voyage'? It is a beautiful expansion of 'Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die.'

You asked about the age of Prof. Markham: I saw him down at the Section last Sunday night, when Jordan spoke on 'The Man Who Was Left.' He (Markham) is a noble looking man, snow white hair and beard, and very close to sixty. I send you a miserable reporter's account of the meeting, in which nobody or nothing is done justice.

"You really must pardon this letter; my mind is dead for the time being. Have been reading a little too heavily. Just as a sample, I shall give you a list of what I am as

present working on, to say nothing of three daily papers, and a stagger of an attempt at current literature:

"Saint-Amand's Revolution of 1848.'

Brewster's 'Studies in Structure and Style.'

Jordan's 'Footnotes to Evolution.'

Tyrell's 'Sub-Arctics,'

and Böhm-Bawerk's 'Capital and Interest' — this latter is a refutation of Carl Marx's theory of values, as determined or measured by labor.

"Good night — By the way, I have forgotten to inform you that an unwelcome guest has annoyed me all evening, and is now getting ready to crawl into bed. This has bothered me not a little. He is such a fool."

This was one of the drawbacks of Jack's quarters — that he must share his bed with no matter what guest chose to remain, invited or otherwise. "And I'd as soon sleep with a snake as with a man," he complained to his sister.

And now I come across an incomplete letter to the Lily Maid, of date May 4, 1899:

"Dear: — — —

"Yours to hand yesterday morning; caught me in bed, and sick abed for the first time in over three years. But I couldn't stand the pressure, so got up in the afternoon. Feeling too heavy and forlorn to-day to do anything, hence, this prompt reply. Your brother has already remarked that little trait of mine; inflicting letters upon my friends, only at such periods that I cannot do anything else.

"What am I doing? Same old thing. Got a twenty-five dollar offer from Youth and Age. Not so bad, or at least better than having the thing die in my drawer. It stands for ten days work, so I get two and a half per day for it. I notice in to-day's want column of the Examiner an ad. which runs to the following purpose: 'Wanted: a bright, intelligent, well educated young man, thoroughly competent at stenography and typewriting, for office work. References required. $4 per week to commence.' He who runs may read — he'd have to work nearly two months to get what I expect to get.

"And there's this redeeming feature in thus getting rid of my earlier work: it cleans up my books ; reduces my stamp outlay; and gives me the wherewithal to send new things a-traveling. . . .

"Sea Sprite and Shooting Star: Held the 'Call' up to find out whether they paid or not. Their reply was 'not.' Then I told them to return; they replied by giving me hogwash and sending proofsheets. Subsequent letter from me to them was courteously sententious, and if, on top of that, they dare to publish, I'll sue them.

". . . Have you seen this month's Black Cat? It has my story, written a couple of years ago, revised hastily and then sadly man-gled by those at the other end. It can only be taken for a penny's worth of rot. You have not told me of 'The Son of the Wolf.' May Overland, have you seen it? Maynard Dixon has done excellent work — excellent is even too weak to do him justice. . . .

"Then I received a refusal from Frank Leslie's Monthly. . . . 'Well written, too risque for our use. We would be glad to consider a short story if you wish to submit one in

the Fall.' . . . Encouraging, to say the least. Well, well, plenty of dig, and an equal amount of luck may enable me some day to make perhaps a small livelihood out of the pen. But what's the diff.? I get so hungry sometimes, hungry for all I have not, that I'd rather quit the whole thing and lie down for the good long sleep, did I not have my mother to look out for. This world holds so much, and it takes but such a little to get a fair share of it" — —

The remainder is missing.

I take up the Johns correspondence at May 18, 1899.

"My dear friend: —

"Back again at the machine. How one grows to miss it ! And you did not mention my scrawl — said scrawl feels slighted. . . .

"I do most heartily agree with you as regards drowning. My stock statement is that I should prefer hanging to drowning. From this you may infer that I, as a strong swimmer, have had some experience. One notable instance was similar to the one you mention as happening to you: that of being dragged down by another, who, perhaps, wasn't worth saving. It happened to me by the dock, with a crowd above but not a boat or boat hook to be had, and the tide very low — twenty feet nearly from the water to the top of the wharf. I was about sixteen, and the lad I was trying to pull out, a wharf-rat of about twelve or thirteen. Really, I saw nothing of my past life, nor beautiful scenes, nor blissful sensations. My whole consciousness was concentrated upon the struggle, my sensation upon the awful feeling of suffocation. An other time, I fought a lonely battle in the ocean surf on a coral beach. Carelessly going in swimming from a sheltered nook, I had drifted too far out and along the shore, and not having the strength to stem my way back, was forced to a landing on the open beach. Not a soul in sight. The seas would swat me onto the beach and jerk me clear again. I'd dig hand and foot into the sand, but fail to hold. It was a miracle that I finally did pull out, nearly gone, in a fainting condition, and pounded into a jelly-like condition." Here he gives a brief account of his attempted suicide by drowning in the Carquinez Straits, ending with "And I was about gone, paddling as the man in the Black Cat paddled, with the land breeze sending each snappy little wave into my mouth. Was still keeping afloat mechanically, when a couple of fishermen from Vallejo picked me up, and can dimly recollect being hauled over the side. No, drowning is not a pleasant shuffle.

". . . As with you, socialism was evolutionary, though I came to it quite a while ago. You say, 'that to retain a leadership one must possess, or acquire, all the virtues which society and politics demand of their favorites — hypocricy, insincerity, deceit, etc.' Robt. Louis Stevenson was a man looked up to, a leader of certain very large classes, in certain very fine ways. I am sure he lacked those virtues. So it would be in all the arts, sciences, professions, sports, etc. . . . Of course, I realize you mainly applied your statement to politics. But have you ever figured how much of this fawning and low trickery, etc., is due to party politics; and with the removal of party politics and the whole spoils system from the field, cannot you figure a better class of men

coming to the fore as political leaders — men, whose sterling qualities to-day prevent them crawling through the muck necessary to attain party chieftainship?

“. . . How concisely you analyzed the lack of unity in the May tale — a lack of unity which you may see is recognized in the very title, ‘The Men of Forty Mile.’ The sub-heading was not of my doing, as were none of the others. I wonder what you will think of ‘In a Far Country,’ which comes out in the June Number, and which contains no reference to Malemute Kid or any other character which has previously appeared. As I recollect my own judgment of it, it is either bosh, or good; either the worst or the best of the series I have turned out. I shall await your opinion of it with impatience.

“. . . We live and learn. With such letters as this, the stereotyped forms of ending have always tortured me. I now comprehend the beauty of yours and make haste to adopt it.

“Jack London.” “May 28, 1899.

“My dear friend: —

“. . . further, believe me, I do not look for the regeneration of mankind in a day: nor do I think man must be born again before socialism can attain its ends. The first motor principle of the movement is selfishness, pure, downright selfishness; the elevation merely an ultimate and imperative result of better environment.

“. . . As you have lost your respect for Roosevelt, so had I long ago lost mine for George Washington, because of the ill manner in which he, too, treated Paine — Paine, who in this case was a contemporary, and who had in his own way done probably as much for the American Revolution as had his immortal traducer. However, I believe you to be less tolerant than I, at least concerning religion. Apropos of Dewey’s alleged remark that God superintended the fight in Manila Bay, and your conjecture as to whether he (Dewey) ever took the trouble to notice that God didn’t prevent the blowing up of the Maine, brings to recollection a similar query from the ‘Social Contract’ of Jean Jacques Rosseau: ‘All power comes from God, I acknowledge it; but all sickness comes from Him, too: does that mean that it is forbidden to call a physician?’“ Jack then devotes a paragraph to Schopenhauer’s “terrific arraignment of women, or rather his philippic against them,” and precedes some extracts: “Don’t believe that I endorse them in toto.”

“June 7, 1899.

“Dear friend: —

“. . . I have been busy. Have been going out more than at any other time in the past eight months; have been studying harder than ever in my life before; and have been turning out more copy than hitherto. Finding that I must go out more and that I was becoming stale and dead, I have really ventured to be gay in divers interesting ways.

“Yes; the time for Utopias and dreamers is past. Coöperative colonies, etc., are at best impossible (I don’t mean religious ones), and never was there less chance for their survival than to-day.”

“June 12, 1899.

“My dear friend:

"Yes, I agree with you, 'In a Far Country' should have been the best of the series, but was not. As to the clumsiness of struc-ture, you have certainly hit it. I doubt if I shall ever be able to polish. I permit too short a period — one to fifteen minutes — to elapse between the longhand and the final MS. You see, I am groping, groping for my own particular style, for the style which should be mine but which I have not yet found.

"As to plagiarism: you seem very hyper-sensitive on the subject. Know thou, that 'In a Far Country' was written long after I had read your 'Norton-Drake Co.' Yet I had no thought of the coincidence till you mentioned it. Great God! Neither you nor I have been the first to make use of a broken back, nor, because of this fact, should we be debarred from using it. How many broken legs, broken backs, broken hearts, etc., have been worked up, over and over again? . . . Take 'White Silence,' how many have made use of a falling tree. For instance, Captain Kettle in June Pearson's. . . . I see no reason in the world why you should cut the broken back out of 'Charge it to the Company.' . . .

"Pardon brevity. I have been writing this and entertaining half a dozen friends at the same time. Really don't know what I have been saying."

A second letter of June 12:

". . . How I envy you the thrill of life, such as must surely have been gained through your mix-up with the Greasers. In this prosy city existence I have even failed to tangle up with a lone footpad. And one cannot really come to appreciate one s life, save by playing with it and hazarding it a little.

". . . Have also tried my hand at storiettes for Munsey, but without success, then I ship same off to Tillitson & Son, 203 Broadway, N. Y. C. Figuring it up, it seems to me they pay some where around four dollars per thousand. . . . They are a syndicate . . . but their demand for such stuff seems unlimited. I don t like that kind of work, myself, as I can readily see you do not. . . .

Yes; going out more isn't a bad idea; but as to the less study, can't agree with you. My mind has at least reached partial maturity and I believe I know how far I may go without injury to it. And when I do go out, I assure you I go out with a vengeance, and throw utterly to the winds all thought and worry of my every-day life. And it has been my luck never to be without the one companion to share with me temporary oblivion. No; I don't mean dope, but a proper unadulterated good time with one who knows a good time when it is seen.

"How rabid you are! I feel called upon, for that matter, to tell you that you are really narrow in some things. Remember, the infidel that positively asserts that there is no God, no first cause, is just as imbecile a creature as the deist that asserts positively that there is a God, a first cause. Have you ever read Herbert Spencer's First Principles of synthetic philosophy, and noted the line, the adamantine line of demarkation he draws between the knowable and the unknowable. Pardon me, I should not have allowed myself this discursion, for I have never heard you make that rash negative assertion. But, as regards your Anglo-Saxon views. In one breath you say you are of pure Anglo-

Saxon descent on both sides and that your descent (evidently on one side at least) can be traced to the Welsh kings. Know thou, that the Welsh blood is really no nearer (save geographically) and no farther away from the Anglo-Saxon, than is the Hindoo blood of India or the Iranic of Persia. The Welsh, of which breed were the Welsh kings you mention, belongs to the Celtic branch of the Aryan Family, as the pure Russian does to the Slavonic, the Hindoo and Persian to the Indo-Iranic. All the same family, but distinctly different branches. What is the Anglo-Saxon, as we understand it to-day? Let me make you miserable with a little history and ethnology." And he goes on at some length polishing up his memory of what he has read, continuing :

"But enough, this is not my hobby, as you may think, but only one portion of my philosophy or whatever you wish to call the entire edifice of my views. Some day we shall meet and I may be able to explain myself better."

His next letter, of June 23, proceeds with the racial discussion. This paragraph is of especial note as regards his biological attitude toward women:

"Remember, there is even a higher logic than moral or formal logic. Moral and formal logic demonstrate thoroughly that woman shall vote; but the higher logic says she shall not. Why? Because she is woman; because she carries that within her that will prevent, that which will no more permit her economic and suffragal inde-pendence, that it will permit her to refrain from sacrificing herself to the uttermost to man. I speak of woman in general. So, with the race problem. The different families of man must yield to law — to LAW, inexorable, blind, unreasoning law, which has no knowledge of good or ill, right or wrong; which has no preference, grants no favors, whether to the atoms in a molecule of water or to any of the units in our whole sidereal system; which is unconscious, abstract, just as is Time, Space, Matter, Motion; of which it is impossible to postulate a beginning nor an end. This is the law, the higher logic, which the petty worms of men must bow to, whether they will or no.

"Socialism is not an ideal system, devised by man for the happiness of all life; nor for the happiness of all men; but it is devised for the happiness of certain kindred races. It is devised so as to give more strength to these certain kindred favored races so that they may survive and inherit the earth to the extinction of the lesser, weaker races. The very men who advocate socialism, may tell you of the brotherhood of all men, and I know they are sincere; but that does not alter the law — they are simply instruments, working blindly for the betterment of these certain kindred races, and working detriment to the inferior races they would call brothers. It is the law; they do not know it, perhaps; but that does not change the logic of events."

"War," Jack declared upon a later occasion, "is a divine beneficence compared with mixed breeding!" During the several years before his death, his experimentation with livestock only cemented his convictions. As witness this letter, written in his last year, to a young Athenian who had dared pit his unripened opinions against the elder's philosophy:

In reply to yours of Dec. 24, 1915. . . . God abhors a mongrel. In nature there is no place for a mixed-breed. The purest breeds, when they are interbred, produce mongrels.

Breed a Shire stallion to a Thoroughbred mare, and you get a mongrel. Breed a pure specimen of greyhound to a pure specimen of bulldog, and you get mongrels. The purity of the original strains of blood seems only to increase the mongrelization that takes place when these strains are interbred or cross-bred.

"Consult the entire history of the human world in all past ages, and you will find that the world has ever belonged to the pure breed and has never belonged to the mongrel. I give you this as a challenge: Read up your history of the human race. Remember, Nature permits no mongrel to live — or, rather, Nature permits no mongrel to endure.

"There's no use in your talking to me about the Greeks. There are not any Greeks. You are not a Greek. The Greeks died two thousand years ago, when they became mongrelized. Just because a lot of people talk the Greek language, does not make those people pure Greeks. Because a lot of people talk Italian, does not make them Roman. The Greeks were strong as long as they remained pure. They were possessed with power, achievement, culture, creativeness, individuality. When they mongrelized themselves by breeding with the slush of conquered races, they faded away, and have played nothing but a despicable part ever since in the world's history. This is true of the Roman; this is true of the Lombards; this is true of the Phoenicians; this is true of the Chaldeans; this is true of the Egyptians; this is not true of the Gipsies, who have kept themselves pure. This is not true of the Chinese, it is not true of the Japanese, this is not true of the Germans, this is not true of the Anglo-Saxons. This is not true of the Yaquis of Mexico. It is true of the fifteen million mongrels of Mexico; it is true of the mongrels that inhabit the greater portion of the West Indies, and who inhabit South America and Central America from Cape Horn to the Rio Grande. This is true of the mongrelized Hindoos.

"Read up your history. It is all there on the shelves. And find me one case where you can breed a greyhound with a bulldog and get anything but a mongrel. Read up your history. You will find it all there on the shelves. And find me one race that has retained its power of civilization, culture, and creativeness, after it mongrelized itself. Read up your history, and try to find any remnant of a pure Roman race, of a pure Hindoo race. . . .

"You know how I am. I talk straight out. When I am asked to hit straight from the shoulder, I hit straight from the shoulder. It is now up to you to come back at me on the very question at issue. . . .

"And, in conclusion, let me repeat — you know the straight talker I am — that no matter how straight-out and savagely I talk, my hand rests no less warmly upon your shoulder, and that only you can be offended by me, and that you cannot offend me.

"Affectionately yours."

To Cloudesley he goes on:

". . . 'The artist is known by what he omits.' That is my chiefest obstacle, one that I am fully aware of, and one that I struggle ceaselessly to overcome. That is why I am trying my hand at storiettes. I do not like them, but I realize what excellent training they give. Also, the shekels they bring in are not exactly distasteful to me. To me, all

my work is practice, experimentative, and I consider myself lucky to be able to sell the sheets of my copybook.

"Forty-six stories — I have not written that many in all my life — why it's a book! Neither have I ever written a book. Nor shall I till I consider myself prepared, and time and place, and man are met."

On July 5, 1899, reference, I believe, is made to the young woman he subsequently married:

"Just got home this morning, and have been hard at it ever since. Have written fifteen hundred words of a new story, transacted all my business, started a few more of my returned children on the turf (as you put it), and am now winding up the last letter of my correspondence. Go away again on Friday, for a jaunt on wheels down country with a young lady whom I have been promising for some time. She made me a call to-day and fore-closed. We stop with mutual friends along the way."

Then he comments upon some editorial errors in his story "The Priestly Prerogative," published in the July Overland, ending his letter: "Damn editors!"

The letter of July 22, illustrates Jack London's law-abiding proclivity, as well as his determination to be an artist: "As for myself, I believe in these present marriage customs and laws, but that is no reason why I should sway my tale one way or the other for aught save the tale's sake. As for my judgment of the tale, I like it least of the series. Just about as much as I do the next which is now in press and which is the last of the Overland series. ["The Wife of a King."]

"As to the hog-train — when a passenger goes by in the daylight, shunning six-wheelers it has been my custom to swing under between the trucks and ride the rods — by this I do not mean the gunnels, brake-beams, or springs, or brake-rods. I have often gone along that way in the daytime, with feet cocked up, reading a novel, peering out at the scenery, and enjoying a comfortable if sometimes dusty smoke.

" . . . As soon as I get well ahead of the game — very problematical — I shall escape all my friends, and creditors alas! by engaging cabin passage on a big English ship for a voyage round the Horn to Europe. Shall go aboard with a box of books, a typewriter, and several boxes of paper, and say! I won't do a thing to things in general and particular. I'll write some sea yarns soaked in the atmosphere, besides other and what I would consider more important work, and do no end of reading up all that which the present and continuous flood of current literature will not permit me to enjoy. Ah plans, plans! How many have I builded! and how few have I realized.

"July 29, 1899.

"My dear friend:

"Trip knocked out in the middle. Whole lot of company came to house — very small house. . . . Well, we had some of our fun anyway.

"Guests are at last gone, and am too flabbergasted to get to work. Have all kinds of work awaiting me, too. Did you ever write a yarn of, say, twelve thousand words, every word essential to atmosphere, and then get an order to cut out three thousand of these words, somewhere, somehow? That's what the Atlantic has just done to me. Hardly

know whether I shall do it or not. It's like the pound of flesh. [This was "An Odyssey of the North," published in Atlantic the following January.] Say, am hammering away at that Cosmopolitan essay, at spare intervals. . . . Am thoroughly satisfied, as far as I have gone, which is saying a good deal for me — am usually sick at this stage, and it's such dry, dissertative stuff after all.

". . . Drop in on us when you do come. Small house, but usually plenty of fair steak, chops, etc., in the larder. I am a heavy eater, but a plain one, fruit, vegetables and meat, and plenty of them, but with small regard for pastries, etc. If you ve a sweet tooth you will not receive accommodation here except in the fruit line and the candy stores.

". . . 0, by the way, just to show how this business of placing MSS. is a despairing one. Long years ago — three, anyway, I wrote a synopsis of 'The Road,' under that title, describing tramps and their ways of living, etc. It has been everywhere — every syndicate and big Sunday edition refused it as a feature article; but I kept it going. And lo, to-day, came a note of acceptance of same from the Arena. Think I'll resurrect some of my old returned third rate work and send it to Harper's, Century, etc. That is, if there is any chance of their accepting what tenth class publications have refused. . . .

"And say, when a third rate magazine publishes something of yours, and you wait thirty days after publication for pay, and then dun them, and then they do not even answer your note, what do you do? Is there any way of proceeding against them? Or must one suffer dumbly? Tell me, tell me — I'd like to make it hot for some of those Eastern sharks.

"And in these pay-on-acceptance fellows, did you ever get your check at the same time you were notified of acceptance? They always make me an offer, first, and then I needs must sit idly and grow weary and sick at heart waiting during the period between my closing with offer and the arrival of the all-needful. . . .

". . . As you say, I am firm. I may sometimes appear impatient at nothing at all, and all that; but this everybody who has had a chance to know me well have noticed: things come my way even though they take years; no one sways me, save in little things of the moment; I am not stubborn but I swing to my purpose as steadily as the needle to the pole; delay, evade, oppose secretly or openly, it's all immaterial, the thing comes my way. To-day I have met my first serious wall. For three long years the fight has been on; to-day it balances; is a deadlock; I may have met my master; I may not; the future will tell, and one or the other of us will break and on top of it all I may say it concerns neither my interest or theirs, nothing except the personal vanity and the clash of our wills. 'I won't' and 'I will' sums the whole thing up.

"Firm? But I am firm in foolishness, as well as other things. Take things more seriously than you? Bosh! You don't know me. Ask my very intimate friends. Ask my creditors. Pshaw — let this illustrate: a very dear friend, a woman charming enough to be my wife, and old enough to be my mother, discovered that my most precious possession, my wheel, was hocked. You know I only live for the day. She at once put

up the all-needful so that I might regain it. She could well afford it, so that was all right; but mark you, she virtually had a lien upon it. Well, to top it — had been extravagant on the strength of receiving money which did not materialize. Creditors waxed clamorous; a few dollars judiciously scattered among them would have eased things; but credit exhausted; along comes a particularly nice person for a good time. A very nice person who wished to see things; wheel hypothecated and things seen for some forty odd hours. This is me all the time and all over — seriously take things of life — does it look like it? Pshaw. Ask those who know me.

"And I am firm in my foolishness.

"I am glad you took Jordan in the right way. He is, to a certain extent, a hero of mine. He is so clean, and broad, and wholesome. Would to God he were duplicated a few thousand times in the U. S. Working for a sheep-skin! That's what most fools do who go in for education, and most of the rest are geniuses and cranks, who get the kernel and then don't or won't use it.

". . . As for my writing histories and works on economics — I may, some day but I have little ambition to do so. The same may be said of any kind of writing under the sun. My only wish that way is the all-needful — it seems the easiest way. Had I an assured income, my ambition would be for music, music, music. As it is, impossible — I bend."

Aug. 10, 1899.

"Dear Friend:

"Same old tale. Wound off one visitor the first of last week, to receive at once two more — they have just now gone home. I'll get even with them yet, so that even their letters, much less them-selves shall not reach me. I see you have been suffering a similar affliction.

"Say, remember telling me if I got a check from Town Topics to frame it? After acceptance I let them slip for several months, then wrote them a nice little note of enquiry — five lines — and behold! They dug up a dollar for that triolet — 'He Chortled with Glee', and two twenty-five for the poem 'If I Were God One Hour.' You mentioned the Owl as a snare and a delusion. Well, they haven't got the best of me yet, at least that's all I can say. You know I wrote long ago a lot of stuff upon which I wasted many stamps. Nor would I retire it if hope of getting my postage back still lived. And I must say I have succeeded in disposing of quite a lot of rubbish that way by sending it to the way down publications. The Owl published a skit of mine a couple of months ago. When they made the offer for it, I almost fainted — One Dollar and Fifty cents for two thousand words. But it more than paid for the stamps I had wasted on the thing, and gave promise of release from at least one of my early night-mares, so I closed with the offer. But they have not yet paid me. Then the question arises: why should they have made such a miserable offer if they intended to take the whole works ? And one answer suggests itself: that from very shame at the smallness of the selling price, the author would refrain from making any trouble in the event of non-payment. However, I am devoid of that kind of shame.

"Yes, I cut the story for the Atlantic. There were 12,250 words; but while they wanted it reduced three thousand, I only succeeded in getting it down to an even ten thousand. So I don't know what they will do about it. They seem very nice people from their letters, but that, however, remains to be substantiated by something solid. Have also sent Houghton, Mifflin & Co., collection of tales. [This was "The Son of the Wolf" collection.]

"I closed with a cash offer of ten dollars, and five yearly subscriptions with the Arena, so probably it is alright with them. Say, it's great, learning the inner nature of some of these concerns!

"O but I do take myself seriously. My self-estimation has been made in very sober moments. I early learned that there were two natures in me. This caused me a great deal of trouble, till I worked out a philosophy of life and struck a compromise between the flesh and the spirit. Too great an ascendancy of either was to be abnormal, and since normality is almost a fetish of mine, I finally succeeded in balancing both natures. Ordinarily they are at equilibrium; yet as frequently as one is permitted to run rampant, so is the other. I have small regard for an utter brute or for an utter saint.

"A choice of ultimate happiness in preference to proximate happiness, when the element of chance is given due consideration, is, I believe, the wisest course for a man to follow under the sun. He that chooses proximate happiness is a brute; he that chooses immortal happiness is an ass; but he that chooses ultimate happiness knows his business.

". . . I doubt if even you would consider the novel avowedly with a purpose to be real literature. If you do, then let us abandon fiction altogether and give the newspaper its due, for the fixing or changing of public opinion especially on lesser things. But Spencer's 'First Principles' alone, leaving out all the rest of his work, has done more for mankind, and through the ages will have done far more for mankind than a thousand books like 'Nicholas Nickleby,' 'Hard Cash,' 'Book of Snobs,' and 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' Why, take the enormous power for human good contained in Darwin's 'Origin of Species' and 'Descent of Man.' Or in the work of Ruskin, Mill, Huxley, Carlyle, Ingersoll. . . .

"As to 'that retired stuff' — many thanks for your kind offer; but really, I shall never resurrect it again. Whenever I get to thinking too much of myself I simply look some of it up, and am at once reduced to a more becoming modesty. No, it's put away for good. I have very little out, just now. And it's growing less all the time. It will soon catch me up, I'm afraid, if I don't get down and dig.

"Well, say, hold on a minute. Let me explain. But first let me say how glad I was that you liked 'The Wife of a King.' But I was candid, though I cannot for the life of me remember what 'shameful comparison' I made in letter to you concerning it. This is the way it happened. I had the most terrific dose of blues I ever was afflicted with in my life. I couldn't think of anything original, so I made a composite of three retired MSS., slapped them together, as I at the time considered, haphazard, with the crudest of dovetailing. Shipped the result off in disgust, and forgot all about it, save a most

uncomfortable sense of general dissatisfaction. And for the first time, when I looked upon it printed, I was not wholly disgusted with myself — not because it was the best I had done, but because I had rated it so low that disappointment or disgust seemed impossible.

"Are there any phases of humanity, under any combinations which have not already been exploited? Yet I think I have for some time had an entirely original field in view, so why should I ask? But who knows. . . . I should think the only way to write a novel would be to do it at a fair rate per day, and then ship off at once. If I can only get ahead of the game, I'm going to jump back to Jerusalem in the time of Christ, and write one giving an entirely new interpretation of many things which occurred at that time. I think I can do it, so that while it may rattle the slats of the Christians they will still be anxious to read it."

The next is a handwritten note dated:

"College Park, May 13/99.

"Dear Friend: —

"A friend has taken it into his head to die; so, in resultant tangle, am at present wasting time at present quarters. Must acknowledge receipt of 'Splendid Spur,' also of two letters, which same I shall answer on my return home. Yes, 'Q' did good work when he completed 'St. Ives.' . . . How do you like my scrawl?"

"962 East 16th St.,

"Aug. 24, 1899.

"My dear friend: —

"'Frisco and Oakland have been roaring since last evening, when the Sherman was sighted. Nor will things quiet down till the week is past. So no work for me — besides, have had another friend to stop with me.

". . . Am going down country the first of next month to pose as best man for a foolish friend of mine who has abandoned the torturing of catgut for the harmony of matrimony. And I have to dig up a wedding present besides! Wow! . . .

"Have you read anything of Weismann's? He has struck a heavy blow to the accepted idea of acquired characters being in herited, and as yet his opponents have not proved conclusively one case in which such a character has been inherited. Another idea he advances well, is that death is not the indispensable correlative of life, as hitherto it has been supposed to be. In fact, his researches in the germ-plasm have proven quite the contrary. Read him up, you will find him interesting. But it s heavy. If you have not studied evolution well, I would not advise you to tackle him. He takes a thorough grounding in the subject for granted.

"Are you going in for that Black Cat Prize Competition? It has just been announced, and the time is not up till the 31st of March, 1900. The style, etc., is worth imitating for the money — if one thinks he is able to do it. I intend having a go at it. I . . . to-day received confirmation of acceptance of my MS. from the Atlantic. But say, can you explain this to me? I understand that they pay on acceptance. Well, to-day

acceptance comes with assurance of publication in an early number, and that is all. No check, no nothing concerning rate of payment, when, or how.

". . . Was there ever a luckier fellow than I when it comes to friends? I doubt it. And between you and myself, I likewise greatly fear for the bit of femininity who takes me for little better and much worse. . . .

". . . But really, I shall have to ask you to accept this stuff as a letter. I have striven and striven and striven. It is warm; doors and windows are open. Three youngsters are playing on the porch before my window. Their elders are in the parlor. My guest and a temporary visitor are in the same room with me, waxing hotter and hotter over some mooted point in that much mooted question of telepathy, so I must call quits, . . ."

"Sept. 6, 1899.

"My dear friend: —

"Back again, but not yet settled down. Have blown myself for a new wheel ('99 Cleveland), and hence, between appearing at weddings in knickerbockers and rampaging over the country with bloomer-clad lassies, and celebrating the return of the Californians, I have been unable to chase ink. The way I happened to get said wheel is an illustration of how little rhyme or reason there is in placing MSS. Some time ago I wrote an avowedly hack article for an agricultural paper, expecting to receive five dollars for the same, and to receive it anywhere from sixty to ninety days after acceptance. But it was rejected, and, being short at the time, I was correspondingly dejected. But straight away I shipped off the MS. to the Youth's Companion, and lo and behold, without any warnings, they forwarded me a check for thirty-five dollars — eleven dollars per thousand. How's that for luck?

". . . Don't weep over what the National did they pay poorly. Some time ago they accepted one of my ancient efforts, for which they gave me five yearly subscriptions, and five dollars cash, pay on publication. I expect it to come out in the September number. God bless the publishers.

". . . Go it for the Black Cat! I cannot even think of a suit able plot — my damnable lack of origination you see. I think I had better become an interpreter of the things which are, rather than a creator of the things which might be.

44 . . . Well, time is flying; I've got a visitor as usual, spending a few days with me, and as I hear the tinkle of his bicycle bell approaching, I must cut off. But just you watch my smoke some of these days — I intend shaking every mortal who knows me and going off all by myself."

"Sept. 12, 1899.

"My dear friend: —

"Between engagements, visitors, and friends, I have not yet succeeded in doing a tap. And to-morrow I start out on that postponed trip of mine to Stanford University and Mt. Hamilton, to say nothing of way points. And when I return from that I am going to lock myself up." [In an unimportant handwritten post script he signs himself "J. G. L." — the only instance I know where he used his middle initial.]

"Sept. 20, 1899.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Back again. Had a glorious time. Stopped over at Stanford, where I met several students I know, sat under the various profs., etc. And looked through the thirty-six inch reflector on top of Mt. Hamilton. There we saw the moon, Saturn and his rings, and quite a number of bourgeois pigs. Yes, they were pigs, dressed like tourists. My companion and I, after seeing them, were exceeding proud of the fact that we were mere proletarians. . . .

". . . Ah, therein you differ from me — it's money I want, or rather, the things money will buy; and I could never possibly have too much. As to living on practically nothing — I propose to do as little of that as I possibly can. Remember, it's the feed not the breed which makes the man. . . .

". . . As an artisan cannot work without tools, so a man cannot think without a vocabulary, and the greater his vocabulary the better fitted he is to think. Of course, an ass may acquire the tools of an artisan and be unable to work with them, so with words. But that does not interfere with the broad statement I have laid down." . . .

"Sept. 26, 1899.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

". . . Did I ever mention a MS. I received in response to a trailer, which same MS. had been O.K'd and blue-penciled? Well, such happened to me some time ago. Without removing marks or anything I shipped it off to Youth's Companion. There were fifteen hundred words to it. Last week a check comes for twenty-five. Say I m having lots of luck with the Companion, sending them my old, almost-ready-to-be-retired stuff. . . . They pay good and promptly. Though such work won't live, it at least brings the ready cash.

". . . How I envy you when you say that you do not write for publication. There is certainly far greater chance for you to gain the goal you have picked out than for me who am in pursuit of dollars, dollars, dollars. Yet I cannot see how I can do otherwise, for a fellow must live, and then there are also others depending upon me. However, I shall once and a while make it a point to sit down and deliberately not write for publication. . . .

". . . Have begun to isolate myself from my friends — a few at a time. But those I have managed to dispense with are the easy ones. I can't see my way clear to the others except by running away. But instead of the desert I'11 take to sea. Many who know me, ask why I, with my knowledge of the sea, do not write some sea fiction. But you see I have been away from it so long that I have lost touch. I must first get back and saturate myself with its atmosphere. Then perhaps I may do something good. . . .

". . . Viewing this world through the eyes of science I can see no reason at all why a person should be the slightest bit pessimistic. Why, it's all good, considering man's relation to it. . . . P.S. — Did I inform you that I am once more an uncle. It was born nearly a month ago. [This was Eliza Shepard's only child, Irving, before mentioned.]

"Oct. 3, 1899.

“Dear Cloudesley: —

“. . . Last Sunday I went off with a very nice young lady on a bicycle trip up to Mill Valley, among the redwoods at the base of Mt. Tamalpais. To do this we had to go to ‘Frisco and take the ferry to Sausalito, and from thence to destination via pedals. Any number of lively young Frisco people take the same outing on Sundays, except that they do not ordinarily or extraordinarily go on bikes. They patronize the railroad. Well, on the back trip to ‘Frisco, a bunch of them took the deck and raised hell generally, to the shocking of many of the more sedate passengers. Am happy to state, however, that the girl I was with, while the kingdoms of the earth could not have lured her into getting up and doing like wise, at least highly enjoyed the performance. All of which is neither here nor there. But for myself, I was attacked by all kinds of feelings. Therein you and I differ — dissipation is alluring to me. Why, my longing was intense to jump in and join them after the fashion of my wild young days, and go on after we arrived in ‘Frisco and make the night of it which I knew they were going to make. Alluring? I guess yes.

“And then again, I could feel how I had grown away from so much of that lost — touch. I knew if I should happen to join them, how strangely out of place it would seem to me — duck-out-of-water sort of feeling. This made me sad; for, while I cultivate new classes, I hate to be out of grip with the old. But say, it wouldn’t take me long to get my hand in again. Just a case of lost practice.

“. . . Have been going on chess drunks of late. Did you ever yield to the toils of the game? — toils in more ways than one. It’s a most fascinating game, and one which has devoured well nigh as many of my hours as cards. However, I’ve done very little chess in the last year or so, and this is merely a temporary relapse.

Have also been feasting my soul with some of the new books: Kipling galore, Bullen’s ‘Sea Idyls,’ Grant Allen’s ‘Adventure of Miss Gayly,’ and among others, Beatrice Harraden’s ‘Fowler’. . . .” At this period Jack London put into practice his thousand-words-a-day stint, which he maintained for the rest of his life:

“Am now doing a thousand words per day, six days per week. Last week I finished 1100 words ahead of the required amount. To-day (Tuesday), I am 172 ahead of my stint. I have made it a rule to make up next day what I fall behind; but when I run ahead, to not permit it to count on the following day. I am sure a man can turn out more, and much better in the long run, working this way, than if he works by fits and starts. . . .

“How time flies! Here is Christmas at hand, and Paris approaching — ah! I wonder if the gods will smile so that I may go.”

“October 24, 1899.

“Dear Cloudesley: —

Everything in confusion, visitors still here. So you’re a chess player. And it’s the one form of dissipation which has any attraction for you. As I can hardly look upon it in that light concerning myself, I can but conclude that you are by far the better player. Why, I have never met a good player — spent all my time teaching beginners, and you

know nothing is worse for chess than that. And besides, I have never had the time to devote to it. For a year at a stretch I never see a board, and then, for a few short weeks I happen to mildly indulge. As I have not taken the time to learn properly, so I cannot play an intensive game; instead, I play viciously, not more than four moves ahead at the best, and endeavor to break up combinations as fast as my opponent forms them — that is, first, if they are threatening; and second, if the slightest and most insignificant gain will accrue to myself, such as the getting of another piece of mine in position by a trade, or by double-banking my opponent's pawns, or preventing his castling by forcing him to move his king in a trade. For the sake of this latter, when the gambit goes my way, I always trade queens. But a heavy player, once growing accustomed to my play, doesn't do a thing to me. So be it. I shall never learn chess.

"Last article published by me, had, among other typographical errors, 'Something fresh for the jaded care of the world,' instead of 'something fresh for the jaded ear of the world.' On second thought it might have been worse.

"Think you could train yourself into becoming a hermit? For me that would be far harder than to train myself to become a suicide. I like to rub against my kind, with a gregarious instinct far stronger than in most men. A hermitage — synonym for hell.

". . . Lucrative mediocrity? I know, if I escape drink, that I shall be surely driven to it. By God! if I have to dedicate my life to it, I shall sell work to Frank A. Munsey. I'll buck up against them just as long as I can push a pen or they can retain a MS. reader about the premises. Just on general principles, you know.

". . . Am reading Stevenson's 'Virginibus Puerisque' just now. Find in this mail his 'Inland Voyage.' Return it when you have finished, as I wish to pass it along. Have read it myself. Get such books for 'Bull Durham' tobacco tags. Have sent for his 'Silverado Squatters' don't think much of it from previous read ing, but it was a long time ago, and I did it too hurriedly, I'm afraid. . . .

"So you try experiments in letter writing. I never do nor never have. Haven't the slightest idea what I'm going to say when I sit down just hammer it out as fast as I can. And right well am I pleased when I have finished the hateful task. I wouldn't do it at all, no more than I would work, were it not for the compensation. As for you, I get more originality in your letters than from all my rest put together rather jerky and jagged but refreshing and interesting. Believe me, I'm not fishing for a loan.

". . . Have been reading Jacobs' 'More Cargoes'. . . . Also have been going through Kendricks Bangs' 'The Dreamers' and 'The Bicyclers and Other Farces.' He's clever and humorous, in a mild sort of way.

"Have been digging at 'Norman's Eastern Question,' preparatory to a certain economic dissertative article I intend writing — Asia touches one of the phases I wish to deal with. Besides, I have gone through Curzon's similar work, and wish to take up soon Beresford's 'Break-up of China.' Am going through Drummond on evolution, Hudson on psychology, and reviewing Macaulay and De Quincey in the course of English in Minto which I am giving to a friend — the photographer. She's well up in the higher Math., etc., but not in general culture — coaches in the exact sciences for

would-be university students, etc. Say, that reviewing does a fellow good. I had no idea how lazy I had gotten.

"Society will never injure me — the world calls too loudly for that."

"Oct. 31, 1899.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

". . . So you deem the world as fair a synonym for hell as I do hermitage. Can't see it. There are some redeeming features. As long as there is one good woman in it, it will not hold. Why, I remember, once, when for several weeks I meditated profoundly on the policy of shuffling off. Seemed the clouds would never break. But at last they did, and I doubt if you could imagine the cause of my sweetened mood. A memory of a day, of an hour — nay, a few paltry minutes — came back to me, of a time almost lost in the dim past. I remembered — what? A woman's foot. We were by the sea. In a dare, we went wading: had to stick our feet in the hot sand till they dried; and it was those few moments which came back to me, dripping with 'sweetness and light.' Hell? Nay, not so long as one woman s foot remains above ground.

"Please don't thing I'm in love. Simply sentiment. Don't get that way often.

"Well, some time since, I started in to write a twenty-five hundred word article on 'Housekeeping in the Klondike.' [This was published in Harper's Bazaar, on September 15, 1900.] In choice of theme I had been forced to narrow, being aware of my miserable predilection. And lo, before I had got into full swing, I found that the whole article could be comfortably taken up in a discussion of bread-making. And, still narrowing, it was soon apparent that this should be divided, one single subhead to be discussed, viz.: sourdough bread-making. And so it goes. Never did a person need the gift of selection more than I.

". . . Have just completed Horace Vachell's 'The Procession of Life' . . . quite interesting, but not of the first water. . . . And any way, did you ever read that boyhood classic, 'Phaeton Rogers'? Rossiter Johnson, who edits the Whispering Gallery of the Overland, is the author. . . .

"My Atlantic story will come out, I believe, in the January number. Received a check for one hundred and twenty dollars yesterday for it, with a year's subscription thrown in. They are very slow, but very painstaking. They even questioned the propriety of using my given name — unconventional. But they came around all right.

"Have heard nothing more concerning my collection. They do take their time about it. Nothing from the Cosmopolitan prize essay either.

"How do you like my new machine? Haven't got used to it yet. Came to-day. When I get married, guess I'll have to marry a typewriter girl. I do most heartily hate the job.

"So the poor little Boers have risen in their might. God bless them! I can admire their pluck, while at the same time laughing at their absurdity. There be higher things than formal logic or formal ethics. When a detached, antiquated fragment of a race attempts to buck that race, a spectacle is presented at once pitiful and impotent. Fools, to think that man is the object of his own volition, inasmuch that a few of him may

oppose the many in a movement which does not spring from the individual but from the race, and which received its inception before even they had differentiated from the parent branch!"

"November 11, 1899.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"You say: 'This is the beginning of the end — you'll see — and within ten years the British Empire will have followed its predecessors, the Greek, the Roman, and the French.' Well, well, well. I'd like to talk with you for a few moments. It's simply impossible to take it up on paper. The day England goes under, that day sees sealed the doom of the United States. It's the Anglo-Saxon people against the world, and economics at the foundation of the whole business; but said economics only a manifestation of the blood differentiations which have come down from the hoary past.

"This movement, dimly felt and working in strange ways, is not to be stopped in a day, or by a lesser people, or by a bunch of the same which have become anachronisms. The Boers are anachronisms. There is no place for them in the whirl of the world unless they whirl with it.

"You say, if subjugated they will still be Boers. Do you remember the Norman invasion of England? How long the Saxons held strictly apart? And how in the end, the Saxon, as a Saxon, vanished from the face of the earth? Took several centuries, but it was accomplished.

". . . I believe Bret Harte wrote a story of a natural fool who got along nicely till he struck it rich. I'm hard at it. Am just finishing an ambitious Klondike yarn which is a failure, and before the twenty-fifth of this month have to write and read up for two essays and prepare for a speech before the Oakland Section. Haven't addressed an audience for three years; it'll seem strange.

". . . As to your suggestion regarding the finish of 'To the Man on Trail': I had never been satisfied with that ending, though too lazy to even think for an instant of attempting to better it. Your ending could not be bettered, and I shall hasten to take advantage of it. Many thanks for same. It will then leave one with a pleasant taste in the mouth. The alliterative effect you mention strikes my gaudy ear; I shall certainly use it. I want you to read my 'Odessey of the North' when it comes out. . . ."

"Nov. 21, 1899.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Hard at it — mostly history and economics. And yet I don't work a tithe of what you work. Why should you work seventeen hours a day? As regards your writing you positively should not do more than six — four were better. But any excess of six cannot be good stuff. . . .

". . . I never pity anybody but myself. Life is too short.

"The Overland declined my offer on specious grounds. Twenty-five dollars was stiff under the circumstances. However, I have placed a yarn with them to come out in the Christmas number. ["The Wisdom of the Trail."] O they're great people, of great heart: but heart and finance do not usually go together. . . .

". . . Very few American educated people have little else but rancor for England — a rancor which is bred by the school histories and the school traditions. All of which is utterly wrong. I have to laugh when you call Kipling a narrow, hidebound, childishly pettish, mean little man. . . . Any masculine who delights in taking down a woman's back hair will find a warm welcome in my heart.

". . . Find, with 'Editor,' when it comes along, some more proofs of yours truly, taken down by the sounding sea. Also one of the young woman who sometimes accompanies me in my far from conventional rambles. Last Sunday, threatening rain, we wandered off into the hills, cooked our dinner (broiled steak, baked sweet potatoes, coffee, etc., crab, French bread, and a patty of dairy butter), and were a couple of gipsies. To-morrow we may jump on our wheels and ride off forty or fifty miles. And yesterday we may have taken in the opera and dined fashionably. Never the same, except the camera, which same I am slowly mastering.

Yes; I read 'A New Magdalen' when I was about twelve, and then shocked a very nice young lady by starting to discuss it with her."

Continuing the discussion that runs throughout the correspondence, and which I must cut, he argues:

"When England is so decadent as to lose her colonies, then England falls. When England falls the United States will be shaken to its foundations, and the chances are one hundred to one that it ever recovers again. Why, England is our greatest purchaser, and our greatest maker of markets, and the only nation which is not deep down hostile to us. Germany, France, Austria and Russia can supply the world with all that the world needs, if they could only get a chance by having England and the United States eliminated from the proposition. And once one were eliminated the ruin of the other were easy. But England is not going to fall. It is not possible. To court such a possibility is to court destruction for the English speaking people. We are the salt of the earth, and it is because we have it in us to frankly say so that we really are so. No hemming or hawing; we state the bald fact. It is for the world to take or leave. Take it may, but it shall always leave us. . . .

" . . . So? Why, the United States never had but one fight in its history; that was when it fought with itself. England never bothered her. Read up history and you will find that England's hands were full of other things, and preferring other matters, she let the colonies slip away. Do you really think we whipped the whole of England in the Revolution? Or in 1812, when her hands were full with Napoleon, and she was fighting in every quarter of the globe? Mexico was play. But the civil war was a war, a death grapple. And all hail to the South for the fight it put up against stiff odds.

"You little know Canada. Why don't those other European countries, standing by themselves, fall? Because, they are but ostensibly alone. In reality they stand together — whenever it comes to bucking the Anglo-Saxon.

Dropping to the personal, he announces:

"If cash comes with fame, come fame; if cash comes without fame, come cash."

"Dec. 5, 1899.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"First letter-writing I have done for quite a while. . . . Have not had an evening at home for nigh on to two weeks, what with suppers, speaking, functions, and last but not least, FOOTBALL. Did you see what we did to Stanford? In case that benighted region in which you reside has not yet received the score, let me have the privilege of blazoning it forth. Thirty to nothing, Berkeley.

"It was magnificent, to sit under the blue and gold and see the Berkeley giants wade through the Cardinals, and especially so when one looks back to the times he sat and watched the Stanfordites pile up the score and hammer our line into jelly. Do you care for football? In case you do not, I shall not permit my enthusiasm to bore you further.

". . . Heaven save us from our friends! Last Sunday evening I spoke before the San Francisco Section. Unknown to me, and on the strength of divers newspaper puffs which recently have appeared, they posted San Francisco, and also perpetrated the enclosed hand bill. I knew nothing about it till just the moment before I was to go on the platform. Can I sue them for libel? [I find the hand bill in Jack's scrapbook for 1899-1900, advertising his name in blatant type, "The Distinguished Magazine Writer," a lecture in Union Square Hall, 421 Post Street, Sunday Ev'g, Dec. 3rd, 1899.]

". . . Your criticism of my 'Editor' article is exactly my own criticism. We could not disagree on that if we tried. By the way, there were 1750 words in it. The 'Editor' was billed to pay liber-ally, and they told me on acceptance, promptly. It was published last October, I received for it five dollars which came to hand day before yesterday.

"0 Lord! Good-by."

"Dec. 12, 1899.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

". . . You mistake, I do not believe in the universal brotherhood of man. I think I have said so before. I believe my race is the salt of the earth. I am a scientific socialist, not a Utopian, an economic man as opposed to an imaginative man. The latter is becoming an anachronism.

"Nay, nay, bankruptcy is not an ideal state, at least for me. It's too horrible for words. Give me the millions and I'll take the responsibilities.

"Later on I shall forward you an article of mine on the 'Question of the Maximum,' which contains within it, though not the main theme, the economic basis for imperialism or expansion. This, I know, is directly opposed to the current ethics. But it is the one which will dominate the current ethics."

Introducing Anna Strunsky

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XIX

JUST about this time Jack London's orbit crossed that of Anna Strunsky. Anna was a Stanford University student a round, brown slip of a girl, a Russian Jewess, no older than the little women of his precocious boyhood, for she was barely seventeen.

A glowing, flaming creature she was, intellectual, brilliant and friendly, with a deep and lasting loyalty that we were all to learn. She was so different from anything he had ever known of woman neither lily-pallid nor boldly passionate; but wide-hearted like all her family, and deliciously, naively frank. She met one so wondrous-comradely. Every one loved Anna, women as well as men; no one could resist the drawing power of her, she the Much-Desired. Who was Jack, to hold aloof from the warmth of her presence? Who, indeed! As naturally as breathing, their friendship waxed, and they could not but regard their need of each other in the big world that is lovely to souls like theirs, stainless of deceit toward each other. But it was their mental and spiritual companionship that most counted, and that endured.

Rose, Anna's younger sister, was likewise uncommonly brilliant for her years — no less remarkable than Anna: "There's Rose," Jack once said to me, — "She's as wonderful, in her way, as Anna. Watch Rose." Rose has indeed been worth watching, from her early work to her extraordinary book on Abraham Lincoln, her translation of Tolstoi's "Journals," and Gorky's "My Confession."

The whole Strunsky family, with its arms-around hos-pitality, its long table always laid for a problematical number of interesting guests (for no dull one ever drew chair to its abundance) — the whole Strunsky brood stamped its intelligence and its lovableness and its charm upon Jack London until he came in after years to call it his Love Family. Once in a letter to me, he said: "They are fine splendid people to know. They are individuals, not a mess. And they stand for high things, and are good to know."

Anna Strunsky, co-author with Jack of "The Kempton-Wace Letters," (and since, of "Violette of Pere La Chaise,") loved mate of a distinguished husband, William English Walling, and mother of four glorious children, wrote me from her home in Greenwich, Connecticut, under date of January 17, 1919:

"Dearest Charmian:

"This is perhaps a pretty complete statement of the psychical aspect of our friendship. I have nothing but love and gratitude for him, and that he has lived at all and I have known him is a miracle of happiness, a miracle of miracles. . . . If there is any thing more that suggests itself, please ask. . . . Your loving sister, always,

"Anna."

What she sends me I give in advance of the letters written her by Jack, which she has as freely contributed to my picture of her friend:

"Jack and I met for the first time at a lecture by Austin Lewis, I believe, in the fall of 1899 at the old Turk Street Temple. It was either Cameron King or Strawn-Hamilton who introduced us. Herman Whitaker had 'discovered' Hamilton and had made him acquainted with Jack, and Hamilton and Cameron were intimate friends.

"It is owing to a kind of spiritual secret diplomacy that the details of our meeting are vague in inverse ratio to the importance of the moment. The essentials, however, are stamped on my mind. He and I gravitated towards the platform to congratulate the speaker. A whispered 'Do you want to meet him?' from either Strawn-Hamilton or Cameron — 'he is Jack London, a Comrade who has been speaking in the street

in Oakland. He has been to Klondike and writes short stories for a living.' We shook hands, and remained talking to each other. I had a feeling of wonderful happiness. To me it was as if I were meeting in their youth, Lasalle, Karl Marx or Byron, so instantly did I feel that I was in the presence of a historical character. Why? I cannot say, except perhaps because it was the truth and he did belong to the undying few. This certainty with which he inspired me was the vital subjective fact about our meeting.

"Objectively, I confronted a young man of about twenty-two, and saw a pale face illumined by large, blue eyes fringed with dark lashes, and a beautiful mouth which, opening in its ready laugh, revealed an absence of front teeth, adding to the boyishness of his appearance. The brow, the nose, the contour of the cheeks, the massive throat, were Greek. His form gave an impression of grace and athletic strength, though he was a little under the American, or rather Californian, average in height. He was dressed in gray, and was wearing the soft white shirt and collar which he had already adopted.

"Then began our friendship. If at the time, to the inexperienced heart of our youth, it seemed tempestuous, almost terrible, storm-bound as it was by our intellectual and psychical differences, now I see in it only the dearness and beauty of a force that outlasts life, a world, indeed, without end, something more precious and more significant to both of us than we could then understand. Those differences — what were they but the healthy expression of our immaturity, of our aspirations toward the absolute of truth and right and justice, the normal expression, perhaps, of the man and woman equation in the abstract questions concerning life? The differences tortured us as they did precisely because in the great essentials we were at one — but this, youth could not know! Did he not years later write 'The People of the Abyss,' 'The Dream of Debs,' 'The Iron Heel'? How then, could I have challenged his Socialism? Was he not an ardent feminist and suffragist? Why then, did I suspect him of thinking women the inferiors of men? Did he not finally marry with love and for love, and exemplify in his own life the need of love that men and women have in common, the greatest miracle of all, the miracle of interdependence? Why, then, did we spend twenty-two months writing 'The Kempton-Wace Letters,' trying to convert each other to positions which, at bottom, we must both have held?

"Individualized as his personality was he was yet symbolic. In him was expressed what a human being escaping from the Abyss might become. Charles Ferguson, the other day, spoke of Jack London as having been the most aristocratic of men. If to be gifted beyond others, stronger than others, more beautiful in person, warmer of heart than others is to be a natural aristocrat, then this super-democrat, this man identified with the People and with the Class War was one. To me his qualities were interesting more because they showed what was in all of us than because they were exceptional. He was a genius and yet that was only to be — the ordinary human being extended. To know him was immediately to receive an accelerated enthusiasm about everybody.

"Our friendship can be described as a struggle — constantly I strained to reach that in him which I felt he was 'born to be.' I looked for the Social Democrat, the Revolutionist, the moral and romantic idealist; I sought the Poet. Exploring his personality

was like exploring mountains, and the valleys which stretched between troubled my heart. They did not seem to belong to the grandiose character he was, or could, by an effort of the will, become. He was a Socialist, but he wanted to beat the Capitalist at his own game. To succeed in doing this, he thought was in itself a service to the Cause; to 'show them' that Socialists were not derelicts and failures had a certain propaganda value. So he succeeded — became a kind of Napoleon of the pen. This dream of his, even when projected and before it became a reality, was repellant to me. The greatest natures, I thought, the surest Social Democrats, would be incapable of harboring it. To pile up wealth, or personal success — surely anybody who was a beneficiary of the Old Order must belong to it to some extent in spirit and in fact.

"So it was that our ancient quarrel, and many, many others took their rise in the same source — a doubt, not as to himself — I never doubted the beauty and the warmth and the purity of his own nature — but as to the ideas and the principles which he invited to guide his life. They were not worthy of him, I thought; they belittled him and eventually they might eat away his strength and grandeur. . . . ". . . I have felt so much for Jack London because I saw in him potential martyrs and heroes. . . . He was symbolic of the Movement and its struggle and its sorrow; he was the dawn of the future, and in his beauty was the pristine beauty and greatness of the race. So I said when I first beheld him; so I say now, after his death. . . ."

Herewith are her friend's first impression of Anna Strunsky:

"Jack London,

"962 East 16th St.,

"Oakland, Calif.,

"Dec. 19, 1899.

"My dear Miss Strunsky: —

"Seems as if I have known you for an age — you and your Mr. Browning. I shall certainly have to reread him, in the hope after all these years of obtaining a fuller understanding.

"What did I start to write you about, anyway? Oh! First, that toasting the old year out affair — does it take place on the last Friday or Thursday of the month; and secondly — well, it doesn't matter. I have forgotten.

"Please don't carry a wrong impression of my feelings regarding Hamilton. Because I happen to condemn his deficiencies is no reason that I do not appreciate his good qualities, nor that I should not love him. Indeed I do. Do you remember how I said I ran down the street after him on a circus day, our engagements, etc.? My feelings and personal liking swayed me there; but in summing up the man I set such things to one side and perform the operation with the cold-bloodedness of the economic man. I hope you will understand. My regard for him is such that were I to accumulate a treasure I think I would advertise for him in the agony columns throughout the United States and bring him to me, give him a home, a monthly allowance, and let him live out his life whatsoever way he willed.

"You said at parting that you also were a literary aspirant. I may be able to help you, perhaps — not in the higher criticism but in the more prosaic but none the less essential work of submitting MS. Through much travail I have learned the customs of the silent sullen peoples who run the magazines. Their rates, avail-ability, acceptability, etc. Should you stand in need of anything in this line (economic man), believe me sincerely at your service.

"Of course, I do not know what lines you deem yourself best fitted for: however, as I sat there listening to you, I seemed to sum you up somewhat in this way: A woman to whom it is given to feel the deeps and the heights of emotion in an extraordinary degree; who can grasp the intensity of transcendantal feeling, the dramatic force of situation, as few women, or men either, can. But, this question at once arose: Has she expression? By this, I mean simply the literary technique. And again, supposing that she has not, has she the 'dig', the quality of application, so that she might attain it.

"In a nut-shell — you have the material, which is your own soul, for a career: have you the requisite action to hew your way to it?"

"Dec. 21, 1899.

"Dear Miss Strunsky: —

"Surely am I a barbarian, lacking in cunning of speech and deftness of touch. Perhaps I am only a Philistine. Mayhap the economic man incarnate. At least blundering and rough-shod, lacking even that expression which should properly voice my thoughts. I call for a trial by jury. I throw myself on the mercy of the Court. Nay, after all is said and done, I plead not guilty.

"'Somehow it is a new note to me, that of being seen as aimless, helpless, hopeless," and I am uneasy under it all.'

"I rarely remember what I say in letters, sometimes retaining only vague recollections of what I do not say; but in the present case I am sure I said nothing like the above. I speculated on you as impartially as had you been a hod-carrier, a Hottentot, or a Christ. It was a first speculation; it dealt with but one portion of your being. And as I could not divorce Christ or the Hottentot from the rest of humanity as having nothing in common with it, so I could not divest you of the weaknesses which I know your fellows to suffer from. But such weaknesses are not to be classed under your three-fold caption, 'aimless, helpless, hopeless.' I granted aim. I then asked myself whether you had the qualities by which to realize it. I did not answer that question, for verily I did not nor do I know. I was even more generous, I granted the basic qualities, all-necessary for attainment, and only questioned the existence of the medium by which they could be made to meet with their proper end. And that question I did not answer (to myself), for I did not know, nor do I know.

"This is my case. I call for your verdict.

"Somehow I am like a fish out of water. I take to conventionality uneasily, rebelliously. I am used to saying what I think, neither more nor less. Soft equivocation is no part of me. As had I spoken to a man who came out of nowhere, shared my bed and board for a night, and passed on, so did I speak to you. Life is very short. The melancholy of

materialism can never be better expressed than by Fitzgerald's 'O make haste.' One should have no time to dally. And further, should you know me, understand this: I, too, was a dreamer, on a farm, nay, a California ranch. But early, at only nine, the hard hand of the world was laid upon me. It was never relaxed. It has left me sentiment, but destroyed sentimentalism. It has made me practical, so that I am known as harsh, stern, uncompromising. It has taught me that reason is mightier than imagination; that the scientific man is superior to the emotional man. It has also given me a truer and a deeper romance of things, an idealism which is an inner sanctuary and which must be resolutely throttled in dealing with my kind, but which yet remains within the Holy of Holies, like an oracle, to be cherished always but to be made manifest or be consulted not on every occasion I go to market. To do this latter would bring upon me the ridicule of my fellows and make me a failure; to sum up, simply the eternal fitness of things:

"All of which goes to show that people are prone to misunderstand me. May I have the privilege of not so classing you?

"Nay, I did not walk down the street after Hamilton — I ran. And I had a heavy overcoat, and I was very warm and breathless. The emotional man in me had his will, and I was ridiculous.

* I shall be over Saturday night. If you draw back upon yourself, what have I left ? Take me this way : a stray guest, a bird of passage, splashing with salt-rimed wings through a brief moment of your life — a rude and blundering bird, used to large airs and great spaces, unaccustomed to the amenities of confined existence. An unwelcome visitor, to be tolerated only because of the sacred law of food and blanket.

"Very sincerely," "Dec. 29, 1899.

"My dear Miss Strunsky: —

". . . Expression? I think you have it, if this last letter may be any criterion. How have I felt since I received it? How shall I say? At any rate, know this: I do agree, unqualifiedly, with your diagnosis of where I missed and how. If I recollect aright, it was my first and last attempt at a psychological study. I say that I had much before me yet to gain before I should put my hand to such work. I glanced over several pages just before sending, noted the frightful diction and did not dare go on to the meat of it. I knew, I felt that there was so much which was wrong with it, that the ending was inadequate, etc., and that was all. But you have given me clearer vision, far clearer vision. For my vague feelings of what was wrong, you have given me the why. It is you who are the missionary. . . . My extenuation is my youth and inexperience. ... It really was false-winged, you see, that flight of mine. Not only have you shown me my main flaw, but you have exposed a second the lack of artistic selection.

"And above all, you have conveyed to me my lack of spirituality, idealized spirituality — I know not if I use the terms correctly. Don't you understand? I came to you like a parched soul out of the wilderness, thirsting for I knew not what. The highest and the best had been stamped out of me. You knew my life, typified, maybe, by the hastily drawn picture of the forecastle. I was troubled. Groping after shadows, mocking,

disbelieving, giving my own heart the lie oftentimes, doubting that which very doubt made me believe. And for all, I was a-thirst. Stiff-necked, I flaunted my physical basis, hoping that the clear water might gush forth. But not then, for there I played the barbarian. Still, from the little I have seen of you my lips have been moistened, my head lifted. Do you remember 'It was my duty to have loved the highest; it was my pleasure had I known?' Pray do not think me hysterical. In the bright light of day I might flush at my weakness, but in the darkness I let it pass.

"Only, I do hope we shall be friends.

". . . I see this 'just a line' has grown. Please do not answer until after your examinations. Know that I pray for the best possible best. And please let me know the outcome, for I shall be as anxious almost as yourself . . . .

"Very sincerely," Either Jack was economizing on ink, or on energy, or improving his chirography, or using a finer pen-point; for his signatures early in 1900 present a reduced appearance. Evidently, from these letters, he is in a low state of cheer and funds and is putting pressure on himself, since on January 22, 1900, still dating from 962 East 16th Street, he writes to Cloudesley Johns:

"Have pawned my wheel, bought stamps, and got things in running order again. . . . Have to get in and dig now — have jumped my stint to 1500 words per diem till I get out of the hole." And on the 30th: "Am hard at it. Have not missed a day in which I have turned out at least 1500 words, and sometimes as high as 2000. How's that? And at the same time I have broken no engagements, gone on with my studying, and corrected daily from 16 to 48 pages of proofsheets. Sometimes forty-eight hours pass without my even stepping foot on the ground or seeing more of out-doors than the front porch when I go to get the evening paper. Hurrah for hell. . . . So you fell! Sensible lad! The damn dollars do carry some weight after all. I am frankly and brutally consistent about money; you are neither, nor are you consistent. . . ."

Nine days earlier he had written to Anna Strunsky, at Stanford:

"Dear Miss Strunsky: —

"0 Pshaw!

"Dear Anna: —

"There! Let's get our friendship down to a comfortable basis. The superscription, 'Miss Strunsky,' is as disagreeable as the putting on of a white collar, and both are equally detestable. . . . Now I feel comfortable. Nobody ever 'Mr. Londons' me, so every time I opened a letter of yours I felt a starched collar draw round my neck. Pray permit me softer neck-gear for the remainder of our correspondence. . . . I did not read your last till Friday morning, and the day and evening were taken up. But at last I am free. My visitors are gone, the one back to his desert hermitage, and the other to his own country. And I have much work to make up. Do you know, I have the fatal faculty of making friends, and lack the blessed trait of being able to quarrel with them. And they are constantly turning up. My home is the Mecca of every returned Klondiker, sailor, or soldier of fortune I ever met. Some day I shall build an establishment, invite

them all, and turn them loose upon each other. Such a mingling of castes and creeds and characters could not be duplicated. The destruction would be great. . . .

"Find inclosed, review of Mary Austin's book. Had I not known you I could not have understood the little which I do. Somehow we must ever build upon the concrete. To illustrate: do you notice the same in excerpt from her, beginning, 'I thought of tempests and shipwrecks.' How I would like to know the girl, to see her, to talk with her, to do a little toward cherishing her imagination. I sometimes weep at the grave of mine. It was sown on arid soil, gave vague promises of budding, but was crushed out by the harshness of things — a mixed metaphor, I believe. . . .

"Ho! ho! I have just returned from the window. Turmoil and strife called me from the machine, and behold! My nephew, into whom it is my wish to inoculate some of the saltiness of the earth, had closed in combat with an ancient enemy in the form of a truculent Irish boy. There they were, hard at it, boxing gloves of course, and it certainly did me good to see the way in which he stood up to it. Only, alas, I see I shall have to soon give him instructions, especially in defense — all powder and flash and snappy in attach, but forgetful of guarding himself. 'For life is strife.' and a physical coward the most unutterable of abominations.

"Tell me what you think of MS. It was the work of my golden youth. "When I look upon it I feel very old. It has knocked from pillar to post and reposed in all manner of places. When my soul waxes riotous, I bring it forth, and lo! I am again a lamb. It cures all ills of the age and is a sovereign remedy for self-conceit. 'Mistake' is writ broad in fiery letters. The influences at work in me, from Zangwill to Marx, are obvious. I would have portrayed types and ideals of which I know nothing, and so, trusted myself to false wings. You showed me your earliest printed production last night; reciprocating. I show you one written at the time I first knew Hamilton. I felt I had something there, but I certainly missed it. . . . Tell me the weak points, not of course in diction, etc. Tell me what rings false to you. And be unsparing, else shall I have to class you with the rest of my friends, and it is not complimentary to them if they only knew

it. . . ."

Here, in form of query, one comes upon his first enunciation of a civil policy which he often repeated as the years went by:

"Feb. 10, 1900.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

". . . What do you think about marriage being made more difficult, and divorce correspondingly easy?

"I have had quite good success with McClure's. You remember my mailing that story of a minister who apostasizes? And the vile sinner who did not? McClure's accepted it if I would agree to the cutting of the opening and the elimination of certain swear words. Of course I agreed, as it was an affair of 6000 words. Two days after that came an acceptance, from McClure's, of 'The Question of the Maximum' — that socialistic essay I read to you. What do you think of that for a conservative house? I mean conservative politically. . . . They also wanted to see more of my fiction, wanted to

have me submit a long story if I had one, and if I had a collection of short stories they wanted to examine them for publication.

"Have finished 'The Son of the Wolf' proofsheets — 251 pages of print in it.

". . . 'I have told you that I consider absolute pauperism almost as objectionable as wealth.' Now, say, I wonder if you mean it? Of course you are inconsistent. Of course you sacrificed (serially) your name and workmanship by changing the story. And further, you did it for money. You can't defend yourself, you know you can't. Why not come out and be brutally frank about it like I am? You are doing the very same thing when you write hack-work. Press or Journal and Black Cat prize stories — money, that's all. Simmer yourself down and sum yourself up in a square way for just once. Be consistent, even though you be vile as I in the matter of dollars and cents.

". . . Have lost steerage way in the matter of writing. Have done twenty-two hundred words in five days, and gone out every night, and feel as though I can never write again. Isn't it fright-ful! Lord! Who wouldn't sell a farm and go to writing! Say, I think I have stuck Munsey's with a thirty-two hundred word essay. I wonder if it can be possible. Wave has not ponied up yet."

And he tenders a bit of futile prophesy:

"Have evolved new ideas about warfare, or rather, assimilated them. If my article is published soon, upon that subject, I shall send it to you. Anyway, to make it short, war as a direct attainment of an end, is no longer possible. The world has seen its last decisive battle. Economics, not force, will decide future wars. Of course all this is postulated between first-class powers, or first-class soldiers; not frontier squabbles. Nor would I classify the fighting in the Transvaal as a squabble. Unless there is a grave blunder, and unless the British do not too heavily reinforce, it will be found that neither British nor Boers can advance. Which ever side advances, advances to its own destruction.

Miss Strunsky had "enticed" him into abrogating a "pet aversion" — the reading of a magazine serial being Mr. J. M. Barrie's "Tommy and Grizel." "I found I could not lay it down," he confesses to Cloudesley, "so I am stuck to the job for a year."

Then come a few remarks upon lost manuscripts:

"Your Call and 'Wave' rackets remind me of what happened to me recently. Last fall I lost a forty-six hundred word story with Colliers Weekly. I wrote them, after due time, and they sent me a full-page letter explaining that it had never reached them, and that they had no record of it. To show them I still had confidence, I later on sent them another. It too became overdue and I trailed it. And lo and behold, the other day arrived both MSS. The first one I had long since retyped.

"My dear fellow, had I not been 'an animal with a logical nature' I should not be here to-day. It is only because I was so that I did not perish or stagnate by the wayside. I have been called stern, cold, cruel, unyielding, etc., and why? Because I did not wish to stop off at their particular station and remain for the rest of my days. Money? Money will give me all things, or at least more of all things than I could otherwise possess. It may even take me over to the other side of the world to meet my affinity;

while without it I might mismate at home and live miserable till the game was played out.

"Got an acceptance from Youth's Companion the other day — qualified — if I would make the opening a little longer. . . . You remember the 'Wave'? I sent them yesterday a brief note, enclosing with it half a dozen pawn checks and a two-cent stamp. I am wondering what they will do."

"Feb. 17, 1900.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Thanks for Julian Ralph's 'Picture of New War Problems.' Find it herewith returned. If it has interested you, I am sure my article will, for I treat the machinery of war at length, and then go into the economic and political aspects. . . . I am intending to write an essay entitled 'They That Rise by the Sword' shortly. And just you wait till I come out with my 'Salt of the Earth.'

"So, when you are doing your best work you only do about four or five hundred a day. Good. Most good. I hope you will live up to it. I insist that good work cannot be done at the rate of three or four thousand a day. Good work is not strung out from the inkwell. It is built like a wall, every brick carefully selected, etc., etc.

". . . Ruskin, at the height of his fame, and turning out his best work in the Cornhill, had the series of essays stopped in the middle by Thackeray because they were daring. And daring, mark you, not for their attacks on religion, but for their attacks on the prevailing school of political economy. The same Thackeray refused one of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's best poems because it was risque. . . . I'm afraid Thackeray was a snob, a cad, and a whole lot of other things which he in turn has so successfully impaled for the regard of the British reading public."

In a letter dated March 1 after a dissertation upon an article by William H. Maple, "Does Matter Think?" Jack concludes with:

"Why, the man positively reeks of Herbert Spencer interpreted by Prof. Haeckel. Not that I am impugning his article; far from it. But he has simply put into his own words what he has learned from them, and he has done it well. Spencer was not openly, that is, didactically favorable to a material basis for thought, mind, soul, etc., but John Fiske has done many queer gymnastics in order to reconcile Spencer, whose work he worships, to his own beliefs in immortality and God. But he doesn't succeed very well. He jumps on Haeckel, with both feet, but in my modest opinion, Haeckel's position is as yet unassailable.

"Am working busily away; have to finish a McClure's story, an Atlantic story, and my speech before the Oakland Section for the eleventh of this month. Then I positively must write a Black Cat story. As yet haven t even worked out a plot, or idea. Was going to send them my 'Man with the Gash,' but McClure's accepted it. It was the MS. which I recently told you of — lost at Collier's Weekly, etc., and returned after I had taken a duplicate from the original longhand. Been refused by all sorts of publications and now McClure's are to publish it in the magazine. They paid me well. The two stories and essay which they accepted aggregated fifteen thousand words, for which

they sent me three hundred dollars — twenty dollars per thousand. Best pay I have yet received. Why certes, if they wish to buy me, body and soul, they are welcome — if they pay the price. I am writing for money; if I can procure fame, that means more money. More money means more life to me. I shall always hate the task of getting money; every time I sit down to write it is with great disgust. I'd sooner be out in the open wandering around most any old place. So the habit of money-getting will never become one of my vices. But the habit of money spending, ah God! I shall always be its victim. I received the three hundred last Monday. I have now about four dollars in pocket, have not moved, don't see how I can financially; owe a few debts yet, etc. How's that for about three days?

". . . If a man, in controversy, becomes undignified, he certainly is beneath your notice, and you likewise lose your dignity if you do notice him. And surely, if he remains dignified, you are the last in the world to become undignified. Life is strife, but it also happens to stand for certain amenities."

". . . Sold Youth's Companion a four thousand word story which they say is the best I have yet sent them; that makes two since you were up." About this juncture, shortly after the first of March, I made the acquaintance of this vivid character, so paradoxical to the chance observer, but whom I have failed to find paradoxical. In the next letter, dated March 10, 1900, Jack mentions our meeting, which I have treated in detail in the Prologue of this book.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

". . . Honestly, though, rubbing with the world will not harm you if you take the rubs aright. Not only wild and woolly rubbing, but intellectual rubbing. The most healthful experience in the world for you who are rather versatile and universal, would be bumping into specialists who would handle you without gloves. Such has been for me the best education in the world, and I look for it more and more. Man must have better men to measure himself against, else his advance will be nil, or if at all, one-sided and whimsical. The paced rider makes better speed than the unpaced.

"I can sympathize with you in your disgust for Harold. [A town.] A year of it would drive me mad, judging from the pictures. Outside of your own work what intellectual life can you have? You are thrown back upon yourself. Too apt to become self-centered; to measure other things by yourself than to measure yourself by other things. . . . Man is gregarious, and never more so when intellectual companions are harder to find than mere species companions.

". . . I am only averaging about 350 words per day, now, and can't increase the speed to save me; but, it s either very good work, or else it is trash; in either case I am losing nothing, for I am measuring myself and learning things which will bring returns some future day." [Here follows the reference to his call at my home.]

"March 15, 1910.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Your Wave episode reminds me of my Journal one. I have sold 2000 words for one dollar and a half; but the work was bad and I would do the same again. But I

can't exactly see it when I am offered three fifty for 2200 words of very good work. I wonder what such people think a fellow lives on. ". . . To be well fitted for the tragedy of existence (intellectual existence) one must have a working philosophy, a synthesis of things. Do you write, and talk, and build upon a foundation which, you know is securely laid? Or do you not rather build with a hazy idea of 'to hell with the foundation?' In token of this: What significance do the following generalities have for you: Matter is indestructible; motion is continuous; Force is persistent; the relations among forces are persistent; the transformation of forces is the equivalence of forces; etc., etc.? And if you do find in these generalities some significance relating to the foundation (way down) of your philosophy of life, what general single idea of the Cosmos do they (which are relative manifestations of the absolute), convey to you? How may you, therefore, without having mastered this idea or law (they are all laws), put down the very basic stone of your foundation? Have you ever thought that all life, all the universe of which you may in any way have knowledge of, bows to a law of continuous redistribution of matter? Have you read or thought that there is a dynamic principle, true of the metamorphosis of the universe, of the metamorphoses of the details of the universe, which will express these ever-changing relations? Nobody can tell you what this dynamic principle is, or why; but you may learn how it works. Do you know what this principle is? If you do, have you studied it, ay, carefully and painstakingly? And if you have not done these things, which have naught to do with creeds, or dogmas, with politics or economics, with race prejudices or passions; but which are the principles upon which they all work, to which they all answer because of law; if you have not, then can you say that you have a firm foundation for your philosophy of life? . . . .

". . . 'Screaming nonsense' — my article on war. You amuse me. Permit me to demolish you. What do you know of the Mauser rifles which are not as yet even in use in South Africa? They have only recently been tested in Holland. Let me demolish you out of your own mouth. Can you conceive of a man pointing, without removing from shoulder, a gun in any given direction for one second, or moving it, during that second at an approximately same elevation for a second? (this isn't sharpshooting, but repelling a rush attack of a body of men). Also, can you conceive that man is capable of pressing a finger steadily (no clicking, no removing or ejecting of shells on his part) upon a trigger for one second? And can you conceive a man capable of inventing a device, which, under steady pressure, will deliver six blows sufficiently heavy to explode by impact six caps set in the ends of six cartridges? If you cannot conceive these things, then I do sincerely pity you; it would be then the fault of your ancestors.

"Did you think that it was necessary for a sharpshooter to shoot so rapidly as all that? Did you think I was fool enough to think so? Cloudesley! Cloudesley! You say that you firmly believe that any position which can be approached at doublequick can be carried at the point of the bayonet by a body twice the strength of the defenders. Cold steel, mind you. Do you happen to know that Hiram Maxim writes his name with a Maxim gun upon a target at two thousand yards? Cold steel!

"You misunderstand the whole trend of my article, which meant first the struggle between first-class soldiers of the first-class European powers, and said powers are on about an equal war-footing. Secondly, my aim was to show, that war being so impossible, that men would not go up against each other to be exterminated, but that a deadlock would happen instead. Thus bringing in the economic factor. Because I stated that warfare was so deadly, I did not state that it would be applied. Rather would the deadlock occur. Read my article again. You missed the whole drift of it.

"Here comes Whitaker, I have to speak over in Alameda in an hour, so must quit.

". . . I expect to have a try at the Black Cat in a couple of days, if only the damned plot will come. Am too busy now to think upon it."

It is noteworthy that in the article referred to above, "The Impossibility of War," Jack London actually foretold the method of warfare that obtained in the Great War fourteen years thereafter:

"Soldiers will be compelled to creep forward, burying themselves in the earth like moles. Future wars must be long. No more open fields; no more decisive victories; but a succession of sieges, fought over and through successive lines of widely-extending fortifications. The defeated army — supposing it can be defeated — will retire slowly, entrenching itself step by step, and most likely with steam entrenching machines. And he went on to emphasize the greater deadliness of artillery owing to "the use of range-finders, chemical instead of mechanical mixtures of powder, high explosives, increase of range, and rapid fire."

To Anna Strunsky, March 15, 1900, whom he had sent a box of his early MSS:

"Dear Anna: —

"Regarding box . . . please remember that I have disclosed myself in my nakedness — all those vain efforts and passionate strivings are so many weaknesses of mine which I put into your possession. Why, the grammar is often frightful, and always bad, while artistically, the whole boxful is atrocious. Now don't say I am piling it on. If I did not realize and condemn those faults I would be unable to try to do better. But — why, I think in sending that box to you I did the bravest thing I ever did in my life.

"Say, do you know I am getting nervous and soft as a woman. I've got to get out again and stretch my wings or I shall become a worthless wreck. I am getting timid, do you hear? Timid! It must stop. Enclosed letter I received to-day, and it brought a contrast to me of my then 'unfailing nerve' and my present nervousness and timidity. Return it, as I suppose I shall have to answer it some day.

". . . I have to speak in Alameda to-night — 'Question of the Maximum.' Might as well work it for all there is in it, before it is published. [In "War of the Classes."]

"Am thinking about moving — getting cramped in my present quarters; but O the turmoil and confusion and time lost during such an operation!

"Freda and Mrs. Eppingwell [Characters in short story 'Scorn of Women'] have fought it out, and I have just reached the climax of the scene with Floyd Vanderlip in Freda's cabin. I did not treat it in the way I suggested. Instead of her wasting a sacredly shameful experience upon a man of his stamp, I had her appeal to him sensuously (I

think I handled it all right). So the conclusion of the story is only about a day away from now. Then hurrah for the East — if McClure accepts it, it will mean about one hundred and eighty dollars. He (McClure) sent me a photograph, large and framed, yesterday, and when I could find no free place upon my walls to hang it, I decided to perambulate. Almost wish a fire would come along and burn me out. It would be quicker, you know.

" . . . I am cursed with friends. I have grown accustomed to their clamoring for my company, and unconsciously feel that my presence (to them) is desirable. This mood is dangerously apt to become chronic. Need I say it so manifested itself Saturday night? And need I say that your company has ever been a great delight to me? That I would not have sought it had I not desired it? That (like you have said of yourself), when you no longer interest me I shall no longer be with you? Need I say these things to prove my candor?

"As to the box. Please take good care of the contents. And don't mix them up, please. I haven't written any poetry for months. Those you see are my experiments . . . and though they be failures I have not surrendered. When I am financially secure, some day, I shall continue with them — unless I have prostituted myself beyond redemption.

"To-day I am just learning to write all over again. When you can display as many failures, and have yet achieved nothing, then it is time for you to say that you cannot write. You have no right to say that now. And if you do say so, then you are a coward. Better not begin unless you are not afraid to work, work, work, to work early and late, unremittingly and always.

". . . Do you show them to no one. Like the leper, I have exposed my sores; be gentle with me, and merciful in your judgment. And remember, they are for your encouragement. Anna, you have a good brain, also magnificent emotional qualities, and insofar you are favored above women in possession. But carry Strawn-Hamilton before you. No system, no application. But carry also Mr. Bamford's quoted warning from 'Watson's Hymn to the Sea.' Don't apply what you have, wrongly. Don't beat yourself away vainly, etc. This was not the lecture I intended giving you; that was on other lines.

"But Anna, don't let the world lose you; for insomuch that it does lose you, insomuch you have sinned." "962 East 16th St., March 24, 1910.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Am pulling out on my wheel for San José; so pardon rush.

"I, at the eleventh hour, from a chance newspaper clipping, caught the motif for a Black Cat yarn. Behold, it is finished and off. How's this for a title? 'The Minions of Midas'? . . . 5000 words in length. ['Moon-Face' collection.] I did not write it for a first, second or third prize, but for one of the minor ones. I knew what motif was necessary for a first prize Black Cat story, but I could not invent such a motif.

". . . Shall be back next Tuesday 27th."

Marriage to Bessie Maddern

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XX

"1130 East 15th St.,

"Oakland, Calif.,

"April 3, 1900.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Thanks for the stamps. And by the way, before I get on to more serious things, let me speak of 'The Son of the Wolf.' For fear you invest in a copy if I don't I want to tell you that I shall send you one as soon as they come to hand. There is only one advance copy on the Coast, and I haven't seen that one yet. They say it is all right.

"You must be amused, lest you die. Here goes. You will observe that I have moved. Good! Next Saturday I shall be married. Better? Eh? Will send announcement of the funeral later.

"Jack London."

Mr. Johns's acknowledgment of the foregoing was laconic in the extreme, consisting of a sacred name of two words with an initial between, followed by an exclamation point. The same mail had brought to my Aunt, Mrs. Eames, the letter quoted in the Prologue. In her hands was the one advance copy of "The Son of the Wolf," to which Jack refers above.

Briefly, it seems to have come about in this way: Pressed for space in the small cottage, especially in the 10 by 10 den which served as work-room, bedroom for himself and any chance guest, and for living-room as well, Jack at last found means to make a change and move his mother and nephew and himself to a nice two-story house at 1130 East Fifteenth Street, flanked by a neat garden. In it were seven rooms, including a large bay-windowed parlor, and an upstairs study 13 by 15 feet. And joy upon joy, an attic where Jack could store his accumulating "gear."

Jack and Elizabeth Maddern had been exchanging instruction in English and "math" in the Fifteenth Street dwelling and the young woman had joined with Eliza in fixing up Jack's new den. His idea of adding a member to the household was born of the moment. He lay on his back in the middle of the floor, lost in a book, while sister and friend put his small but swelling library on some shelves he had had thrown together by a carpenter. Eliza, happening to glance aside, saw him turn over on his elbows, and, supporting his head on his hands, regard Miss Maddern fixedly as she moved about. His eyes filled with visions, and he dropped his face and lay still for a long time. Eliza, with a pang, sensed what had come to him, but held her peace. Looking back upon it, he wrote: "I was convinced absolutely that I knew the last word about love and life."

That evening, by force of argument, Jack convinced the girl of the wisdom of a union such as he proposed, or at least gained her consent, and next morning dropped into his sister's house:

"I am going to be married," he said without preamble. Eliza, as mask-like of face and feelings as ever he could be, replied, Good! I'm glad of it!" and undertook, at

her brother's request, to break the news to his mother. Flora London, who had been basking in the dream of this large, new, clean house where she would be mistress, was not enthusiastic at the idea of being superseded. Jack's cozy little plan did not work out so automatically as he had hoped; three months after the return of the bride from honeymoon to home all decorated with flowers by Eliza, that same sister-in-law, again at Jack's plea, superintended another removal, namely of Flora London and Johnnie Miller, into a cottage on Sixteenth Street, almost behind Jack's home. Eliza appears to have avoided all interference and only consented to step in from time to time when Jack's feminine affairs tangled to the imminence of his great disgust. Little was said upon these occasions between brother and sister. One look at his gray face, a word or two from the tightened bow of his lips concerning the nature of his need, and Eliza, without undue antagonizing of the others, set about regulating matters as fairly as possible.

While one delves for further enlightenment upon Jack London's sanction for this abrupt and loveless union, it may well be surmised that his feeling for Anna Strunsky played its part. Up to now, and beyond, his head determined the way of his life, for the day had not come when the big, ripe, man-heart of him overturned the fanes he had so carefully erected, and caused him to volunteer that "Love is the greatest thing in the world." As for Anna, the very dart and smart of their intellectual comradery rendered her an unrest. His plans for the future were so nicely ordered toward a systematic schedule of writing — to the aim of successful living, to be sure — that he could not consider the feverish temperamental life that was likely to be if he joined his with Anna's. How much the very fear of being drawn into such a situation entered into his sudden resolve to take no chances on that side, and to marry, as he did marry, we shall never know.

Cloudesley Johns, upon receipt of the printed announcement, wrote Jack:

"Harold, Cal., April 12, 1900.

"Dear Jack: —

May I defer my congratulations of you and Mrs. Jack for ten years? Then I shall hope to tender them — Thursday, April 7th, 1910. Don't forget: try to expect them.

"Your mind will be much occupied for a time with your change of residence and condition, and mine is hibernating at present, so I would suggest that you take up my last letter, and reply to it, — say June 1st.

"I heartily wish you both permanent satisfaction.

"Cloudesley Johns."

"1130 East 15th St., April 16, 1900.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Why certainly you may defer congratulations till April 7, 1910. Permit me to felicitate you upon your last letter bar this one I am answering. We all had a good laugh over it and enjoyed it immensely. I was away on the little wedding trip when it arrived, and my sister (you met her), looked at it and said she'd give ten dollars to see what you had to say. And it was worth it.

"No, I'll not answer it. Am not laconic enough.

". . . Got settled down to work to-day, and did the first thousand words in three weeks, and hereafter the old rate must continue. Say, a year ago I wrote a two thousand word skit or storiette called 'Their Alcove.' First, second, and third raters refused out of hand. Sent it to the Women's Home Companion, and with out a word of warning, and in quick time, came back an acceptance accompanied by a twenty dollar check. Most took my breath away.

"May 2, 1900.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

" . . . No; at the moment I get a good phrase I am not thinking of how much it will fetch in the market, but when I sit down to write I am; and all the time I am writing, deep down, underneath the whole business, is that same commercial spirit. I don't think I would write very much if I didn't have to."

Also on May 2, Jack wrote to Anna:

"How sorry I am. Friday I am chairman at the Ruskin Club dinner and cannot possibly escape. Thursday I speak in 'Frisco, and Saturday am bound out to dinner. . . . However, may I put you down for afternoon and dinner on Wednesday, May 9th?

"How enthusiastic your letters always make me feel. Makes it seem as though some new energy had been projected into the world and that I cannot fail gathering part of it to myself. No; God does not punish confidence; but he grinds between the upper and the nether millstone all those of little faith and little heart, and he grinds them very fine. Of course you will succeed if — you will work — and certainly you seem to suffer from a superabundance of energy. Apply this energy, rightly and steadily, and the world will open its arms to you. You are all right; the world is all right; the question is: will you have the patience to gain the ear of the world. You will have to shout loud, for the world is rather deaf, and you may have to shout long. But the world sometimes opens its ears at the first call. May it be thus with you.

"Jack."

In a letter of June 3, he mentioned having received a letter from Charles Warren Stoddard. The correspondence between these two prospered for years, during which the older man addressed Jack "Dear Son," and Jack responded with "Dear Dad." They never met. In this same letter of June 3 to Mr. Johns, Jack goes on:

"Have sold a couple of hundred more dollars worth of good stuff to McClure's at least I think it is good — 'The Grit of Women' [published August, 1900] and 'The Law of Life' [published March, 1901, both stories in McClure's, and later collected in volumes 'The God of His Fathers' and 'Children of the Frost.' respectively.]

"Got the proof sheets of a 'S. F. Examiner' story in and am correcting them . . . 'Which Makes Men Remember.' [Published June 24, 1900, under title 'Uri Bram's God.']

". . . So! I am married, and I cannot start to Paris in July, dough or no dough — that's why I got married.

"But none the less I heartily envy you your trip. I think maybe I'11 take a vacation on the road this summer just for ducks and to gather material, or rather, to freshen up what I have long since accreted — how would you judge of my use of that last word?

"Smart Set? I may go in for one of the lesser prizes. Can't tell yet. Outing has asked a bunch of Northland stories of me and I am busy hammering away at them just now."

In the next letter, June 16, he winds up advice to writers:

". . . Pour all yourself into your work until your work becomes you, but nowhere let yourself be apparent. When, in the 'Ebb Tide,' the schooner is at the pearl island, and the missionary pearler meets those three desperate men and puts his will against theirs for life or death, does the reader think Stevenson? . . . Nay, nay. Afterwards, when all is over, he recollects, and wonders and loves Stevenson — but at the time? Not he . . . study your Be loved's 'Ebb Tide.' . . . Study your detestable Kipling. Study them and see how they eliminate themselves and create things that live, and breathe, and grip men, and cause reading lamps to burn overtime. Atmosphere stands always for the elimination of the artist, that is to say, the atmosphere is the artist. . . .

". . . Think it over and see if you catch what I am driving at. Of course, if you intend fiction, then write fiction from the highest standpoint of fiction. . . . Put in life, and movement — and for God's sake no creaking. Damn you! Forget you! And then the world will remember you. . . . Pour all yourself into your work until your work becomes you, but nowhere let yourself be apparent."

Upon a long-coveted day when, debts cleared and cash left in pocket, for once square with the world, Jack strolled along Oakland's Broadway, it occurred to him that he could actually step into any of the familiar shops and purchase things that had burned in his desire since he could remember. Smiling to himself, he stopped before one window after another until he came to halt beside some small boys gloating and whispering before a candy store display. And suddenly an emptiness gnawed in him — something had gone out of his life. It was too late — desire had fled upon tired wings, and there was nothing that he, with silver at last heavy in his pocket of excellent cloth, cared to buy. It came with a shock. From the pocket he withdrew a hand bulging with loose change and bestowed it upon the little boys, with a catch in his throat almost marveling at the eagerness in their faces — which turned into something akin to suspicion, for a man must be crazy to shell out so much money at one time. And Jack passed on sadly enough, doubtlessly a trifle sorry for himself. "There wasn't a thing I wanted any more," he told his sister. "It had come too late."

Jack and his wife take a holiday at the seashore, at Santa Cruz, upon return from which he writes:

"July 23, 1900.

"Dear Cloudesley:

"Back from vacation at last! And hard at it. This is thirty-fifth letter. Ye Gods!

"Did I tell you McClure has bought me (as you would call it), but as I would say, has agreed to advance me one hundred and twenty-five per month for five months in

order that I may try my hand at a novel? Well, it is so, and I start in shortly, though filled with dismay in anticipation.

"Did you read that storiette of mine Semper Idem; Semper Fidelis? About fifteen hundred words, dealing with a man who cut his throat, bungled it, was cautioned by the doctor at the hospital as to how he might bungle it, and who went out, profited by the advice, and did it successfully? Well, I have sent it everywhere. At last I sent it to Black Cat. I would have sold it for a dollar. But the Black Cat gave me a sort of poor mouth, said it had hospital stuff to last it two years, etc., and that under the circumstances it could only offer me fifty dollars for it! Say! Most took my breath away. A fifteen hundred word sketch, The Husky, I refused to sell some time ago for $3.50, and Harper's Weekly bought it for twenty dollars. Say, those hang fire MSS. seem the best after all."

The next letter, dated July 31, 1900, is to Anna Strunsky:

"Comrades! and surely it seems so. For all the petty surface turmoil which marked our coming to know each other, really, deep down, there was no confusion at all. Did you not notice it? To me, while I said, 'You do not understand,' I none the less felt the happiness of satisfaction — how shall I say? felt, rather, that there was no inner conflict; that we were attuned, somehow; that a real unity underlaid everything. The ship, new-launched, rushes to the sea; the sliding-ways rebel in weakling creaks and groans; but sea and ship hear them not: So with us when we rushed into each other's lives — we, the real we, were undisturbed. Comrades! Ay, world without end!

"And now, comrade mine, how long are those Shakespeare papers to keep you from 'Consciousness of Kind?' You know how anxiously I wait the outcome, and how much you have improved. And Anna, read your classics, but don't forget to read that which is of to-day, the new-born literary art. You must get the modern touch; form must be considered; and while art is eternal, form is born of the generations. And O, Anna, if you will only put your flashing soul with its protean moods on paper! What you need is the form, or, in other words, the expression. Get this and the world is at your feet.

"And when are we to read 'The Flight of the Duchess'? And when are you coming over?"

"Sept. 9/00.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"So am I up against it — and just got started against it. Am winding up the first chapter of novel ['A Daughter of the Snows']. Since it is my first attempt, I have chosen a simple subject and shall simply endeavor to make it true, artistic, and interesting. But afterward, when I have learned better how to handle a sustained effort, I shall choose a greater subject. I wish I were done.

". . . There are a number of Le Gallienne's quatrains which I like better than corresponding quatrains of Fitzgerald's. Perhaps the literary mentors will not bear me out in this, but none the less, so far as I am concerned, it is so. . . .

"Am beginning to take exercise once again. Indian clubs, jumping, etc., every day, wheelrides every day, and baths three or four times per week — swimming I mean.

Am just back from practising in diving, and am stiff and sore with practising front and back somersaults. . . . Expect to take up fencing later on, and the gloves, and shooting. It is Voltaire, I believe, who said: 'The body of an athlete and the soul of a sage; that is happiness.' I am trying to assimilate Spencer's philosophy just now, so there is a chance that I may yet attain to happiness." Meanwhile, Jack and Anna had formulated the project of writing in collaboration, to thresh out their opposing ideas by means of a correspondence as between two men, upon the subject of Love.

To Mr. Johns, Oct. 17, 1900, Jack mentions this work:

"Didn't I explain my volume of letters? Well, it's this way: A young Russian Jewess of 'Frisco and myself have often quarreled over our conceptions of love. She happens to be a genius. She is also a materialist by philosophy, and an idealist by innate preference, and is constantly being forced to twist all the facts of the universe in order to reconcile herself with herself. So, finally, we decided that the only way to argue the question out would be by letter. Then we wondered if a collection of such letters should happen to be worth publishing. Then we assumed characters, threw in a real objective love element, and started to work. Of course, don't know yet how it will turn out. We're both doing some very good work — in spots; but we are agreed, in case they merit it, to go over when we are done."

"Nov. 27th.

"Dear Anna:

"I have been sitting here crying, like a big baby. I have just finished reading 'Jude the Obscure.' Perhaps it is not as great as 'Tess,' but in a way it is greater. When are you coming over that I may lend it to you? With two such books to his name Hardy should die content. Well may he look upon his work and call it good.

"Jack."

To Mr. Johns, Dec. 10, 1900:

"You can't get away from the materialistic conception of history. . . . Ideas do not rule, never have ruled; where they have appeared to rule, it was merely because economic or material conditions were such as to have first generated the ideas, and secondly, to have been in harmony with the working of them."

And Dec. 22:

"Yes, after much delay, I captured Cosmopolitan prize. I flatter myself that I am one of the rare socialists who have ever suc-ceeded in making money out of their socialism. Apropos of this, I send you copy of a letter received day before yesterday from Brisbane Walker. Of course I shall not accept it. I do not wish to be bound. Which same you do think I am. Not so. McClure's have not bound me, nor will they. [This refers to the offer of an editorship.] I want to be free, to write of what delights me, whensoever and wheresoever it delights me. No office work for me; no routine; no doing this set task and that set task. No man over me. I think McClure's have recognized this, and will treat me accordingly. Aside from pecuniary considerations, I think they are the best publishers, or magazine editors, in their personal dealings, that I have run across.

"Speaking of illustrations, did you see how beautifully Ainslie's did by my story in December number? Incidentally, without asking my permission, here and there they succeeded in cutting out fully five hundred words, which I shall reinsert when published in book form. I suppose the one hundred and twenty-five they paid for it was considered sufficient justification for mangling."

On the day after Christmas, he wrote to Anna:

"Comrade Mine: —

"Thus it was I intended addressing you a Christmas greeting, saying, as it seemed to me, for you, the finest thing in the world. But it was impossible. For a week I have been suffering from the blues, during which time I have not done a stroke of work. Am writing this with cold fingers, at six in the morning — going for a day on the water, fishing, shooting, etc., to see if there are any curative forces left in the universe.

"Ah, we refuse not to speak, and yet we speak brokenly and stumblingly! True, too true. The paradox of social existence, to be truthful, we lie; to live true, we live untruthfully. The social wisdom is a thing of great worth — to the mass. For the few it is a torment, upon it they are crucified — not for their salvation, but for the salvation of the mass. I grow, sometimes, almost to hate the mass, to sneer at dreams of reform. To be superior to the mass is to be the slave of the mass. The mass knows no slavery. It is the task master.

"But how does this concern you and me! Ah, does it not con-cern us? We may refuse not to speak, yet we speak brokenly and stumblingly — because of the mass. The tyranny of the crowd, as I suppose Gerald Stanley Lee would put it. As for me, just when freedom seems opening up to me, I feel the bands tightening and the riveting of the gyves. I remember, now, when I was free. When there was no restraint, and I did what the heart willed. Yes, one restraint, the Law; but when one willed, one could fight the law, and break or be broken. But now, one's hands are tied, one may not fight, but only yield and bow the neck. After all, the sailor on the sea and the worker in the shop are not so burdened. To break or be broken, there they stand. But to be broken while not daring to break, there s the rub.

"I could almost advocate a return to nature this dark morning. A happiness to me? — added unto me? — why, you have been a delight to me, dear, and a glory. Need I add, a trouble? For the things we love are the things which hurt us as well as the things we hurt. Ah, believe me, believe me. 'I have not winced or cried aloud.' The things unsaid are the greatest. Surely, sitting here, gathering data, classifying, arranging ; writing stories for boys with moral purposes insidiously inserted; hammering away at a thousand words a day; growing genuinely excited over biological objections; thrusting a bit of fun at you and raising a laugh, when it should have been a sob — surely all this is not all. What you have been to me? I am not great enough or brave enough to say. This false thing, which the world would call my conscience, will not permit me. But it is not mine: it is the social conscience, the world's which goes with the world's leg-bar chain. A white beautiful friendship? — between a man and a woman? — the world cannot imagine such a thing, would deem it inconceivable as infinity or non-infinity."

Letters: Cloudesley Johns and Anna Strunsky

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XXI

LETTERS opening the year 1901, hint at Jack's general state of inner consciousness, his worldly condition, and sentiments on the consummation of fatherhood, so dearly desired from merest boyhood.

"1130 East 15th St., Jan. 5/01.

"Dear Cloudesley:

". . . I have written probably one hundred and ten thousand this [past] year, against your ninety-odd; but I think that I loafed or did other things less, and that each thousand took me longer than each of your thousands did you.

To tell you the truth, Cloudesley, I haven't had any decent work published recently — work which I would care to have you read — socialistic essay excepted, and that I was unable to get a whack at in the proof sheets.

". . . Christmas is just past. Further a friend has taken up writing with seven children and an undeveloped ability, which said friend I have been helping to finance. Another, both ankles broken badly some time since. Then my mother, to whose pension I add thirty dollars each month, got back in her debts and I have just finished straightening her out. And my Mammie Jennie (negro foster mother) came down upon me for December quarterly payment of interest on mortgage, and delinquent taxes. Furthermore, within a week I expect my wife to be confined. . . . January check non est, and I have been going along on borrowed money since before Christmas."

"Sunday Morning, Jan. 6/01.

"Dear Anna: —

"I had intended writing you yesterday, asking you to come over Monday evening and go with me to that equal suffragist club before which Whitaker was to read. Then Tuesday I could have taken your picture. But I had forgotten Mrs. Gowell's lectures. . . . Also found out that Monday was not the night and that we would have our regular boxing bout.

"So Saturday, but come early . . . so that I may take advantage of the sun. This, then, be the qualification: if I do not telephone you otherwise. Possibly ere that time, the boy — I do pray for a boy — shall have arrived. In which case, you must come. So Saturday, early. . . . My birthday. A quarter of a century of breath. I feel very old.

"Of the New Comer, I thank you for what you say. It will be in itself a dear consummation. Then must come the patient determining. And, O Anna, it must be make or break. No whining puny breed. It must be great and strong. Or — the penalty must be paid. By it, by me; one or the other. So be.

"I shall be glad to go in for the Ibsen circle. I need more of that in my life."

"Feb. 4/01.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Not dead, but rushed as usual. Have got down to my regular five hours and a half sleep again and running by the clock. Am just answering a whole stack of letters.

"Well, there's no accounting for things. I did so ardently long to be a father, that it seemed impossible that such a happiness should be mine. But it is. And a damn fine, healthy youngster. Weighed nine and a half pounds at birth, which they say is good for a girl. Up to date has shown a good stomach and lack of ailments, for it does nothing but eat and sleep, or lie awake for a straight hour without a whimper. Intend to call her 'Joan.' Tell me how you like it, what associations it calls up.

". . . As regards 'bumming by force from peoples inhabiting lands we cannot thrive in?' Does not our modern slavery serve to deteriorate us, affecting our own government? While counting the profit you must not ignore the loss. . . . Do you not realize that whatever is 'is right and wise.' Certainly it may be made wiser and more right in the natural course of evolution (and then again it mayn't), but the point is that it is the best possible under the circumstances. Given so much matter, and so much force, and beginning at the beginning of things as regards this our world, do you not know that it could not have worked out in any other way, nay, not in the least jot or tittle could it have been other than it was. We may make it better; and then again we may not.

"As Dr. Ross somewhere says: 'Evolution is no kindly mother to us. We do not know what moment it may turn against us and destroy us.' Don't you see; I speak not of the things that should be; nor of the things I should like to be; but I do speak of the things that are and will be. I should like to have socialism; yet I know that socialism is not the very next step; I know that capitalism must live its life first. That the world must be exploited to the utmost first; that first must intervene a struggle for life among the nations, severer, intenser, more widespread, than ever before. I should much more prefer to wake to-morrow in a smoothly-running socialistic state; but I know I shall not; I know it cannot come that way. I know that a child must go through its child's sicknesses ere it becomes a man. So, always, remember that I speak of the things that are; not of the things that should be.

"Find enclosed Cosmopolitan letters. I stood off first one and wrote to McClure's. They have agreed to go on with me, giving me utter freedom. So you see, at least they have not bought me body and soul. Honestly, they are the most human editors I ever dealt with. When I think about them, it is more as very dear friends, than people I am doing business with. However, in refusing Cosmopolitan offer, which meant giving up freedom, I think I have acted for the best. What think you?"

"Feb. 13/01.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Well, I am on the home stretch of the novel, and it is a failure. This is not said in a fit of the blues, but from calm conviction. However, on the other hand, I have learned a great deal concerning the writing of novels. On this one which I have attempted, I could write three books of equal size showing wherein I failed, and why, and laying down principles violated, etc. 0, it's been a great study. I shall be at work finishing it for the rest of the month — you know I always finish whatever I begin. I never leave a thing in such a state that in the time to come haunting thoughts may creep in — 'If

I only had gone on,' etc. "McClure's are getting ready to bring out a second collection of Klondike stories — not so good as the first, however.

"March I shall take a vacation, and April I intend writing my long-deferred 'Salt of the Earth.' . . .

"I see you laugh at me and my optimistic philosophy. So be. I only wish you would study up the materialistic conception of history, then you would understand my position."

Again Jack moves his family, this time to an ornate Italian villa, "La Capriccioso," on the shores of Oakland's pleasure-pond, Lake Merritt, designed and built by his good friend the sculptor, Felix Peano:

"1062 First Avenue,

"Oakland, Calif.,

"March 15/01.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Note by address that I have moved. Last seen of old house there was a foot and a half of water under it, and the back yard a lake. Am much more finely situated now, nearer to Oakland, with finer view, surroundings, air, etc., etc. Do you remember Lake Merritt? — a body of water which you might have seen from the electric cars on the way to my place from down town. I am located right near it, and believe, with a sling shot from the roof of the house, that I could throw a stone into it.

"Shall have the novel done in ten days, now — N.G. ["No Good"]. But I know I shall be able to do a good one yet.

". . . Mr. Whitaker is selling some of his work, — now Ainslie's, The S. S. McClure, Munsey's, etc., etc. He's picking up.

"Jack."

"April 1/01.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"The novel is off at last, and right glad am I that it is. . . .

"I send herewith a letter from Town Topics. They are paying two dollars for jokes now, and if you have any it wouldn't be a bad idea to send them along. I do not know much about joke writing, but I wouldn t send jokes in a bunch. I sent four triolets (the only four I ever wrote), to Town Topics. They took one, and sent three back. Later I resent one of the triolets: they took it. Later I resent another: they took it. But they balked on the fourth. ". . . By all means . . . come somewhere and live in the center of things. In this day one cannot isolate one's self and do anything. Get you a big city anywhere, and plunge into it and live and meet people and things. If you believe that man is the creature of his environment, then you cannot afford to remain way off there on the edge of things."

"April 3/01.

"Dear Anna: —

"Did I say that the human might be filed in categories? Well, and if I did, let me qualify — not all humans. You elude me. I cannot place you, cannot grasp you. I may

boast that of nine out of ten, under given circumstances, I can forecast their action; that of nine out of ten, by their word, or action, I may feel the pulse of their hearts. But the tenth I despair. It is beyond me. You are that tenth.

"Were ever two souls, with dumb lips, more incongruously matched! We may feel in common — surely, we ofttimes do — and when we do not feel in common, yet do we understand; and yet we have no common tongue. Spoken words do not come to us. We are unintelligible. God must laugh at the mummery.

"The one gleam of sanity through it all is that we are both large temperamentally, large enough to often misunderstand. True, we often understand but in vague glimmering ways, by dim perceptions, like ghosts, which, while we doubt, haunt us with their truth. And still, I, for one, dare not believe; for you are that tenth which I may not forecast.

"Am I unintelligible now? I do not know. I imagine so. I cannot find the common tongue.

"Largely temperamentally — that is it. It is the one thing that brings us at all in touch. We have, flashed through us, you and I, each a bit of the universal, and so we draw together. And yet we are so different.

"I smile at you when you grow enthusiastic? It is a forgivable smile — nay, almost an envious smile. I have lived twenty-five years of repression. I learned not to be enthusiastic. It is a hard lesson to forget. I begin to forget, but it is so little. At the best, before I die, I cannot hope to forget all or most. I can exult, now that I am learning, in little things, in other things; but of my things, and secret things double mine, I cannot, I cannot. Do I make myself intelligible? Do you hear my voice? I fear not. There are poseurs. I am the most successful of them all.

Jack."

"April 8/01.

Dear Cloudesley: —

I am sending you herewith pictures of the youngster at three weeks and two months.

"Every man, at the beginning of his career (whether laying bricks or writing books or anything else), has two choices. He may choose immediate happiness, or ultimate happiness. . . . He who chooses ultimate happiness, and has the ability, and works hard, will find that the reward for effort is cumulative, that the interest on his energy invested is compounded. The artisan who is industrious, steady, reliant, is suddenly, one day, advanced to a foremanship with increased wages. Now is that advance due to what he did that day, or the day before ? Ah, no, it is due to the long years of industry and steadiness. The same with the reputation of a business man or artist. The thing grows, compounds. 'He is not only paid for having done something once upon a time,' as you put it, but he has been paid for continuing to do something through quite a period of time. . . .

"O no. My 'incentive' is not the 'assurance of being able some day to sell any sort of work on the strength of a name.' Every year we have writers, old writers, crowded out — men, who once had names, but who had gained them wrongfully, or had not done

the work necessary to maintain them. In its way, the struggle for a man with a name, to maintain the standard by which he gained that name, is as severe as the struggle for the unknown to make a name.

"Jack London."

"Harold, April 13, 1901.

"Dear Jack: —

". . . Thanks for photos: my mother asked a while ago if you had sent any of the 'small one' yet. They are woefully helpless and stupid things — human infants — yet it is wonderful what expression they sometimes have. That of Miss London at two months impresses me as distinctly weird, as if she were perplexed by some weighty problem. I believe the mystery of existence agitates the mind at even so early a stage of its development as that.

"N.B. I think your machine needs boiling — try brushing the types for a starter though.

"Cloudesley Johns."

April 19/01.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"I agree with you in some of your criticism of 'The Law of Life,' but not in all. For instance, 'What was that?' Remember, the words occur, not in the writer's narrative — in such a place your criticism would hold good. But the words do occur in the mind of the Indian. He thinks them. And that it is the most natural thing in the world for a person to so think when something unknown or unusual occurs, you cannot deny.

". . . Did I tell you? — novel is accepted to be brought out this fall. In the meantime immediate serial publication is being sought.

Have to go read a poem over a coffin to satisfy the whim of a man who was quick and is now dead; so so long."

Saturday evening, April 26, 1901, he lectured in Forrester's Hall, Alameda, at corner of Santa Clara Avenue and Park Street, upon tramp experiences.

Home July 12, from a vacation which he wrote Cloudesley was a longer absence than he had intended, Jack sends Anna the letter quoted below. And right here it is well to insert Jack London's own words on his outlook toward newspaper work: "I could have made a good deal at newspaper work; but I had sufficient sense to refuse to be a slave to that man-killing machine, for such I hold a newspaper to be to a young man in his forming period. Not until I was well on my feet as a magazine writer did I do much work for newspapers." "July 24/01.

"My Little Collaborator: —

"Yes, and the Yellow is dead — at least for some little time to come. For all I know, I may be doing prize fights next.

"Explanations are hardly necessary between you and me, but this case merits one I think. Didn't get home till the middle of the day, Monday. Went to see my mother, sister, etc. Tuesday went to Santa Cruz to speak. Came back Wednesday and pitched into work on back correspondence. All the time intending to take up reply to Dane

Kempton's last and surprise you with it. But the Sunday Examiner rushed me Thursday to have a freak story in by Friday noon. And Thursday also the Daily Examiner clamored to see me instanter. Put daily off, finished Sunday work on time, and on Friday also went to see Daily Examiner. They proposed the Schutzenfest to me. Saturday I started reply to Dane Kempton and paid bills. And on Sunday took up the Schutzenfest and have been at it steadily for ten days, publishing in to-day's Examiner the last of that work. My whole life has stood still for ten days. During that time I have done nothing else. Why, so exhausting was it that my five and one-half hours would not suffice and I had to sleep over seven.

"And just now, to-day, as I sat down to send you greeting, along comes yours to me. I kind of looked for you to be over to-day, though little right had I to, and I have now given up that idea.

"And further, I find I must do something for McClure's at once, or they will be shutting off on me. So I am springing at once into a short story, which will be finished by end of week, and then the Letters. You know I have striven to be on time, so forgive me this once. Tell you what I'll do, if you don't expect to be out — see you on Friday afternoon. Won't be able to stop to dinner, though, for have to go to 6:30 supper. [This was the delightful 'Six-Thirty Club,' of San Francisco.] If I do miss the supper, will be dropped from the rolls, for it will have been my third consecutive absence.

"Haven't finished 'Aurora Leigh' yet, but it is fine, greater, I think, than Wordsworth's ('Excursion' is it?) from the little you read me of it." Early October finds Jack broken with S. S. McClure, and again moved, this time a little higher toward the western hills, with a long-envied view of the Golden Gate across the Bay. With each change of residence, he had a new rubber-stamp made for letter-heading:

"Jack London,

"56 Bayo Vista Avenue,

"Oakland, Calif.,

"October 9/01.

"Dear Cloudesley:

"Note change of address. Am now living out on the hills. . . .And how's New York? Are you going to settle down to writing for the winter? I nearly shipped across on a cattle boat when I was on the road, but somehow didn't.

"Am free lance again. Have just finished a 3700-word defense of Kipling against the rising tide of adverse criticism. Did you see the attack in current Cosmopolitan?

". . . "Well, haven't much news. Am hard at it. That series of letters with Miss Strunsky is three-fifths through. That is to say, we have three-fifths of a book done. Though the Lord only knows what publisher will dare tackle it. Also, am hammering away at a series of Klondike tales, which I shall assemble under the title 'The Children of the Frost.' They are all to be done from the Indian approach, you know."

Two letters unfold the first intimation that Jack London wanted to widen his field by getting away from Alaska:

"Nov. 8/01.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Of course the painter has to quit painting bears, but he has first to gather together his itinerary and select his route. (Say, is that what they call a mixed metaphor?)

"Anyway, it's the same old story. A man does one thing in a passable manner and the dear public insists on his continuing to do it to the end of his days. O the humorists who try to be serious!

". . . that letter series Miss Strunsky and I are writing? Well, we've got past the forty-thousand mark and the goal is in sight. Gee! I wonder how you'll jump upon it. My contention is the same as I heard you make once: That propinquity determines choice. Yet I am sure you will be after my scalp before you finish it — that is, if we can entice a publisher into getting it out.

"Whitaker has just sold a story to Cosmopolitan. Rah for Whitaker! 0, he's going it scientifically.

"I wouldn't mind being with you next spring when you pull out for the old countries.

"Cosgrave mentioned having several interesting conversations with you, and that he expected to get some tramp work from you. How is it coming on?"

"Dec. 6/01.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Nothing doing. Am hammering away in seclusion, trying to get out of Alaska. Guess I'll succeed in accomplishing it in a couple of years.

". . . Wyekoff is not a tramp authority. He doesn't understand the real tramp. Josiah Flynt is the tramp authority. Wyckoff only knows the workingman, the stake-man, and the bindle-stiff. The profesh are unknown to him. Wyckoff is a gay-cat. That was his rating when he wandered over the States.

"Well, good luck on the way to Cuba! Wish I were with you. I am rotting here in town. Really, I can feel the bourgeois fear crawling up and up and twining around me. If I don't get out soon I shall be emasculated. The city folk are a poor folk anyway. To hell with them."

Upon a not much later date, Jack London wrote: "Although primarily of the city, I like to be near it rather than in it. The country, though, is the best, the only natural life."

At the time he expressed the foregoing, I also find this: "I think the best work I have done is in the 'League of the Old Men,' ["Children of the Frost" collection] and parts of 'The Kempton-Wace Letters.' Other people don't like the former. They prefer brighter and more cheerful things. Perhaps I shall feel like that, too, when the days of my youth are behind me. But he never changed, always con-sidering "The League of the Old Men" his finest story. Concerning the "Kempton-Wace Letters," note the following two communications, undated, to Anna Strunsky:

"Dear Anna: —

"Your letter is a splendid, a delicately splendid addition to the book. I am anxious to see it in type. I want to see it shape up.

"Your letter impelled me to work, and find here my attempt at rewriting my first letter. I have been two whole days on it, and working hard. From the trouble I have had with it, and from its original horribleness, I now know that I shall have to write it a third time (at the general revision), ere it is worth looking at. However, I send it for what it is worth. How bad my first letters were I never dreamed. I know now.

"You will notice that I have devoted little space to Hester, and more space to other and unimportant things. I have described her mental characteristics, her intellectual constitution, that which appeals to the non-loving Herbert Wace. For the reader I have already opened the breach between you (Dane Kempton) and me. When the book opens we are both aware of the slipping away, vaguely aware; one certain function of the book will be to differentiate us so that the breach becomes sharply defined. I change my landlord to my friend Gwynne. I shall develop a love experience for him, which shall culminate in one of the inserted letters — naturally the love experience will be evidence on my side of the contention.

"Dear Anna:

"Find here letter No. 2. And I must plead guilty to the same feeling which you were under when you wrote me. I don't know what to make of it. Seem all at sea. Feel that I am all wrong, that I am not building characters as I should, or even writing letters as they should be written. But I suppose the whole thing will grow, in time. Anyway, it's a good method for getting a fair conception of one's limitations.

"What do you think of my making a poet of Hester? Should it be poet or poetess? I detest poetess. Is there such a word as 'lyricist'? There is the word 'lyrist', meaning the same thing, but I do not like it. Do you catch my new school possibly to be founded by Hester? — Poetry of a Machine Age. I may exploit it in later letters. Do you, Dane Kempton, behold that I have not told you anything about Hester physically? I don't like the wind up, the treatment of the minor conflict. It seemed as though I begged the question, and yet I couldn't conceive a way of arguing it out. To me it seems almost unarguable. I do not know. Perhaps not. Can't tell.

". . . And please criticize unsparingly, especially in errors of taste."

In an article written after Jack London's death, Mrs. Walling said, referring to the period when they were collaborating:

"He held that love is only a trap set by nature for the individual. One must not marry for love but for certain qualities discerned by the mind. This he argued in 'The Kempton-Wace Letters' brilliantly and passionately; so passionately as to again make one suspect that he was not as certain of his position as he claimed to be."

Piedmont

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XXII 1902 — PIEDMONT — 27th YEAR

RETURNING at Christmas, 1901, from a fifteen-months visit in the eastern states, broken by several weeks of Europe, at my Aunt's suggestion I went to call at the Bayo

Vista Avenue home of the Londons, but found no one at home. When I did renew acquaintance, that spring of 1902, it was in the old Worcester bungalow at Piedmont, set on a breezy high-hill slope amid pine and swaying eucalyptus, with a rich spread of golden poppy-field slanting toward the westering sun, across the blue bay to the bluer sea. George Sterling, the poet, had called Jack's attention to this neglected, picturesque spot beyond his own home, and it came nearer to Jack London's ideal than any house he ever dwelt in.

The squat, weathered thatch of shingle sheltered a large-beamed living hall, a small dining room, and three or four bedchambers, in one of which Jack eventually combined his sleeping-with working-quarters. Kitchen, laundry, and servants' rooms rambled like aimless if charming after thoughts, with scant mercy to impatient feet, up-step and down, to the dismay of mistress and nursemaids and cook, of which assistants, whenever obtainable, there were, at one time or another, from one to three.

The long-deserted premises lacked certain modern touches, and Eliza was called in to oversee the rehabilition. A pretty box of a cottage in the grounds was furnished for Jack's mother, the which, after voluble objection, she had at length consented to occupy. By now Flora London had grown as averse to pulling up stakes as ever she had welcomed such diversion in a by-gone day. While on Bayo Vista Avenue, Jack had pursued the custom of receiving all and sundry callers upon one afternoon and evening a week, with welcome to dinner. Other days he must be uninterrupted. This was the untheatrical practicality of his dream — "keeping my house in order." All things, work and play, should be subject to an efficient discipline. "I am a disciple of regular work," he had to say, and never wait for an inspiration. Temperamentally I am not only careless and irregular, but melancholy; still I have fought both down. The discipline I had as a sailor had full effect on me. Perhaps my old sea days are also responsible for the regularity and limitations of my sleep. Five and a half hours is the precise average I allow myself, and no circumstance has yet arisen in my life that could keep me awake when the time comes to 'turn in.'"

As for the domestic wear and tear involved to insure his one half-day of relaxation out of six or seven (he did not always rest on Sundays, and one day a week he devoted to helping a brother writer, since successful, and now deceased), he would cry:

"If there are not enough servants, get more; your credit is good. Our slim days are passing. Go ahead — get all that are needful to put a good hospitable meal on my table on my Wednesdays!"

Those Wednesday afternoons and evenings will never fade to the lucky souls privileged to share in them, filled as they were with merriest and noisest of jollity and sport; card-games — whist, poker, pedro, "black-jack;" rapid-fire of wits. And there was no lack of music — piano and singing, ringing voices — and poetry. Arthur Symons, Le Gallienne, Swinburne, the Rosettis, Fitzgerald, Bierce, Henley — these and many others were read aloud around the long oaken table, or lolling about the roomy veranda where swung the hammock. Now it would be George Sterling's hushed recitation, or Jack's vibrant tone, or Anna's mellow, golden throat — all the others hanging tremu-

lous on the music of speech from these receptive ones who could not wait to make known their beloved of the poets. Blessing it was to sit under the involuntary young teachers of good and gracious ways of the spirit.

Frolicking outdoors and in, the company assisted their sparkling-eyed gay host, his formidably wise head "sunning over with curls," in the flying of huge box kites from stationary reels set about the acre or so of garden both tended and wild-poppied. Or sparred lustily with the gloves, or fenced with him or with the rising story-writer Herman Whitaker, who was Jack's English-pupil and incidentally his fencing instructor. Or with one another. Or rolled clamoring downhill in the tall grasses bloomed thickly amongst by the great, flaunting-orange poppies.

On working-days, for his conditioning Jack would inveigle anyone he could into a boxing-bout — even the little nurse-maids in their early teens had a rare chance to learn scientific self-defense with the well-padded gymnasium gloves. For in sport, as in everything else, Jack London adhered to the scientific approach. It was always an irk to him when hasty young male opponents lost their heads at his insistent, repetitive light-tapping on some persistently unguarded spot, and took to "slugging" in hot blood. In such case Jack necessarily defended himself with an occasional judicious "slug" of his own, until the other should learn the error of his ways. But more often he simply stalled and let the heated fighter absorb the disconcerting lesson of being hurt only by his own headstrongness.

Indoors, in the large room that was the apple of his eye, games were played of intellectual as well as hilarious "rough-house" varieties, in which all joined, boys and girls, men and women and children; and no one could surpass the joyous roar of Jack's fresh boyish lungs, nor out-invent him in bedevilment and sporting feats. Then suddenly he might shout, "Oh, wait — I've got to read you something! Have you seen W. W. Jacobs' 'Many Cargoes' and 'More Cargoes?' You've simply got to listen to 'In Borrowed Plumes.'" Thereupon, light-stepping with his blithe walk from fetching the book, he would settle deep into the yarn, perhaps propped on the floor with cushions, and repeatedly break down until he rolled and wept in a near-hysteria of uncontrollable mirth over the psychology of Jacobs's outraged skipper.

Romping, they were all one to Jack in this hearty crowd, the president of a great eastern publishing house, or say Sterling's several young and beautiful sisters, and the brilliant Partington sisters and brothers from San Francisco. They had to "take their medicine," Jack vowed, and they knew he despised a coward. The only difference he made with the girls was that he avoided being truly rough, except in such desperate encounters when they might overbear him by conspiracy or numbers or both. As, for instance, during a camping week in the farther hills, when these resourceful maidens, returning from a rattlesnake hunt one warm afternoon, sewed him napping in a hammock and built beneath him a crackling bonfire; or when, after a succession of clever indignities heaped upon him by their teeming trickery, he let them have a large panful of well-dressed salad of ripe red tomatoes, slung precisely chest-high in a sanguinary line the length of a picnic-table. After which perforce he took swift heels to the loftiest

reaches of the landscape, pursued by a mad avenging mob of petticoats. Well I remember a day when Joaquin Miller strayed in upon us from his own home, "The Hights," not far away, and found Jack breathing hard and at wary distance from the exhausted feminine element of the camp. Some of the girls, as outcome of a blackberry "scrap," in which the August dust had also been used as ammunition, looked much like the day-after upon a battlefield. "I wish you would go and tidy your hair, young woman," Mr. Miller said to myself, who, though not one of the opposing factions, had accidentally intercepted a pailful of flying water. But presently, everything had quieted down, and the Poet of the Sierras, high-booted, hoary-bearded, serene, was reciting his own verses at our unanimous request. Still can I see Jack's drooped eyes, violet behind the longlashes, and hear the musical voice of the poet:

"Many to-morrows, my love, my dove,
Only one to-day, to-day."

Again, all frolic ceased, Jack could be so still, so low-toned with sudden access of beauty, or the sharing of beauty; as when, it may be, he would lead a friend into the rosy gloom of his redwood living-hall, that the glory of a single poppy, or two, or three poppies in a stem-slender vase, might be viewed against a window where a late sunray touched to burnished, palpitant gold the sumptuous petals. Many an one, thus favored, took to heart the unforgetable lesson in simplicity of detail, just as Jack had profited in Japan even with so youthful observation.

But in the many times I rode my chestnut mare to Piedmont that year, dropping in at one home or another where "The Crowd" forgathered in the best times they were ever to know, or at the picnic revels sometimes held Sunday afternoons, or sailed of a Sunday aboard some hired yacht like the Jessie E., or Jack's own little sloop Spray, never once did I see or hear aught that was not all good, and clean, and wholesome. The healthful romping, be it ever so boisterous, of these "children of a larger growth," will never be misunderstood by the true hearts that still beat high at thought of those bright California days and nights — when care and spirit-ache were haply laid aside, days and nights "gone, alas, like our youth, too soon." In the very month of his passing, talking with one who had been of the Crowd, Jack wound up with: "Well, we were a pretty clean bunch all 'round."

Nor did I notice much drinking, though Jack, with that hospitableness which was one of his strongest passions, had stored a moderate supply of wines, beer, and whiskey behind the redwood-paneled doors of a built-in wall cabinet to one side the yawning fireplace; to say nothing of ginger ale and sodas and mineral waters. I think he would have loved great banquets in that roomy apartment, or at least a table resembling the Strunskys', always ready laid with abundance for the chance wayfarer. Perhaps Jack most strikingly embodied his magnificent ideal of entertainment in that succession of word-pictures painted in "The Wit of Porportuk," the last story in the collection "Lost Face." Limitless, uncalculated hospitality, as attained in later years — but this belongs to another page.

I can see Jack London now, glass in hand, elbow lip-high, the freedom of the blue ocean in his deep sailor-eyes, joining departing guests each with stirrup-cup of whatsoever beverage raised for the pledging, his bright face and hair, played over by the firelight, standing out clearly from the dull-red paneling. Who, that knew him even slightly in those days, but can conjure a vision of him in one or another of his endless phases? Anna Strunsky Walling has given an authentic impression of him:

"I see him in pictures, steering his bicycle with one hand and with the other clasping a great bunch of yellow roses which he had just gathered out of his own garden, a cap moved back on his thick brown hair, the large blue eyes with their long lashes looking out star-like upon the world — an indescribably virile and beautiful boy, the wisdom of his expression somehow belying his mouth.

"I see him lying face-down among the poppies, or following with his eyes his kites soaring against the high blue of the California skies, past the tops of the giant eucalyptus which he so dearly loved.

"I see him becalmed, on the Spray, the moon rising behind us, and hear him rehearse his generalizations made from his studies in the watches of the night before of Spencer and Darwin. His personality invested his every movement and every detail of his life with an alluring charm. One took his genius for granted, even in those early years when he was struggling with all his unequaled energies to impress himself upon the world."

And yet, and yet, with his dream in effect, at least in its ordered intention, tied to the mate he had chosen, fatherhood in his hungry grasp at last, at last, and the deepest love in him for the tiny daughter with face so wistfully like his own — the Boy-Man was not happy. Some few of the merrymaking friends and neighbors may have suspected that his scheme of life had failed of triumphant joyousness; but he spoke no word to them, nor looked the sorrow that was his. Only to Anna and to Cloudesley did he let go ever so little the leash he put upon his tongue, and hint the barrenness of his soul for even the year last past. As Anna said of him at that time:

"His standard of life was high. He for one would have the happiness of power, of genius, of love, and the vast comforts and ease of wealth. Napoleon and Nietzsche had a part in him, but Nietzschean philosophy became transmuted into Socialism — the movement of his time — and it was by the force of his Napoleonic temperament that he conceived the idea of incredible success, and had the will to achieve it. Sensitive and emotional as his nature was, he forbade himself any deviation from the course that would lead him to his goal. He systematized his life. Such colossal energy, and yet he could not trust himself! He lived by rule. Law, Order and Restraint was the creed of this vital, passionate youth."

The first of Jack's 1902 letters is to Anna Strunsky, written on January 5:

"Your greeting came good to me. And then there was the dear little token for Joan. And it all impresses me with how much I am and always shall be in your debt. . . .

"You look back on a tumultuous and bankrupt year; and so I. And for me the New Year begins full of worries, harassments, and disappointments. So you? I wonder.

"I look back and remember, at one in the morning, the faces I saw go wan and wistful — do you remember? or didn't you notice? — and I wonder what all the ferment is about.

"I dined yesterday, on canvasback and terrapin, with champagne sparkling and all manner of wonderful drinks I had never before tasted warming me heart and brain, and I remembered the sordid orgies and carouses of my youth. We were ill-clad, ill-mannered beasts, and the drink was cheap and poor and nauseating. And then I dreamed dreams, and pulled myself up out of the slime to canvasback and terrapin and champagne, and learned that it was solely a difference of degree which art introduced into the fermenting. . . .

"Sordid necessities: For me Yorick has not lived in vain. I am grateful to him for the phrase. Am I incoherent? It seems very clear to me.

"And now to facts. Bessie wants me to ask you, if, on January 12th, we can stop all night, and if we can put Joan to bed also. You see, in Piedmont here, we have to leave San Francisco an hour earlier than we used to on account of the street cars. And Bessie cannot bring herself to be away from Joan a whole night."

This occasion was a birthday party given for Jack by the Strunsky family, on January 12. "The Crowd" were all there, and among them a young Norwegian writer, Johannes Reimers, whose novel, "The Heights of Simplicity," just out, he presented to Jack. This man became one of Jack's close friends, and in time one of his favorite painters. I asked Mr. Reimers the other day concerning the meeting with Jack that birthday night at the Strunskys' on Sutter Street:

"Jack looked like a young, ardent, hopeful fellow brimful of conviction. He instantly inspired me with his open comradeship. In appearance? — oh, I should say he struck me as resembling a powerful, healthy young Scandinavian, of a sea-roving type. I tried to get him into conversation about contemporary literature, and was impressed with an apparent bashfulness in him, for he seemed quite reticent of his opinions. And when we said good night, he asked me to come and see him in Piedmont — to come over and have lunch when there was to be nobody else there. And that's the way our friendship began. I read aloud one of my Overland Monthly stories to him, and when I had finished, Jack sat quietly for a minute or two, thinking; then he pointed: 'Look at that stack of manuscripts there? Those are just your kind of stories, and nobody wants to buy them.' — Whenever I saw him, he was always the center of a group; people flocked to his vital magnetism; every one who came within its radius, loved him."

The day after his letter to Anna, whom he had nicknamed "Protean," and who honored him with "Sahib," in unrelieved despair Jack wrote to

Cloudesley — January 6:

"Dear Cloudesley:

"But after all, what squirming, anywhere, damned or otherwise, means anything? That's the question I am always prone to put: What's this chemical ferment called life all about? Small wonder that small men down the ages have conjured gods in answer.

A little god is a snug little possession and explains it all. But how about you and me, who have no god?

"I have at last discovered what I am. I am a materialistic monist, and there's damn little satisfaction in it.

"I am at work on a short story that no self-respecting bourgeois magazine will ever have anything to do with. In conception it is really one of your stories. It's a cracker jack. If it's ever published I'll let you know. If not, we'll wait until you come west again.

"As regards 'effete respectability,' I haven't any, and I don't have anything to do with any who have . . . except magazines. Nevertheless I shall be impelled to strong drink if something exciting doesn't happen along pretty soon.

My dear boy, nobody can help himself in anything, and heaven helps no one. Man is not a free agent, and free will is a fallacy exploded by science long ago. Here is what we are: — or, better still, I'll give you Fisk's definition: 'Philosophical materialism holds that matter and the motion of matter make up the sum total of existence, and that what we know as psychical phenomena in man and other animals are to be interpreted in an ultimate analysis as simply the peculiar aspect which is assumed by certain enormously complicated motions of matter.' This is what we are, and we move along the line of least resistance. Whatever we do, we do because it is easier to than not to. No man ever lived who didn't do the easiest thing (for him).

"Or, as Pascal puts it: 'In the just and the unjust we find hardly anything which does not change its character in changing its climate. Three degrees of an elevation of the pole reverses the whole jurisprudence. A meridian is decisive of truth; and a few years, of possession. Fundamental laws change. Right has its epochs. A pleasant justice which a river or a mountain limits. Truth this side the Pyrenees; error on the other.'

"Nay, nay. We are what we are, and we cannot help ourselves. No man is to be blamed, and no man praised.

"Yes, Cosgrave wrote me instanter about the Letters. I'm afraid they're not for him. They would be utter Greek. Say, Cloudesley, did you ever reflect on the yellow magazinism of the magazines? — — — says I ought not to write for the Examiner.

And in the same breath he says he will take what I write if I write what he wants. O ye gods! Neither the Examiner nor Everybody's wants masterpieces, art, and where's the difference in the sacrifice on my part? . . .

". . . Well, in six days I shall be twenty-six years old, and in nine days Joan will be one year old. . . ."

Here are excerpts from letters to Anna, showing his effort to bend her great talent to disciplined work on the Kempton-Wace correspondence:

"I have been in despair over this letter. Four days I have devoted to it. . . . Well, well, there will have to be no end of revising when we have finished. . . . The great thing after all is to get the letters shaped.

“The movement of this is too rapid and sketchy. It is too much in the form of a narrative, and narrative, in a short story, is only good when it is in the first person. The subject merits greater length. Make longer scenes, dialogues, between them.

“My criticism is, in short, that you have taken a splendid subject and not extracted its full splendor. You have mastery of it (the subject), full mastery — you understand; yet you have not so expressed your understanding as to make the reader understand. . . .

“Remember this — confine a short story within the shortest possible time-limit — a day, an hour, if possible or, if, as sometimes with the best of short stories, a long period must be covered months merely limit or sketch (incidentally) the passage of time, and tell the story only in its crucial moments.

“. . . Now, don’t think me egotistical because I refer you to my stories I have them at the ends of my fingers, so I save time by mentioning them. Take down and open Son of the Wolf.

On January 18, he wrote:

“You are getting a big grip on the written word. And I am whistling over my work at the way the Letters are coming on. We must finish them on this lap. I begin a reply to-day to your last in the series. But, Oh! won’t we need to lick those first letters into shape!

“As for my not having read Stevenson’s letters — my dear child! When the day comes that I have achieved a fairly fit scientific foundation and a bank account of a thousand dollars, then come and be with me when I lie on my back all day long and read, and read, and read, and read.

“The temptation of the books — if you could know! And I hammer away at Spencer and hack-work — try to forget the joys of the things unread.”

He writes to Cloudesley on “Jan. 27/02”:

“Dear Cloudesley:

“So you’ve been oystering? And at a beautiful time of the year — November, on the Atlantic seaboard! How did you like it? I note that you are non-committal on your postal.

“A line from Stoddard [Charles Warren], telling me that you had dropped in on him, led me into looking for your arrival in California at any time. When are you coming West? If you are not, then go on East, but don’t stop in that man-killer New York. Mate with the ‘wind that tramps the world,’ do anything except stay in that ‘fierce’ burg. It will kill anybody with guts, even you.

If you hit California you must drop in on me and stop for a spell. I am always hard up, but I’11 never again be as hard up as during your previous visit. You see, I do not have to worry about grub from day to day. I’m doing credit on a larger and Napoleonic scale. And gee! if at any moment I should die, won’t I be ahead of the game!”

“Jack London,

“Piedmont,

“Alameda County, Calif.

"Feb. 23/02.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Behold, I have moved! Wherefore my long silence. I have been very busy. Also, I went to see a man hanged yesterday. It was one of the most scientific things I have ever seen. From the time he came through the door which leads from the death-chamber to the gallows-room, to the time he was dangling at the end of the rope, but 21 seconds elapsed.

"And in those twenty-one seconds all the following things occurred: He walked from the door to the gallows, ascended a flight of thirteen stairs to the top of the gallows, walked across the top of the gallows to the trap, took his position upon the trap, his legs were strapped, the noose slipped over his head, drawn tight and the knot adjusted, the black cap pulled down over his face, the trap sprung, his neck broken, and the spinal cord severed — all in twenty-one seconds, so simple a thing is life and so easy it is to kill a man.

"Why, he made never the slightest twitch. It took fourteen and one-half minutes for the heart to run down, but he was not aware of it. 1/5 of a second elapsed between the springing of the trap and the breaking of his neck and severing of his spinal cord. So far as he was concerned, he was dead at the end of that one-fifth of a second. He killed a man for twenty-five cents.

"You ask what else beside matter moves. How about force? Waves of light, for instance.

"We'll have to reserve the free will argument till God brings us together again. I've got the cinch on you.

"Did you go in on the Black Cat? I went in for a couple of stories, though I have little hope of pulling down even the least prize. I imagine I can sell the stuff somewhere else, however.

"Lord, what stacks of hack I'm turning out! Five mouths and ten feet, and sometimes more, so one hustles. I wonder if ever I'11 get clear of debt.

"Am beautifully located in new house. We have a big livingroom, every inch of it, floor and ceiling, finished in redwood. We could put the floor space of almost four cottages (of the size of the one you can remember) into this one living room alone. The rest of the house is finished in redwood, too, and is very, very comfortable. We have also the cutest, snuggest little cottage right on the same ground with us, in which live my mother and my nephew. Chicken houses and yards for 500 chickens. Barn for a dozen horses, big pigeon houses, laundry, creamery, etc., etc. A most famous porch, broad and long and cool, a big clump of magnificent pines, flowers and flowers and flowers galore, five acres of ground sold the last time at $2000 per acre, half of ground in bearing orchard and half sprinkled with California poppies; we are twenty-four minutes from the door to the heart of Oakland and an hour and five minutes to San Francisco; our nearest neighbor is a block away (and there isn't a vacant lot within a mile), our view commands all of San Francisco Bay for a sweep of thirty or forty miles, and all the opposing shores such as San Francisco, Marin County and Mount Tamalpais (to

say nothing of the Golden Gate and the Pacific Ocean) and all for $35.00 per month. I couldn't buy the place for $15,000. And some day I'll have to be fired out."

But on March 14, 1902, he writes to Anna from the Piedmont eyrie, showing his sincere attitude toward debt:

"I find myself forced to get up at four o'clock now, in order to turn out my day s work. And of course, so long as tradesmen bicker and landlords clatter, that long must the day's work be turned out.

"Also, Joan has been under the weather, my sister's boy on the edge of dying for a number of days, my other sister very close to death herself, and the many and varied demands have consumed every minute of my time.

"Do run over and see us when you're in town. We are nearly settled now, and things will be more comfortable. . . . It will be delightful here this summer." A week later:

"Many happy returns of the year, since I am too late for the day. And after all, it is the year that must count, and not the day. May it be a full year.

"And may it be an empty one, too — empty of heartache, and soul-silences, and the many trials which have been yours in the past twelve months.

". . . I look out across the bay to a nook in the Marin shore where I know San Rafael clusters, and I wonder how it fares with you and how you are doing.

"I would suggest . . . that you gather together your belongings, gipsy fashion, and seek a change. New scenes, new inspiration. . . . Also, do not worry. Things are not worth worrying over, except bills and rent. Other things do not count.

". . . And say, next Sunday, to-morrow, what's the matter with running over to see us? Charmian Kittredge, charmingly different from the average kind, is liable to be here. Perhaps you will like her. Also, Jensen, an old Klondike friend (the sailor whose letters I once showed you), is to be here. Also, possibly several others who will pitch quoits, and fence, and what not. Also, I am scheduled, in the company of Jim and George, to take hasheesh as a matter of scientific investigation. . . . Do come."

The "scientific investigation" proved a very unpleasant passage. Jack deliberately buttered a piece of bread with an excessive amount of the drug, and the overdosage counteracted all the promised joys of his dreaming. A horrible nightmare was the result, and much nausea to follow.

A fragment of a letter to Anna:

"In the last twelve days I have done over eleven thousand words, and that's the rate I have, and am keeping up. 'Writer's cramp,' you know. Do run over and see us some day any day. . . . The rest is bound to do you good. And stop all night we've a little more room in our new quarters.

"And O, before I close, Whitaker has sold a story to Harper's Monthly for one hundred dollars, a story which had been refused divers times by lesser publications. "I am to proceed right now to a review of "Foma Gordyeeff" for Impressions. Have you read it yet? I am saving it for you to read first of all if you haven't. It is a wonderful book. I wish I could allow myself the freshness of a whole day to it instead of going at it, as I now shall, jaded and tired."

To Cloudesley, from Piedmont, March 26, 1902:

"Have got another collection of stories done, 'Children of the Frost,' though they are waiting publication at various magazines."

To Anna, three days later:

"I had intended to write you a good long letter . . . but people have come, must shave now or never, and have some toning to do in dark room . . . do you know, leaving out the letters to be inserted, we have now 50,000 done on the book?

"I must get a Letter from you (Dane Kempton) saying that you are coming to California, and also, somewhere in your Stanford Letters a limit must be given to the effect of our meeting, which meeting I should imagine must precede your meeting with Hester.

"What ho! now, for the revision! You must come and live with us during the momentous period. It's glorious here, more like a poppy dream than real living. . . . Let me know if Letter fits, or if another is needed.

And a little later:

"I have just finished reading your last Letter, Dane Kempton, preparatory to replying to it, and before replying, I must tell you that I feel the Letters will go! Go! Go!

"Your last is good, is great! You do get your position stated better than I had thought it possible it could be stated. Come to-morrow. The reply will await you. How goes the novel? I must see and hear of it, all of it.

"Jack."

In the month of May, Jack suffered some newspaper notoriety of an unexpected and to him unusual sort. It was his custom to run accounts at the tradesmen's, pending the receipt of checks from the publishers, which were often delayed, sometimes for impatient weeks. A grocery bill, among others, was still unpaid when he moved to Piedmont, and he was waiting funds with which to liquidate all outstanding obligations when the grocer, sole one of the debtors to voice anxiety, to Jack's indignation dunned him over the telephone. His indignation was eloquently expounded, it may be taken for granted, the while he explained his position with regard to the delayed check. When the man persisted in refusal to deliver bread that day, Jack, now thoroughly aroused, assured him that the bill would be paid when and only when he, Jack London, thought fit and proper. And furthermore, if the groceryman made any undue fuss, or complained, as threatened, to carry the matter up to the Grocers' Association — it never would be paid. The dealer promptly, in council convened, did precisely what he was warned not to do; and Jack did precisely what he had warned he would do: the bill never was paid. Evidently the Groceryman's Association appreciated his contention, or did not wish to encourage the onus of discourtesy in their ranks, for they failed to back up the complainant. As soon as Jack's check finally arrived, he settled all bills except this one, seeing to it that word of the same reached the groceryman.

"It's the only bill of mine that I ever defaulted on in my life," Jack said when relating the affair, "except $1.67, I think it was, I owed a man in Oakland at the time I jumped

out tramping. And I've never been happy that I couldn't find that man after I came back, try as I would."

At the beginning of this incident of the grocery bill, I said that Jack "suffered" notoriety. It was only a way of speaking. I do not know that he suffered. In fact, whether or not his elation extended to the notoriety, no matter how jocosely stated in the press, in this affair or any other that made him conspicuous, is one of the few things about him which I have never fathomed with satisfaction to myself. He appeared to enjoy any kind of contest, as well as its at tendant fruits; but I have oftentimes suspected though never divulging this to him — a bold front to carry on a bluff that protested an underlying shrinking.

"Piedmont, June 7/02.

"Dear Anna: —

". . . Bills are beginning to press, and I am behind in all my work. Just now I am hammering out juvenile stuff — the Fish Patrol stories for the Youth's Companion. [Book of this collection published 1905.] The proofsheets of the novel are giving me endless trouble. It is terrible to doctor sick things. Last night was business meeting of Kuskin. In morning did day's juvenile work. Expected to get off 7 pages of proofs in afternoon and go down town on business. At one o'clock I started in on proofs (7 sheets), at quarter past five I finished them! Every batch seems the worst till the next batch comes along.

"Second Tuesday in June, June 10th, is night you are billed for the lecture at 528 27th St."

On July 3, he writes her:

"I am wondering and wonder what you are doing, and as usual am too rushed to write. For three months I have been steadily dropping behind in all my work, and I have sworn a great vow to catch up. Yesterday I worked eighteen hours, and did clean up quite a lot — the same, the day before, and day before that, etc.

"Sahib."

In a letter to Cloudesley, who was still in New York, of date July 12, 1902, I come upon Jack's first voicing of his fear and regret concerning the gathering of too much knowledge — "opening the books" was his life-long phrase:

"You must have been having one hell of a time. Aren't you disgusted with metropolitan life? If you aren't you ought to be. I am, and I've never seen it.

"This world is made up chiefly of fools. Besides the fools there are the others, and they're fools, too. It doesn't matter much which class you and I belong to, while the best we can do is not to increase our foolishness. One of the ways to increase our foolishness is to live in cities with the other fools. They, in turn, would be bigger fools if they should try to live the way you and I ought to live. Wherefore, you may remark that I am pessimistic.

"Speaking of suicide, have you ever noticed that a man is more prone to commit suicide on a full stomach than on an empty one? It's one of nature's tricks to make

the creature live, I suppose, for the old Dame knows she can get more effort out of an empty-bellied individual than a full-bellied one.

"Concerning myself, I am moving along slowly, about $3000 in debt, working out a philosophy of life, or rather, the details of a philosophy of life, and slowly getting a focus on things. Some day I shall begin to do things, until then I merely scratch a living.

"Between you and me, I wish I had never opened the books. That's where I was the fool."

It was in this summer, "pitifully, tragically hard at work," as Anna once phrased it, that about the middle of July an offer from the American Press Association found Jack London. This came by wire, and the following day he left for New York, the proposition being that he sail for South Africa to write a series of articles on the Boer War and the political and commercial status of the British Colonies. Sorely in need of diversion, and money with which to meet the lengthening scale of living, this commission, promising both, was welcomed and accepted with celerity, and Jack was the very picture of enthusiasm and relief when a God-speeding crowd of us saw him off on the Overland Limited at Oakland Pier. The only regret he showed was in his face, when he pressed Baby Joan in his arms at parting.

By the time he reached New York, it had been learned that the Boer generals had set sail for England. His plans were altered, but he continued on, in tbe hope of intercepting and interviewing these men. Meanwhile he had made tentative arrangements with the Macmillan Company to publish a contemplated book upon the slums of London. For through lack of foresight and faith, the McClures had let the bright young star slip through their fingers. But Mr. George P. Brett, President of the Macmillan Company, made no such blunder.

On the 29th of July, Jack wrote to Cloudesley Johns, who had temporarily left New York:

"It's a damned shame we missed each other. I sail to-morrow evening for Liverpool. I received your letter last night at 8 o'clock at the Harvard Club — too late to write you. . . . Write me, care of Am. Press Association, 45 Park Place, N. Y. C."

And to Anna, on the 31st, from "B. M. S. Majestic":

"I sailed yesterday from New York at noon. A week from to-day I shall be in London. I shall then have two days in which to make my arrangements and sink down out of sight in order to view the Coronation from the standpoint of the East Enders, with their stray flashes of divinity.

"I meet the men of the world in Pullman coaches, New York clubs, and Atlantic liner smoking rooms, and, truth to say, I am made more hopeful for the Cause by their total ignorance and non-understanding of the forces at work. They are blissfully ignorant of the coming upheaval, while they have grown bitterer and bitterer towards the workers. You see, the growing power of the workers is hurting them and making them bitter while it does not open their eyes."

Richard Lloyd Jones met Jack in New York at this time, and was impressed by the many facets he observed of the boy. “To me,” Jack said in his hearing, “the world looks like a play that needs perfecting. The lines we speak are not well thought out. The stage business we perform is not well conceived. And the plots we put together are too often poor and mean. We need to work on higher and finer lines.”

And the next day the young fellow was roystering through the recreational city of Coney Island, nothing too absurd or too wild for him to attempt. He insisted upon looping the loop. Mr. Jones accompanied him — once, which was the measure of his fun. “But London went down again and then again, and still again. He went down eleven times. After he was about half way of these trials, I asked him why he wanted to keep on, and he replied: I’m going down that thing until I can go clear around the loop without grabbing hold of it. And he did, an evidence of his perseverance.”

By the end of the first week in August Jack was installed in the East End of London, working under forced draft, and on the 17th scribbled a card to Cloudesley:

“Your letter, forwarded from California, just received. I enjoyed it immensely. I am located in the East End and am hard at work. Have finished 6000 words. Latter part of this week I go down into Kent to do the hop-picking.

“Been in England 11 days, and it has rained every day. Small wonder the Anglo-Saxon is such a colonizer.”

On the 25th, to Anna:

“Saturday night I was out all night with the homeless ones, walking the streets in the bitter rain, and, drenched to the skin, wondering when dawn would come. Sunday I spent with the homeless ones, in the fierce struggle for something to eat. I returned to my rooms Sunday evening, after thirty-six hours continuous work and short one night s sleep. To-day I have composed, typed and revised 4000 words and over. I have just finished. It is one in the morning. I am worn out and exhausted and my nerves are blunted with what I have seen and the suffering it has cost me. . . . I am made sick by this human hell-hole called the East End.”

By the close of September, roughly in seven weeks he had lived his book, written his book, taken the photographs to illustrate his book, tried out some English publishers on his work, and was ready for a fleeting jaunt on the Continent. He had written Cloudesley on September 22: “Yours of Sept. 9th received. I quite agree with you that not to be a free agent is hell. But I don’t quite follow you when you say the particular hell lies in not being able to blame anybody, anything, and not even yourself. I don’t see how that will help matters in the least. If you throw me down and break my back, of course I can blame you; but that doesn’t mend my back.

“I am glad you liked ‘Nam-Bok the Unveracious.’ The idea of it always appealed to me (including the satire), but I was not satisfied when I wrote it. I feel that I missed somewhere. . . .

“In another week I shall have finished my book of 60,000 words. It’s rather hysterical, I think. Look up a brief article of mine in the Critic somewhere in the last numbers. Also tell me how you like the ‘Story of Jees Uck’ in current Smart Set.”

Near the end of his life, "Of all my books on the long shelf," Jack said to me, "I love most 'The People of the Abyss.' No other book of mine took so much of my young heart and tears as that study of the economic degradation of the poor." Always he was made wroth from a technical standpoint, when this work was ignorantly and maliciously termed a "socialistic treatise." "I merely state the disease, as I saw it, he would explain. "I have not, within the the pages of that book, stated the cure as I see it." Jack's earliest method seems to have been to entrench himself behind facts that others had overlooked or neglected, and deliver his challenge. To the wavering and hesitant tongue and eye of the unprepared or unwilling, he showed no mercy whatever. All the satisfaction he won from trying to stir the dead mass was his knowledge that he knew what he knew. Facts were facts, and the only foundation upon which to build righteous certitudes. Of work like "The People of the Abyss, he would say: "I treat of the thing that is, not of the thing that ought to be. To critics who rail at Ms propaganda, I like to point out how deliberately little he cluttered his art, his fiction, with propaganda.

As if in negation of his consistent attitude on the mighty dollar, Jack put his heart and precious time into this exposition of London's East End with full belief that it would not prove a money maker, either as a bound book or serially. No bourgeois magazine, able to pay its worth as a human document, would risk reputation on one so forthright of unsavory truths. So "The People of the Abyss" appeared in Gaylord Wilshire's socialist monthly, Wilshire's, and of course the price could not have been large. Only one of many instances was this, where Jack London acted what seemed paradoxically when sternest values were at stake. It was only a manifestation of his necessity, while perchance building temples in the sky, of keeping his feet on the ground — as he had written Anna, "Somehow, one must always build in the concrete." One critic has said, "With sincerity one may cleave to greatness and sit among the giants." And Jack was eminently sincere in all he did — whether pursuing a hard-headed course in order to discharge his patriarchial duties, or flaming his unremunerative soul-stuff upon the incombustible wall of public opinion. He must weave his best into a dog-story or other fiction medium; straight, unvarnished Truth about the human, no matter how gloriously portrayed, did not command an approval that paid for the beds and bread and coats he must supply his charges.

In Paris, Jack fell in with a spirit kindred to his own vein of French, who assured him: "Ah-h-h, we will not only see Paris: we will live Paris!"

It grimly amused him, in the early days of the Great War, to read or hear denial on the part of Germany and the Germans of their hatred for England and the English. His sharpest impression of Germany was of a day's journey that ended in Berlin. The compartment contained a half-dozen men besides himself, all Germans of the educated classes; but though they spoke English perfectly, any bid for companionship or request from Jack for information was met with boorish discourtesy of briefest reply, or no reply except lowering looks and cold shoulders. Upon alighting at Berlin, these men suddenly learned from some remark he dropped that he was American:

"Why didn't you tell us?" was the burden of their lament. "We thought you were an Englishman — your face, your figure, your clothes."

And thereafter nothing was too good to be done to make amends.

Italy he loved, and took many photographs with his big "panoram," which he enjoyed developing later in the little dark-room in Piedmont, and framing for his walls. And he climbed Vesuvius.

In all the great centers of civilization, as in New York City, his personal touches with and too-keen observation of the rich, set against his intimate knowledge of the Submerged, contributed toward a vast melancholy. Again he wished that he had never "opened the books." But having opened them, it was not in his nature to turn back; he must continue to the end to keep his eyes open their uttermost, for weal or woe.

While still on the Continent, a cable apprised him of the birth of his second child, Bess, who came along eighteen months after Joan, and Jack lost no time in terminating the vacation. On the evening of November 4, 1902, from New York he wrote to Cloudesley:

"Just arrived, and if I can raise $150 by to-morrow morning, shall put out for California to-morrow afternoon.

"Sorry I didn't have your room address, for I could have looked you up and talked the evening with you. As it is, shall have to be on the jump to get away to-morrow.

That autumn of 1902, as Jack London sped west once more, saw his bewildered reviewers facing three new volumes just on the bookstalls, from as many different publishers — namely, "Children of the Frost," (Macmillan); "The Cruise of the Dazzler," (Century); and "A Daughter of the Snows," (Lippincott.) In all, he had five books to his credit, with enough manuscript on hand for an equal number. There ensued lengthy reviews in America, where he was hailed alliteratively as "The Kipling of the Klondike," while England sat up and dared venture the assertion that he was America's most promising writer of fiction. "A Daughter of the Snows" called out much diversity of opinion, and no reviewer thought as poorly of it as the author himself. But in future years, looking over this his first long romance, Jack concluded: "It's not so bad, after all. I really believe I think it's rather good for a starter. Lord, Lord, how I squandered into it enough stuff for a dozen novels!"

Home From Europe; Separation

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BACK from Europe, Jack's solemn purpose was to achieve harmony within himself when he should again be at home in the Piedmont bungalow. He devoted himself to this idea, with earnest intention toward the development of his children, and strove to convince himself that all was well with him. As note this paragraph to Cloudesley, dated January 27, 1903:

"By the way, I think your long-deferred congratulations upon my marriage are about due. So fire away. Or, come and take a look at us, and at the kids, and then congratulate."

The Wednesday evenings and Sunday outings were resumed, new acquaintances came and went. Among other writers who shared in the Piedmont gaieties were W. C. Morrow, Dr. C. W. Doyle, and Philip Verrill Mighels, whose novel, "The Inevitable," made simultaneous appearance on Lippincott's fall list with "A Daughter of the Snows." Frank Norris, with whom Jack London had previously gotten tangled in press controversy, had died the year before, or undoubtedly he would have been one in the Crowd.

To me Jack was always friendly, if a trifle impersonal; and once in a while he referred with genial quizzicalness to my failure to review his first book. He presented me with a copy of "The Cruise of the Dazzler," inscribing it: "Dear Charmian:

"In memory of the Jessie E. and the run home before the wind.

"Jack London.

"The Bungalow, February 25, 1903."

Journalists came thousands of miles to interview him, and of them all I think he most cared for that brilliant and lovable soul Fannie K. Hamilton, whose surpassing appreciation of him was a sustained joy for all his years. As to his mode of life he said to her:

"I have adaptability, and can endure cities; but this suits me best. I like room."

Odd little experiences came his way, hurts delivered by pinch-natured debtors to his kindness. Two of them were totally unexpected — one, when a friend he had assisted in various ways spent an entire night showing him conclusively why he, Jack London, was doomed to failure in literature; the second, when another, far more indebted, cut him dead in a Piedmont home, before "The Crowd," He seemed a veritable mark for slights from persons whose touchiness and jealousies restrained them from truly knowing his unsuspecting good-nature and fellowship:

"Did you see — — cut you when he came into the room Sunday, when you and George were playing pedro?" asked his indignant hostess.

"No!" with incredulous, bright interest. "You don't say so! I was so intent on my rotten hand that I never noticed . . . why, I said Hello, didn't I? I'm sure I did. . . . Now I do remember just for an instant it seemed the air was chilly, and then it went right out of my head. Why, the son of a gun!" he added amiably, "what did he do that for! What have I done to him?"

And the short-lived wonder gave place to other and more profitable curiosities about the world in which he lived. For the largest part of his life, he stedfastly refrained to take to himself slights or petty humors of men and women. Near the end, sadly enough, they began to gather in a formidable cloud upon his horizon of values. To Anna, in a letter, he commented upon the incident:

"Oh, by the way. I have lost a friend. W. has canceled my name from his list and even cut me in public. For what reason I cannot imagine, for he has said nothing to

me at all, though I have heard he was incensed because I told Leonard D. Abbot when I was in New York that he (W.) was a backslider from the Cause."

But it would appear that the young husband and father waged a losing fight for the livable contentment of his resolutions. As early as the middle of February, when again he wrote Cloudesley, his final words bespeak a desire for solitude:

"Feb. 21/03.

"Dear Cloudesley: —

"Well, I must say, from your letter, that my predictions concerning you and New York came pretty close to being verified. And I m glad to hear you reshaking its dust from your shoes by May. Do it, by all means. The city life is too unnatural and monstrous for us folk of the West. To hell with it. There's more in life than what the social shambles offers.

"Do, by all means, stop over and see us. I hope, by May, to have a sloop on the Bay and be writing a sea novel. You and I can have some fine voyaging together."

A letter to Anna Strunsky, written a month later during an illness, illustrates the heavy pressure he was putting upon himself to gain financial footing to do justice to his little family, as well as an almost superhuman struggle to shake free from "hack-work" and get down to worthy achievement. (I remember dropping in one day to see the babies, and noticing Jack, much tousled, very pale, and with a don't-disturb-me look appealing through the wel-coming smile. Jack, who a few short years earlier had been striving to master common grammar, to develop "grammatical nerves," was now typing the manuscript of a story that was destined to ring around the world and be treasured in the universities of his country as a jewel of English literature — "The Call of the Wild." At the same time he was shaping up material for the sea novel referred to in the above letter to Cloudesley, which was "The Sea Wolf," hardly less noted; while arrangements had been perfected with Macmillans to bring out "The Kempton-Wace Letters.") Below is the letter to Anna:

"March 13/03.

"Dear Anna: —

"I quite wondered if you were ever going to write to me again. And I should have wondered more, only I have been head over heels in work, getting things cleaned up, books partly finished, etc., so that I might start in on the sea novel for Mr. Brett.

"You found him reading the manuscript of what was probably my dog story. ["The Call of the Wild."] I started it as a companion to my other dog-story Batard, which you may remember; but it got away from me, and instead of 4000 words it ran 32000 before I could call a halt. I hope you will like it when it appears.

"I wrote Hyman [her brother] a letter which he must have received just about the time he arrived in San Francisco. I have been unable to get over and see him. I go nowhere any more. Since my return, I have been to San Francisco but twice and do not dream of when I shall again go there.

"I have just finished writing two lectures, each 6000 words long and something like the 'Tramp.' They are 'The Scab' and 'The Class Struggle.' [Collected under title of "War of the Classes."]

"I can hardly contain myself, looking forward to seeing the Letters in print. Be sure to question anything and everything in mine that strikes you as wrong.

". . . I am quite a hermit these days, going nowhere and seeing nobody. Between my crippled condition and the excessive delayed work it heaped upon me, I have been unable to see your people. . . . ". . . I hear all kinds of flattering bits of news concerning you from Don and Wilshire, and know that you are glowing and rampant, living always at the pitch of life as is your way, pleasuring in your sorrows as ardently as in your joys, carelessly austere, critically wanton, getting more living out of hours and minutes than we colder mortals, God pity us, get out of months and years. Child, how one envies you. For child you are, as essentially a child as saliently you are a woman.

"I have reread what I have written. Believe me, there is nothing in it — only envy, honest envy, for one who will always titillate with desire, and with a thousand desires, who is content to pursue without attaining, and who enjoys more in anticipation than do others who grasp and satisfy and feel the pangs of hunger that is sated and yet can never be sated. Am I wrong? I hope not."

Desperate for funds, with bills pressing, Jack London hesitated not to accept two thousand dollars flat from The Macmillan Company for "The Call of the Wild," which was to be brought out in July, following serial publication begun immediately in the Saturday Evening Post, for which he received seven hundred dollars. And "The Call of the Wild," for which he pocketed only this total of twenty-seven hundred dollars, scored an instantaneous hit, leaped into the front ranks of the "best-sellers" and made money for everyone but the author. However, lest there be misunderstanding on this ground, let me go on record with the fact that Jack London came to maintain that he gained rather than sacrificed in the transaction, in view of the world-wide advertising upon which the Macmillans spent enormous sums.

"Mr. Brett took a gamble, and a big chance to lose. It was the game, and I have no kick," he stoutly asserted. "Also," Jack would add, "Mr. Brett stood almost certainly to lose on 'The Kempton-Wace Letters,' and I'm willing to lay a bet that the Company never much more than cleaned up expenses on that splendid but misunderstood and unpopular book."

"The Kempton-Wace Letters" subsequently went out of print in both the United States and England. In 1921 the book was resurrected, and reprinted in London by Mills & Boon, Ltd.

Jack's aptness for titles was never more happily evidenced than in "The Call of the Wild." And yet, both serial and book publishers entreated a different one. Jack concurred with their dissatisfaction, and told them he was quite willing they should invent a better. That they could not, or at least did not, gives one pause.

Jack was systematically criticized by a certain type of reviewers of all times, for his "brutality." I am inclined to think the following, from a letter to Mr. Johns of March 16/03, must have been the most surprising commission he ever received:

"If you have any 'horror' stories, submit them to Book man. I have the following from Bookman:

"'Don't you happen to have up your sleeve a dramatic tale with plenty of battle, murder, and sudden death — a story with real horror in it? Remember, the more gore the better."

One New York critic of "The God of His Fathers" had pleased Jack.

"Mr. Jack London's strength never degenerates into brutality. He deals with brutal things, with naked things, with the primitive life in a world barren of all save hardship, ice and snow, rich only in gold; but he remains an artist to the last. Whatever he tells us we accept because we feel its truth and the skill of its telling."

And an English reviewer characterized this collection as "Epic Stories of the North."

In another note to Anna, Jack is seen emerging from his hermit mood in a reference to the pleasure of a fortnight's visit each from the Lily Maid and Cloudesley Johns. And below are brief communications to his two friends upon one matter or another:

"Dear Anna: —

"Telegram received. I have no copy of the quotations lost by the printers. So book ["Kempton-Wace Letters"] will have to go without them. Too bad!

". . . Am in tremendous rush. Hope you'll make this out. Wilshire was out to see me, with Rose, the Waitings, etc. All went to Ruskin Annual Dinner together.

"Shall send fotos of Joan and Bess as soon as I can get around to the making of them. . . .

"By the way, the contract you signed with Macmillan Company is for the U. S. only. I feel quite certain that you and I will receive the same royalties from England from Messrs. Isbister & Co. . . . (This Isbister proposition is due to certain publishing arrangements I have on that side of the water.)"

"April 24/03.

"Dear Anna: —

"This is the first writing I have done for some time. Easter Sunday I elected to cut off the end of my thumb, and not finding the piece, have had a painful wound to heal. . . . Have a heart beating in the end of my thumb. . . . Am glad you liked the dog story. . . ."

Of same date to Cloudesley:

"Sedgwick has accepted 'Marriage of Lit-Lit' [In collection entitled "The Faith of Men"] if I put a snapper on the end of it As it s already sold in England I guess 111 obey."

Referring to "People of the Abyss":

"May 5/03.

"Dear Cloudesley:

"Thank you very much for your criticism. The proofs are in, but I shall save your points (almost all of which I bow to) until I get another whack at the proofs, which I will get when I place the illustrations in it. "My thumb is growing nicely — quite a chunk of new and very tender meat on the end of it. We went out sailing yesterday, and about everybody aboard, and there were fifteen, ran into it."

"May 29, 1903.

"Dear Cloudesley:

"When are you coming up? Am just in from a cracking good trip, in which I blew the Spray's sails to ribbons. Am waiting ashore now while new ones are being bent. I find that I can work splendidly upon her.

"Nothing doing, no news, nothing. Thumb is getting along and have finished 30,000 words of sea story. ["The Sea Wolf."] When it is done am going to send you a MS. copy for criticism (if you don't mind), before I submit it."

"The Kempton-Wace Letters" was published in May, and Jack received his first copy of the book through the Glen Ellen post office, in Sonoma County, whither he had removed his family to camp on my Aunt's place on Sonoma Mountain, "Wake Robin Lodge." Here a congenial company of acquaintances met in the summers, making merry in the incomparable woods bordering Graham and Sonoma Creeks, swimming in the pools, tramping, boxing, fencing, kiting, and gathering about the campfire at dusk for discussion and reading. On one such night Jack, in firelight supplemented by a lantern, read aloud the "Letters." While several members of my family participated in all this rural delight, I was able to be present upon only an occasional week-end. I was fortunate enough to make one of the thralled circle that formed about the flickering logs on the June evening Jack London read aloud in his musical voice, at one sitting, "The Call of the Wild," which had just come to his hand.

Jack's state, and his method of speculation upon that of another, is shadowed in the following, written to George Sterling in June of 1903: ". . . this I know, that in these later days you have frequently given me cause for honest envy. And you have made me speculate a great deal. You know that I do not know you no more than you know me. We have really never touched the intimately personal note in all the time of our friendship. I suppose we never shall.

"And so I speculate and speculate, trying to make you out, trying to lay hands on the inner side of you what you are to yourself, in short. Sometimes I conclude that you have a cunning and deep philosophy of life, for yourself alone, worked out on a basis of disappointment and disillusion. Sometimes, I say, I am firmly convinced of this, and then it all goes glimmering, and I think that you don't want to think, or that you have thought no more than partly, if at all, and are living your life out blindly and naturally.

"So I do not know you, George, and for that matter I do not know how I came to write this."

During this period, some of his friends sensed the breaking strain the young man was undergoing, and that all was not well in the Londons' ruddy-brown tent cottage

and environs amidst the spicy-perfumed laurels edging the Graham's bank; but they would have been shocked had they known the strain was so taut that for some time back Jack had avoided sleeping with his old familiar pistol in the same room, lest he do himself an injury in his trouble-ridden slumber. Which would point to the surmise that unhappy as he thought himself, he valued existence sufficiently to take steps to preserve his own.

Much suffering he concealed in the solitude of a leafy study on a mossy shelf down the bank, where at a rustic table he worked steadily on his novel, "The Sea Wolf"; or under an hilarious exterior as he played water-tag with a bevy of camp children, or blind-man's bluff among the trees and blossomy undergrowth on the Sonoma's marge. Mornings he rose betimes and went out ostensibly for small game, with a conspicuous absence of bags upon his returnings. This gave rise to an endless string of verses, goodnaturedly taunting and wholly affectionate, composed by little Dorothy Reynolds and Henry Breck and their playmates, and chanted shrilly by the juvenile company by campfire, to the tune of "Mr. Dooley." Here are some of the verses:

"O Mr. London,
Mr. London,
The finest man the rabbits ever knew;
He always sought them
But never shot them,
For that was Mr. London's way to do.

"He started early
One Sunday morning:
He said, I will be sure to get one now!'
And gazing upward
Upon the hillside,
He saw a rabbit there as big as a cow.

"He raised his rifle,
He shook a trifle;
The rabbit looked at him reproachfully.
He said, I cannot,'
He said, I will not,'
And so he let the rabbit turn and flee.

CHORUS

"O it's strange when upon returning,
How his hunter's skill he'd praise,
About those monstrous rabbits
In his early morning chase.
O it's then that our hearts are gladdest,
And it seems it can't be true,
When he has to eat that bacon
Instead of rabbit stew."

It was during these dawn and sunrise hauntings of this sloping wall of Sonoma's valley that Jack London fell hopelessly in love with the "Sweet Land" he evermore was to adore and make his heart-home.

Evidently his plans were to spend as little time thence forth as he could possibly avoid at the once desirable bungalow in Piedmont, as cited by his next contemplated absence, in a letter of July 2:

"Dear Cloudesley:

"Here I am, camping and knocking out 1500 words per day seven days in the week. If you re coming to see me, come just the same. Am only $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours ride from San Francisco. So bring your traps right on up to camp here. Have a girl to do the cooking, plenty of grub, and plenty of blankets. So come along. Expect to stay here for a month yet. Then for the sloop!

". . , You remember the rig we rode in the day I cut my thumb. Five of us were coming in on it, same road, down hill, horse hitting it up — when king-bolt broke and we spilled. I had five different places on arms and legs in bandages, also a stiff knee. Am almost recovered now.

"No, the Kempton Letters were written entirely by Anna Strunsky, though the earmarks of each are to be found in the other's work unconscious absorptions of style, I suppose."

In answer to some question from George Sterling, he again outlines his philosophy of work: "No, I don't approve of Pegasus plowing if he can fly. But I believe in his plugging like hell in order to fly."

Of course this tension of spirit could not last, in one so dynamic and intense as he. In spite of every effort, struggle as he would to carry out his scientific-mating experiment, he became beaten at his own game; and it was by a curious irony of events that his ultimate failure should have been coincident with the appearance of "The Kempton-Wace Letters," dealing the lie direct to his once boasted rule-of-thumb program.

Indeed, not long afterward we learned that in a copy of this book presented to a young cousin of mine, he had written refuting a brave argument once held with her in camp:

"One hour of love is worth a century of science."

This he repeated in my own copy three months after our marriage.

For now, abruptly, "out flew the web and floated wide," the fabric he had so carefully designed, so faithfully woven to its last least pattern of fidelity. It had got beyond him and he tore it and cast it to the winds. He did not care whither he went, nor how, nor with whom. He caught at a wild unthought-out suggestion for a northern trip without an ending and not without a companion. Largely owing to restlessness, he renounced the steamer voyage as lightly as he had conceived it. But he remained unshaken in determination to start living by himself, at the first moment he could break up at the bungalow and see his family housed comfortably where he would have convenient access to his little ones.

Let no one, quick to condemn his action, dream that all this chaos of the established was easy for a man of Jack London's stamp. Deeply he loved his children, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. But he had committed a boundless mistake in his arrogant youth, and the penalty that was inevitable had overwhelmed him commensurately. "I must work hard to bring things out as right as I can," with sad eyes he said to one of us, "though it be work that shall wring my heart" — thinking of his babies, and not a little of the radical disturbance of their mother s round of existence. Sometimes, it seemed, he almost doubted his own strength to go through with what he had been driven to undertake.

But desire for freedom had wrung him vitally from all other considerations — he who could never be really free, in his whole life of responsibility for others. From Piedmont, in the midst of the rack of tearing up — everyone concerned oppressed with the impermanence of what had seemed so secure — Jack wrote:

"Dear Cloudesley:

"Just a line to let you know I am suddenly back from camping, that my affairs are all in confusion, that I do not know yet what I shall do, that I need and can use no help other than my own strength may give me, and that you do not come North till you hear from me again."

And on the 29th:

"Thank you, old man. Am moving house and splitting up, just now. Poor, sad little Bungalow!

"Should I need you, I will call upon you unhesitatingly."

He found a cozy five-room flat in Oakland, at what was then 1216 Telegraph Avenue, to which he moved his mother and Johnnie, setting aside space for his own belongings while he should be away in the sloop. The two babies and their mother were quartered in another flat a few blocks distant. From his new habitation he wrote Cloudesley:

"Aug. 21, 1903.

"Well, good luck to you, old man. If you love, that is all there is to it. I thought you downed my Herbert Wace philosophy rather squeamishly.

"And so we go zigzagging through life. When we first knew each other we were on the same tack. Then I filled away on the other tack and married. Now I have come about once more, and I find that you have put your helm down and are away on the opposite tack. May your reach be a longer one than-mine much longer."

That there was no lack of anguish on Jack's part for pain inflicted throughout this separation, may be judged, reticent though he was in general, from the closing remark of the next letter. Also he gives a line on his expectation of benefit to his work in the new order of life. To his mind, there could be no two ways about the latter, for the double homes demanded his very best effort to earn big prizes, although meanwhile he must deliver a certain amount of "hack:"

"1216 Telegraph Avenue,

"Oakland, Cal., Aug. 26, 1903.

"Dear Cloudesley:

"Yes, I shouldn't mind living for a while in Los Angeles; but, you see, I'm settled, am three months behind in all my work, letting my contracted work go and hammering away at hack in order to catch up with a few of my debts, and do not see my way to getting even with my work for all of a year hence.

"Hard-a-lee with me will not affect my work — in fact, I am confident it will be far otherwise.

"I laugh when I think of what a hypocrite I was, when, at the Bungalow, I demanded from you your long-deferred congratulations for my marriage — but, believe me, I was a hypocrite grinning on a grid.

"Concerning your affair, let me say this: It's all right for a man sometimes to marry philosophically, but remember, it's damned hard on the woman."

To Cloudesley, September 5, 1903:

"Tell you what I'll do. I'll take a flying trip down to Los Angeles, say somewhere in January if not December, as soon as 'The Sea Wolf' is done and providing the Century takes it serially for 1904. The dicker is now on, and the only thing Gilder hesitates about is the last half (unwritten) wherein a man and woman are all by themselves on an island. I have just tried to assure him that I won't shock the American Prude, and, anyway, that he can blue-pencil all he wants.

"If Century doesn't take the novel, why, when I get done with it I'11 have to plunge into hack-work up to my ears to escape bankruptcy. If Century does take it, why then I can take a vacation.

"As for living in Los Angeles — nay, nay. I am wedded to 'Frisco Bay.

I should like to take the ride you mention. I love motion and can never go too fast. . . . "I wouldn't care much for a woman capable of saying: 'A woman can lose everything, even her loved ones and her life, and still be rich in her purity.' I may respect her, but I could not admire her. She is a little cloudy and small in her ethical concepts even though it be not her fault."

The next letter shows his desire again to roam the world:

"Sept. 5, 1903.

"Dear Anna: —

"As usual, hard at work. It s been so long since I had a real vacation that I hardly know what such a thing would be like. Even when I was in Europe last year, instead of resting I wrote a book. Well, in about a year I am starting off around the world, and I expect to take years in going around.

". . . Our Book — — I haven't the least idea how it has sold; but, when all is said and done, it has been received far more favorably than might have been expected. It is a good book, a big book, and, as we anticipated, too good and too big to be popular. . . ."

On the 21st he wrote Cloudesley:

"I'm sending you, this mail, a copy of 'Call of the Wild.' You don't seem to care for the 'Daughter of the Snows.' I don't blame you. I wonder how you'11 like the 'Sea Wolf.' I'11 bet you'11 wonder how the Century dares to publish it."

"Sept. 26, 1903.

"Dear Cloudesley:

" . . . By the way, I learn Macmillan Company has made 'People of Abyss into a $2.00 net book."

The reviewers, again with three new books thrown suddenly at their heads, making eight within three meteoric years since this astonishing young writer had shot into vision, were stunned not only by numbers but by the total dissimilarity of the three — "The Call of the Wild," "The Kempton-Wace Letters," and now "The People of the Abyss." British critics, theretofore gathering in enthus-iasm, were of two minds about "The People of the Abyss." Mainly it was resented and condemned as an inexcusable infringement on his part to come to their shores and turn out the London slums for the world to view. They thought he would be better occupied in those of his own land. A minority, however, accorded the book its due. And two years later, the Archbishop of Canterbury, inspecting New York's East Side, exclaimed: "Amazing! I am astonished at it all. The slums of New York are not nearly so bad as the slums of London. And the mean streets are not so mean as the East End of our great English city."

"Oct. 9, 1903.

"Say, Cloudesley:

"Thursday, Oct. 22nd, I set sail on the Spray for a couple of months cruising about the Bay, and up the Sacramento, San Joaquin and Napa rivers. Do you want to come along, just you and I?

"We can both get our writing in each day and have a jolly time. Also, I'll have a shotgun and rifle along and we can get in plenty of duck-shooting. It won't cost you anything. . . . Also, I have that Smith-Premier typewriter, and if you can use such a machine you won't have to bring your own along.

"What'd ye say? Let's hear soon."

"Oct. 13, 1903.

"All right, old man. I shall look for you, then, on Oct. 21st. You may desert or receive dishonorable discharge, whichever you will, whenever you wish. . . . We ought both of us get in plenty of work, and have a good time, and get health and strength.

Japanese-russian War

VOLUME I — CHAPTER XXIV Spring 1904

WITH war threatening to flare up any moment between Japan and Russia, the San Francisco Examiner asked Jack London if he would be ready to go out at call. Jack, near the close of his sea novel, sorely needing funds, held himself awaiting the summons. He arranged his finances so that regular payments would be made to his mother as well as to his children, with instructions to his eastern publishers to stand prepared to advance any necessary further sums should his wife call for the same. Meanwhile the Managing Editor haled him to San Francisco, to sit for photographs against the

day of featuring a sensational departure. The pictures were posed on the roof of the Examiner Building, and portray a very lovable, very boyish, unmodish person, with tousled curls.

Although hostilities had not yet been actually declared, Jack was dispatched on the S. S. Siberia. To Cloudesley on January 7 he dashed off: "Sail to-day for Yokohama. Am going for Hearst. Could have gone for Harper's, Collier's, and N. Y. Herald — but Hearst made the best offer " Other newspapermen aboard were Captain Lionel James, London Times; Percival Phillips, London Daily Express; Sheldon Inglis Williams, artist for London Sphere; 0. K. Davis, New York Herald; Frederick Palmer and R. L. Dunn, for Collier's Weekly, and Collier's veteran war photographer, James H. Hare.

En masse "The Crowd" saw Jack off at the dock; and of the Crowd, George Sterling and I were entrusted jointly with the Century Magazine and the Macmillan proof-reading of "The Sea Wolf," the manuscript of which had been completed and signed the previous evening, and shipped off to the Century Magazine for immediate serialization. The original script of this novel lay in a steel safe throughout San Francisco's Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906, and to this day the incinerated sheets preserve their form, the only visible markings being lead-penciled corrections, which withstood the heat.

Five days later, at the Sterlings' in Piedmont, a few of us gathered to celebrate Jack's twenty-eighth birthday.

Early in the voyage, he had an attack of grippe; and the day the Siberia cleared from Honolulu, during deck sports Jack's left foot was badly injured.

There is not space in this biography to incorporate Jack London's articles on the Japanese-Russian War. But I quote excerpts from letters written to me, and these will serve to illustrate the almost intolerable irk endured under the rigors of Japanese discipline toward the newspaper man. "They settled the war correspondent forever," he often exclaimed, " — — and they proved that he was a dispensable feature of warfare."

Near the time of Jack's death, among other collections of unpublished book material, he had arranged his Japanese-Russian and also his 1914 Mexican War-Notes, which shall presently be issued as he intended. His utter disgust with the lack of opportunity given the journalist, to deliver what would be really worth-while articles, accounts for his long delay in bringing out his notes. His 3-A Kodak, however, had the distinction of being the first to supply pictures for the American public, although so poor was the mail service in and out of Korea, he never knew until his return six months afterward whether or not his films and cables had been received.

One can give no better idea of his experience and frame of mind than by quoting from his letters to myself:

"S.S. Siberia,

"Jan. 13/04.

"Somewhat weak and wobbly, but still in the ring. Came down with a beautiful attack of La Grippe. Of course, didn't go to bed with it, but spent the time in a

steamer chair, for one day half out of my head. And oh, how all my bones ache, even now! And what wild dreams I had! . . .

"Honolulu is in sight, and in an hour I shall be ashore mailing this, and learning whether or not there is war.

". . . Am, Grippe excepted, having a nice trip. The weather is perfect. So is the steamer. Sit at the Captain's table, and all the rest you know. . . ."

"Jan. 15/04.

". . . Well, we sailed yesterday from Honolulu. . . . Am still miserable with my Grippe, but getting better. Had a swim in the surf at Waikiki. Took in the concert at the Hawaiian Hotel, and had a general nice time.

"Had some fun. I bucked a game run by the Chinese firemen of the Siberia, and in twenty-five minutes broke three banks and won $14.85! So, you see, I have discovered a new career for myself.

"The war correspondents, the 'Vultures,' are a jolly crowd. We are bunched up at the Captain's table, now that the passenger list has been reduced by the lot who left at Honolulu. In fact, the trip to Honolulu had three bridal couples which sat at the upper end of the table. This is a funny letter the correspondents are cutting up all around me; and just now I am being joshed good and plenty."

"S.S. Siberia, Jan. 20/04.

". . . Quite a time since I last wrote. You'll wonder why. Well, know that I am the most fortunate of unfortunate men. The evening of the day we left Honolulu I smashed my left ankle. For sixty-five sweaty hours I lay on my back. Yesterday I was carried on deck, on the back of one of the English correspondents. And to-day I have been carried on deck again.

"The smashed ankle is the misfortune; the fortune . . . is the crowd of friends I seem to have collected. From six o'clock in the morning till eleven at night, there was never a moment that my stateroom did not have at least one visitor. As a rule there were three or four, and very often twice as many. I had thought, when the accident happened, that I should have plenty of time for reading; but I was not left alone long enough to read a line.

"I am looking forward with interest to the sixth day, when, if the surgeon does not change his mind, I may put my foot to the deck and try to walk with the aid of crutches.

Of course, what you want to know is what the smash consists in. I was jumping and coming down from a height of three feet and a half. I landed on my left foot — having 'taken off' with my right. But my left foot did not land on the deck. It landed on a round stick, and lengthwise with the stick. Stick about diameter of broom-handle. Of course, my foot went up alongside my leg. My ankle was strained on one side, sprained on the other. That is, the tendons on the inside were stretched and ruptured, the bones on the outside ground against each other, bruising themselves and pinching the nerves — result, an irresistible combination.

“Now I have two weak ankles. I fear me I am getting old. Both my knees have been smashed, and now both my ankles. It might be worse, however. What bothers me just now is that I don’t know just how bad this last ankle is. Absolute rest, in a rigid bandage, has been the treatment, so not even the surgeon will know till I try to walk on it.

“. . . Don’t worry because I have let my worry out in this letter. Anyway, I’ll be able to write you later, before we make Yokohama, and let you know more. I hope the report will be promising.”

“S.S. Siberia, Jan. 21/04.

“You should see me to-day. Quite the cripple, hobbling around on a pair of crutches. I can’t stand on the ankle yet, but hope to be able to walk by the time we make Yokohama. To-day is Thursday, and we expect to arrive next Monday morning. I hope war isn’t declared for at least a month after I arrive in Japan — will give my ankle a chance to strengthen.

“All hands are very good to me, and I might say I am almost worn out by being made comfortable. . . . I am in for a game of cards now, so more anon.”

“S.S. Siberia, Jan. 24/04.

“Yesterday I dragged about on crutches to the boat deck and to tiffin, and to bed. To-day I have ventured without crutches. But I walk very little just from stateroom to boat deck.

“A young gale is on, but the Siberia is behaving splendidly.

“P.S. The young gale is still growing.”

“S.S. Siberia, Jan. 24/04.

“Just packing up. Shall be in Yokohama at six to-morrow morning. Ankle is improving. Am walking (very slowly, and limpingly, and carefully) without crutches. I just missed breaking the leg — so you can see what a twist it was. Hope the war holds off for a month yet. . . .”

“Thursday, Jan. 28/04.

“. . . If you can read this. The train is joggling, and the temperature inside the car is 40. I am on the express bound for Kobe — where, on Jan. 31, if not sooner, I expect to get a steamer for Korea. I am bound for Seoul, the capital. Was pretty busy in Yokohama and Tokio. Arrived Monday, and have been on the jump until now, though this writing looks as though I were still jumping.

“Ankle is getting better very slowly.”

“Jan. 29/04.

“You should have seen me plunging out of Kobe this morning, myself and luggage in three ‘rickshaws, with push-boys and pull-boys and all the rest, and racing to catch the express for Nagasaki. No steamer out of Kobe till Feb. 3rd, so am going to try my luck at Nagasaki, twenty-two hours’ ride on the train and no sleeping car.

“Weather is warmer down here. It was bitter cold up Yokohama-way.

“If I do not refer to war doings, know that there is a censor ship, and cables, etc., are held up. . . .”

"Shimonoseki, Feb. 3/04.

"Still trying to sail to Chemulpo. Made an all-day ride back from Nagasaki to Moji to catch a steamer, Feb. 1 (Monday). Bought ticket, stepped outside and snapped three street scenes. Now Moji is a fortified place. Japanese police Very sorry, but they arrested me. Spent the day examining me. Of course, I missed steamer. Very sorry. Carted me down country Monday night to town of Kokura. Examined me again. Committed. Tried Tuesday. Found guilty. Fined five yen, and camera confiscated. Have telegraphed American Minister at Tokio, who is now trying to recover camera.

Received last night a deputation from all the Japanese Newspaper correspondents in this vicinity. Present their good offices, and 'Very sorry.' They are my brothers in the craft. They are to-day to petition the judges (three judges sat on me in black caps) to get up mock auction of camera, when they will bid it in and present it to me with their compliments. 'Very uncertain,' how ever, they say.

"Expect to leave for Chemulpo on the 6th or 7th hist."

"On board Junk, off Korean Coast,

"Tuesday, Feb. 9, 1904.

"The wildest and most gorgeous thing ever! If you could see me just now, captain of a junk with a crew of three Koreans who speak neither English nor Japanese and with five Japanese guests (strayed travelers) who speak neither English nor Korean — that is, all but one, which last knows a couple of dozen English words. And with this polyglot following I am bound on a voyage of several hundred miles along the Korean coast to Chemulpo.

"And how did it happen? I was to sail Monday, Feb. 8th, on the Keigo Maru for Chemulpo. Saturday, Feb. 6th, returning in the afternoon from Kokura (where my camera had been returned to me) — returning to Shimonoseki, I learned the Keigo Maru had been taken off its run by the Jap Government. Learned also that many Jap warships had passed the straits bound out, and that soldiers had been called from their homes to join their regiments in the middle of the night.

"And I made a dash right away. Caught, just as it was getting under way, a small steamer for Fusan. Had to take a third class passage — and it was a native steamer — no white man's chow (food) even first class, and I had to sleep on deck. Dashing aboard in steam launch, got one trunk overboard but saved it. Got wet myself, and my rugs and baggage, crossing the Japan Sea. At Fusan, caught a little 120-ton steamer loaded with Koreans and Japs, and deck load piled to the sky, for Chemulpo. Made Mokpo with a list to starboard of fully thirty degrees. It would take a couple of hundred of such steamers to make a Siberia. But this morning all passengers and freight were fired ashore, willy nilly, for Jap. Government had taken the steamer to use. We had traveled the preceding night convoyed by two torpedo boats.

"Well, fired ashore this morning, I chartered this junk, took five of the Japanese passengers along, and here I am, still bound for Chemulpo. Hardest job I ever undertook. Have had no news for several days, do not know if war has been declared and shall not know until I make Chemulpo — or maybe Kun San, at which place I drop

my passengers. God, but I'd like to have a mouthful of white man s speech. It's not quite satisfying to do business with a 24-word vocabulary and gesticulations."

"Thursday, Feb. 11, 1904.

"On board another junk. Grows more gorgeous. Night and day traveled for Kun San. Caught on lee-shore yesterday, and wind howling over Yellow Sea. You should have seen us clawing off — one man at the tiller and a man at each sheet (Koreans), four scared Japanese, and the fifth too seasick to be scared. Of course, we cleared off, or you wouldn t be reading this.

"Made Kun San at nightfall, after having carried away a mast and smashed the rudder. And we arrived in driving rain, wind cutting like a knife. And then, you should have seen me being made comfortable last night — five Japanese maidens helping me undress, take a bath, and get into bed, the while visitors, male and female, were being entertained (my visitors). And the maidens passing remarks upon my beautiful white skin, etc. And this morning, same thing repeated — the Mayor of Kun San, the captain of police, leading citizens, all in my bed-room, visiting while I was being shaved, dressed, washed, and fed.

"And all the leading citizens of the town came to see me off, and cheered me, and cried 'Sayonara' countless times.

"New junk, manned by Japanese — five and not one knows one word of English; and here I am, adrift with them, off the Korean Coast. "No white man's news for a long time. Hear native rumors of sea-fights, and of landing of troops, but nothing I may believe without doubting. But when I get to Chemulpo, I'll know 'where I'm at.'

"And maybe you think it isn't cold, traveling as I am, by junk. . . . The snow is on the land, and in some places, on north slopes, comes down to the water's edge.

"And there are no stoves by which to keep warm — charcoal boxes, with half a dozen small embers, are not to be sneered — at I am beside one now, which I just bought for 12½ cents from a Korean at a village, where we have landed for water."

"Saturday, Feb. 11, 1904.

"Still wilder, but can hardly say so 'gorgeous,' unless landscapes and seascapes seen between driving snow squalls, be gorgeous. You know the tides on this Coast range from 40 to 60 feet (we're at anchor now, in the midst of ten thousand islands, reefs, and shoals, waiting four hours until the tide shall turn toward Chemulpo — 30 li — which means 75 miles away).

"Well, concerning tides. Yesterday morning found us on a lee shore, all rocks, with a gale pounding the whole Yellow Sea down upon us. Our only chance for refuge, dead to leeward, a small bay, and high and dry. Had to wait on the 40-ft. tide. And we waited, anchored under a small reef across which the breakers broke, until, tide rising, they submerged it. Never thought a sampan (an open crazy boat) could live through what ours did. A gale of wind, with driving snow — you can imagine how cold it was. But I'm glad I have Japanese sailors. They're braver and cooler and more daring than the Koreans. Well, we waited till eleven A.M. It was 'twixt the devil and the deep sea — stay and be swamped, run for the little bay and run the chance of striking in the

surf. We couldn't possibly stay longer, so we showed a piece of sail and ran for it. Well, I was nearly blind with a headache which I had brought away with me from Kun San, and which had been increasing ever since; and I did not much care what happened; yet I remember, when we drove in across, that I took off my overcoat, and loosened my shoes — and I didn't bother a bit about trying to save the camera.

"But we made it half full of water but we made it. And maybe it didn't howl all night, so cold that it froze the salt water.

"All of which I wouldn't mind, if it weren't for my ankles. I used to favor the right with the left, but with the left now smashed worse than the right, you can imagine how careful I have to be (where it is impossible to be careful) in a crazy junk going through such rough weather. And yet I have escaped any bad twists so far.

"Junks, crazy — I should say so. Rags, tatters, rotten — something always carrying away how they navigate is a miracle. I wonder if Hearst thinks I'm lost."

"Monday, Feb. 15, 1904.

Oh, yes, we waited four hours! When four hours had passed, wind came down out of the north, dead in our teeth. Lay all night in confounded tide-rip, junk standing on both ends, and driving me crazy what of my headache.

"At four in the morning turned out in the midst of driving snow to change anchorage on account of sea.

"It was a cruel day-break we witnessed; at 8 A.M. we showed a bit of sail and ran for shelter.

"My sailors live roughly, and we put up at a fishing village (Korean) where they live still more roughly, and we spent Sunday and Sunday night there — my five sailors, myself — and about 20 men, women and children jammed into a room in a hut, the floor space of which room was about equivalent to that of a good double-bed.

"And my foreign food is giving out, and I was compelled to begin on native chow. I hope my stomach will forgive me some of the things I have thrust upon it: Filth, dirt, indescribable, and the worst of it is that I can't help thinking of the filth and dirt as I take each mouthful.

"In some of these villages, I am the first white man, and a curiosity.

"I showed one old fellow my false teeth at midnight. He proceeded to rouse the house. Must have given him bad dreams, for he crept in to me at three in the morning and woke me in order to have another look.

"We are under way this morning — for Chemulpo. I hope I don't drop dead when I finally arrive there.

"The land is covered with snow. The wind has just hauled ahead again. Our sail has come in, and the men are at the oars. If it blows up it'll be another run for shelter. O, this is a wild and bitter coast."

"Tuesday night, Feb. 16, Chemulpo.

"Just arrived. Am preparing outfit — horses, interpreter, coolies, etc., for campaign into the North toward the Yalu and most probably into Manchuria."

"Buy everything in sight and get ready to start for Ping-Yang!" Jack was greeted when he landed at Chemulpo. It was the first white-man s speech he had heard in eight days. The welcome tongues were those of Jones and MacLeod, who had preceded him. One of these men, who had known Jack, did not recognize him, so disfigured and cadaverous was he from sunburn and illness, and so crippled. And now, for the first time, he learned that war was on — had been on for five days.

"Chemulpo, Feb. 17/04.

". . . Am preparing to advance north — campaign to the Yalu and perhaps into Manchuria. I shall accompany. Am busy getting interpreters, coolies, horses, saddles, provisions, etc. Only four outside newspapermen here. The rest, a host, cannot get here."

"Grand Hotel, Seoul, Feb. 24/04.

". . . Am starting in five minutes for the North. Have been about crazy trying to outfit and start:

"3 pack ponies

"2 riding horses

"1 interpreter (Jap.)

"1 cook (Korean)

"2 mapus (Korean grooms)."

Of all the correspondents in the field, Jack was the last to reach Seoul, but the first to the Front. At Seoul, no one seemed to have any orders about him, so he lost not a moment hitting the road for the North. But from Sunan, the farthest point yet reached by any correspondent, and near the firing line, he was ruthlessly ordered back to Seoul.

"Ping-Yang, March 4/04.

"Have made 180 miles on horseback to this place. I shall be able to ride a little with you when I return, for it appears there are months of riding before me. I have one of the best horses in Korea — was the Russian Minister's at Seoul before he went away.

Very little chance to write these days am not writing enough for the Examiner as it is. Worked to death with the trouble of traveling.

"Have received no more letters from you nor anybody.

"Am pulling North soon for Anju and maybe the Yalu. Am now in the midst of accounts with correspondents, interpreters, mapus and what not, so cannot think. . . . I do not know when I shall ever be able to write you a real letter lack of time.

"But I'm learning about horses last two days traveled 50 miles a day, and I was saddle-sore and raw.

I am living in a Japanese hotel crammed with soldiers. (Only three of us — 1 English correspondent — 1 American photographer.) Am ordering whiskey just now for them."

"Poral-Colli, March 8/04.

"How the letters have roused me up! . . . Furthermore, they have proved to me, or, rather, reassured me, that I am a white man.

“As a sample of many days, let me give to-day. Was for bidden departure by Gen. Sasaki at Ping-Yang — argued it out through interpreters — vexations, delays, drive me mad. Should have started at 7 A.M. Scarcely started to load pack horses, when summoned by Japanese Consul — more interpreter — distraction — successful bluff — pull out late in afternoon.

“Arrive at this forlorn village; people scared to death. Already have had Russian and Japanese soldiers — we put the finishing touch to their fright. They swear they have no room for us, no fuel, no charcoal, no food for our horses, no room for our horses, nothing — no grub for our mapus and interpreters. We storm the village — force our way into the stables — capture 25 Ibs. barley hidden in man’s trousers — and so forth and so forth, for two mortal hours — chatter and chin-chin to drive one mad. “And this is but one of all the days. One can scarcely think white man’s thoughts. . . . As I write this, the horses are breaking loose in the stable — native horses are fiends, and I have desisted writing long enough to stir up the mapus.

“The horse I was astride of to-day is named Belle. I named her after your Belle. She is as sweet and gentle as yours, and she is the only sweet and gentle horse in Korea. She is an Australian barb, and have I told you she was the Russian Minister’s at Seoul? She is gigantic compared with all other horses in Korea — Chinese, Japanese, and Korean horses — and excites universal wonder and admiration.

“As I write this a cold wind is blowing from the North, and snow is driving. Also, before my door are groaning and creaking a hundred bullock-carts loaded with army supplies and pushing North.

“My interpreter comes in with his daily report. Manyoungi, my Korean cook and interpreter, comes in with tea and toast. Dunn sends down half a can of hot pork and beans — and there are a thousand interruptions.”

“Wednesday, Mar. 9/04.

Here we are — captured and detained, while the wires are working hot between here and Ping-Yang and Seoul. I mean captured by Japanese soldiers who will not let us proceed North to Anjou. And five more vexatious hours have just elapsed — chin-chin and delay galore.

“As I write this, a thousand soldiers are passing through the village past my door. My men are busy drawing rations for themselves and horses from the Army.

“Red cross ponies, pioneers, pack horses loaded with munitions and supplies, for foot soldiers, are streaming by. Captains are dropping in to shake hands and leave their cards, and then going on.

“IMPORTANT. ANOTHER VEXATION!

“Just caught five body lice on my undershirt. That is, I discovered them, Manyoungi picked them off, the while he interpreted for me an invitation from a Korean nobleman to come to his place and occupy better quarters! The nobleman looked on, while the lice were caught and I changed my clothes. Lice drive me clean crazy. I am itching all over. I am sure, every second, that a score of them are on me. And how under the sun am I to write for the Examiner or write to you!

"Intermission — the horses, stabled within ten feet of me, have been kicking up a rumpus — kicking, biting, stampeding my Belle and my three other horses — and broken legs would not be welcome just now. I am advised to get my life insured.

"And the troops stream by, the horses fight — and mapus, cook and interpreter, are squabbling 4 feet away from me. And the frost is in the air. I must close my doors and light my candles.

"A Korean family of refugees — their household goods on their backs, just went by."

"Japanese Consulate,

"The 9th March, 1904.

"To Mr. Jack London:

"Sir:

"I have the honor to inform you by the order that you would stay here until our Land Forces under Major General Sasaki proceed for the North.

"Yours truly,

(Signed) "C. Chinjo,

"Jap. Acting Consul."

Jack, referring to the foregoing, notes as follows:

"This is one of many commands not heeded. This was issued yesterday at Ping-Yang. I am now North of that city and in advance of General Sasaki.

"The first command, had I obeyed it, would have held me in Tokio to this day, where are 50 other correspondents who did heed. I am prepared, however, to be held up by Japanese scouts at any moment and be brought back to Ping-Yang. But it's all in the game. I am the only correspondent thus far in advance. With me is Dunn, a photographer for Collier's Weekly. . . . In Ping-Yang are two other correspondents — and that is all the regular correspondents in Korea at present moment."

"Sunan, Mar. 11/04.

"Have just returned from a ride on Belle — doesn't that strike you familiarly? North I may ride for a hundred yards, and when I come thundering up at a lope the Japanese guard turns out on the run, presenting bayonets to me in token that I may proceed no farther. East, West, and South I may ride as far as I wish, but North, where fighting is soon to begin, I may not go. Nor may I go until I receive permission from Lieut.-General Inouye, commander of the 12th Division of 12,000 men, and just now at Seoul, a couple of hundred miles to the South.

" . . . Your two letters I received several days ago were brought up, horseback, from Seoul. As I write I look out my door and a dozen feet from where I am sitting, see Belle munching away at her barley ration which I have drawn for her from the Army. She is a joy! . . . I am my own riding teacher. I hope I don't learn to ride all wrong. But anyway, I'll manage to stick on a horse somehow, and we'll have some glorious rides together."

"Sunan, March 12/04.

". . . You needn't worry about my welfare. The Japanese are taking very good care of me. Here I am, 40 miles from the front, and here I stay. The only other newspa-

perman who reached this far, Dunn, has gone back. So I'm farthest north of all the correspondents. Furthermore, no others may now pass out of Ping-Yang."

He quotes several short poems from the Korean, and comments:

"These are sweet, are they not? They are the only sweet things I have seen among the Koreans!"

"Ping-Yang, March 14/04.

". . . Ordered back to Ping-Yang yesterday by the authorities — so here I am, and a chance to mail this."

"Ping-Yang, March 16/04.

"Here beginneth the retrograde movement. Have been ordered back 50 li from Sunan to this place. Am now ordered back 540 li from this place to Seoul — the Japanese are disciplining us for our rush ahead and the scoop we made — and they are doing it for the sake of the correspondents who remained in Japan by advice of Japanese and who have made life miserable for the Japanese by pointing out that we have been ahead gathering all the plums.

"540 li to Seoul and 540 li back = 1080 useless li I have to ride, plus 100 (Sunan and return) = 1180 useless li. Well, I'll become used to the saddle at any rate."

"Seoul, March 18/04.

"Just arrived, fired hence from the North. Pull out on a little side jump to Wei-hai-wei to-morrow morning early. Learn that a bunch of letters is chasing around after me up at Ping-Yang. . . . Shall get them a week hence when return from Wei-hai-wei."

"March 19/04.

". . . Didn't go to Wei-hai-wei after all."

"Seoul, Korea, March 29/04.

"Here I am, still in Seoul, assigned to the first column but not permitted to go to the Front. None of the correspondents at front. All held back by Japanese, and in this matter we are being treated abominably.

". . . I have decided that I shall remain away no more than a year. Ten months from the time I left San Francisco, I shall cable Hearst to send out another man to take my place at the front — if I've got to the front by that time.

". . . Since writing you from north of Ping-Yang at Sunan, I have not only received not one letter from any one else, but not one letter from you. . . . You, at least, have my miserable letters to the Examiner to read. Have never been so disgusted with anything I have done. Perfect rot I am turning out. It's not war correspondence at all, and the Japs are not allowing us to see any war. Photographs inclosed taken at table upon which I am writing this."

"Grand Hotel, Seoul, Korea, April 1/04.

And still no mail. . . . I'll never go to a war between Orientals again. The vexation and delay are too great. Here I am, still penned up in Seoul, my 5 horses and interpreters at Chemulpo, my outfit at Ping-Yang, my post at Anjou — and eating my heart out with inactivity. Such inactivity, such irritating inactivity, that I cannot even write letters.

"Mark you, while inactive, I am busy all the time. What worries is that I am busy with worries and nothing is accomplished. Never mind, I may not ride beautifully or correctly, but I'11 wager that I stick on and keep up with you in the rides we may have to gether.

"Just now I'm riding all kinds of Chinese ponies, with all kinds of saddles, in all kinds of places (and some of the ponies are vicious brutes). I was out yesterday, without stirrups, and loped all over the shop with another fellow, down crowded streets, narrow streets, crooked streets, over sprawling babies, for the ponies are hard-mouthed and headstrong (a thousand shaves), and live to tell the tale."

Here is a letter received by Jack from Mr. James, Chemulpo, at this juncture:

"Dear London:

"Your mare and the ponies are well looked after. Only a little influenza in her and she wants a lot more exercise. She is quite fat.

"Chin-chin, old chap.

Yours as a Sourdough,

"James."

And at foot, this note from Jack's interpreter, K. Yamada:

"For you don't returned within long time there happened trouble yesterday that I had been arrested to Japanese gendarme as reporting military secret to you and after 10 hours examined several questions, I could come back to my boarding house. Received telegram and I shall do your order.

"Y.ff'ly [affectionately?!],

"K. Yamada."

"If you don't come back I can't help plenty troubles."

Jack comments upon the two communications above:

"These two letters, on same sheet, as indicative of some of my troubles. Here I am, compelled to remain in Seoul, my horses at Chemulpo. My interpreter, K. Yamada, left in charge of horses, arrested. My mare with influenza, and suffering from 'hay-belly,' which James mistakes for being in foal. Hay I had sternly for bidden, for I had learned effect on mare. James (an Ex-Klondiker) and making a dash for Chemulpo, I asked to take a look at my horses."

In very bad humor over the holding up of his mail, he writes:

"Seoul, Korea, April 5/04.

". . . I am going out to ride off steam now on a jockey saddle and a spanking big horse, and if we don't kill each other we'11 kill a few native babies or blind men. Had the horse out yesterday — hardest mouth — took half a block to bring it to a walk and half a dozen to hold it when I got off to pay a call. How I stuck on I don't know — but I never took the reins in both hands, a la Japanaise, nor did I throw my arms around his neck. Oh, I'm learning, I'm learning. I never had time in my life to learn to play billiards, but I'm learning now. I never had time to learn to dance, but if this war keeps on I'll learn that, too — only the missionaries don't dance, and the Kresang (Korean

dancing girls) can't dance because the Emperor's mother is dead and the court is in mourning.

"To-morrow night I give a reading from 'Call of Wild' before foreign residents for benefit of local Y. M. C. A. — and I give it in evening dress! ! ! Custom of the country and I had to come to it. In Japan, however, one has to have a frock coat and top hat — imagine me in a Prince Albert and a stovepipe. Anyway, if Japan wins this war the Japs will be so cocky that white people will be unable to live in Japan. . . .

". . . Here's the horse, and I go. Say, I have learned a new swear-word (Korean), 'Jamie.' Whenever you want to swear just say 'Jamie' softly, and people won't know you are swearing."

"O-Pay, Korea, April 16/04.

"In the saddle again . . . and riding long hours. Roads are muddy. Was putting Belle in up to the shoulders as darkness fell last night. Have breakfast eaten and am under way at 6 a.m. It is now 9 :30 p.m., and I have just finished supper and am going (in about one minute) rather tired to bed."

"Anjou House, April 17/04.

"Plugging along in the race for Japanese Headquarters. Four men ahead of me, but expect to overhaul them, though I am bringing my packs along and they are traveling light. The rest of the bunch is left in the rear.

"Beautiful long hours in the saddle, and beautiful mud. . . . Am prouder than a peacock, for I am able to keep Belle's shoes on her, to tighten them when they get loose, and to put on a shoe when she casts and loses one. Of course, it is coldshoeing, but they work! they work!"

Wiju, April 24th.

"Well, I didn't overtake the four men ahead of me, though I caught up with them where they were stopped farther back along the road, and arrived here with them, where we shall stop for some time.

"Now, to business. As I understand it, Macmillans expect to bring out 'The Sea Wolf' late this Fall. I shall not be able to go over the proof-sheets. And you must do this for me. I shall write Macmillans telling them this and asking them to get into communication with you. In the first place, before any of the book is set up in print, you must get from them the original MS. in their possession. Much in this MS. will have been cut out in the Century published part. What was cut out I want put back in the book. On the other hand, many GOOD alterations have been made by you and George [Sterling], and by the Century people — these alterations I want in the book. So here's the task — take the Macmillan MS., and, reading the Century published stuff, put into Macmillan MS. the good alterations.

"Furthermore, anything that offends you, strike out or change on your own responsibility. You know me well enough to know that I won't kick."

"Headquarters 1st Japanese Army,

"Manchuria, May 6/04.

". . . I am well, in splendid health, though profoundly irritated by the futility of my position in this Army and sheer inability (caused by the position) to do decent work. Whatever I have done I am ashamed of. The only compensation for these months of irritation is a better comprehension of Asiatic geography and Asiatic character. Only in another war, with a whiteman's army, may I Hope to redeem myself. It can never be done here by any possibility."

"Headqrs. First Jap. Army,

"Feng-Wang-Cheng,

"Manchuria,

May 17, 1904.

". . . I have so far done no decent work. Have lost enthusiasm and hardly hope to do anything decent. Another war will be required for me to redeem myself, when I can accompany our army or an English army. Well, time rolls on. In six weeks the rainy season will be here. The chances are that I'll pull out for some point in China where I can get in touch with a cable. . . .

"Do you know — beyond my camera experience at Moji (mailed before the War) I do not know whether the Examiner has received one article of mine (I have sent 19) or one film (and I have sent hundreds of photographs)."

"Headquarters First Japanese Army,

"Feng-Wang-Cheng,

"Manchuria,

"May 22, 1904.

"My heart does not incline to writing these days. It could only wail, for I am disgusted at being here. War? Bosh! Let me give you my daily life.

"I am camped in a beautiful grove of pine trees on a beautiful hill-slope. Near-by is a temple. It is glorious summer weather. I am awakened in the early morning by the songs of birds. Cuckoo calls through the night. At 6 :30 I shave. Manyoungi, my Korean boy, is cooking breakfast and waiting on me. Sakai, my interpreter, is shining my boots and receiving instructions for the morning. Yuen-hi-kee, a Chinese, is lending a hand at various things. My Seoul mapu is helping in the breakfast and cleaning up generally. My Ping-Yang mapu is feeding the horses.

"Breakfast at 7. Then try to grind something out of nothing for the Examiner. Perhaps go out and take some photographs, which I may not send any more for the Censor will not permit them to go out undeveloped and I have no developing outfit or chemicals with me.

"I am at liberty to ride in to headquarters at Feng-Wang-Cheng, less than a mile away. And I am at liberty to ride about in a circle around the city of a radius little more than a mile. Never were correspondents treated in any war as they have been in this. It's absurd, childish, ridiculous, rich, comedy.

"In the afternoon, the call goes forth, and we (the correspondents) go swimming in a glorious pool — clear water, over our heads, plenty of it. It all reminds me of Glen

Ellen. A campfire at night, whereby we curse God, or Fate, and divers peoples and things which I shall not mention for the Censor's sake, and the day is ended.

"Disgusted, utterly disgusted.

"I have this day written the Examiner that in a month or six weeks (at outside) I shall pull out of the country and go to someplace where I can get in direct communication with them; that my position here is futile; that there is no reason for my continuing here, and that, unless arrangements have been made for me to go on the Russian side, I shall return to the United States — unless they expressly bid me remain.

"Now I don't think it is possible for them to make arrangements for me to go on the Russian side, so . . . as you read this I may be starting on my way back to the States, to God's country, the Whiteman's country. . . . Who knows? Who knows? At any rate, believe me . . . it would take a many times bigger salary than I am receiving to persuade me to put in a year again in Japan much less pay for the year out of my own pocket. In the past I have preached the Economic Yellow Peril; henceforth I shall preach the Militant Yellow Peril.

"And just imagine the Censor reading all this. . . . Not a letter, not a line. I know not what is happening.

". . . I have no heart, no head, no hand, for anything. In preposterous good health, but ungodly sick of soul. . . ."

Jack London always cherished a high regard for Richard Harding Davis. Mr. Davis, together with John Fox, Jr., and a large contingent of other writers, were held tightly, though courteously and hospitably, bottled up in Tokyo by the Nippon Government. Here they were eating out their hearts in enforced inaction, doubtlessly envious, and excusably, of the seven men who, Jack among them, had somehow got ahead with the First Army. And yet, when it was rumored in Tokyo that Jack London, a white man, a countryman, was in sore straits with the brown military authorities away up in Korea, and like to be summarily dealt with, it was Richard Harding Davis, white man to white man's rescue, although personally he knew him not, who first set the wires burning to Washington, where Theodore Roosevelt sat in the President's chair.

I have heard Jack's account of the fracas that "put him in wrong" with General Kuroki. Later on, someone circulated that he had been sent back to America for "violation of neutrality." Being very rusty on the facts, I took occasion, during a visit from James H. Hare in 1917, to refresh my meniory. When Jack renewed acquaintance with both "Jimmie" Hare and "Dick" Davis in 1914 at Vera Cruz, I had the pleasure of meeting them.

The seven who were lucky enough to be members of the Japanese First Army were Jack London, Captain Thomas (French), William Maxwell (British), Mr. Fraser, and, for Collier's Weekly, Mr. Hare, Mr. Palmer, and Mr. O. K. Davis — all absolute subjects of the iron machine of which they were part. Each possessed his own outfit and servants, including a mapu (horse-boy), and every week these mapus went to the Japanese quartermaster to obtain feed for their masters beasts. On one such day, Jack's boy had some dispute with another mapu. Going to see what the row was about, Jack's boy

explained that the other had prevented him from getting his proper share of the feed. This same offender Jack recognized as one who had been stealing his "grub" for some time back; but knowing how risky it would be for an unwelcome white correspondent to strike a Japanese, no matter how low in station, had regretfully refrained from taking it out on the other's hide. On the present occasion Jack interposed, by word of mouth, and the impudent thief, presuming too far upon a fancied security, made a threatening bluff in his direction. Jack watched carefully, and only when the fellow came actually at him, did he let out that small, scientific fist. "Lord, Lord," I can hear him muse, "I only hit him once — stopped him with my fist, rather — you know, he fell right into it; and then down with a thud. And he went around whimpering in bandages for two weeks."

But Jack nor his friends minimized the danger he was in, for the beaten mapu lost no time reporting to headquarters, and there were black looks everywhere. Jack was called on the carpet by General Kuroki's chief of staff, General Fuji, while the six other white men armed themselves, determined to stand with their comrade against the whole brown Army if need be, and go down together — a lovely thing, the most inspiring and romantic in the world.

Matters looked very serious for a while, although General Fuji did at length condescend to listen to Jack's side. Richard Harding Davis's effort undoubtedly halted any sudden execution by court martial that might have been in the minds of the staff. At any rate the storm blew over; but for days the seven men kept closely together, ready for emergency. Again, in 1914, Mr. Davis extended a second white-man's hand in an unforeseen difficulty; but that story belongs elsewhere.

And when Jack sailed from Yokohama, coming home, he left Mr. Davis still awaiting, with the other soul-sick correspondents, their permission to go to the Front.

Volume II

Return From Korea; Divorce

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXV Autumn, 1904

ON June 30, 1904, still in the ocean aboard the in coming S.S. Korea, from Yokohama, Jack London was served with papers for "separation and maintenance." Moreover, he learned from the inhospitable messenger that an attachment had been levied by the plaintiff upon his personal property, even to his books, "My very tools of trade," as he designated his library. The attachment spread to whatever funds might be due from his publishers, and covered his balance with The Examiner for the war articles — all of it revenue which in his provident integrity he had sought almost solely for the benefit of his dependents.

He was generous until taken advantage of, and then — divinely generous still, even to generosity becoming, in the nature of things, a mere duty. When questioned as to a seemingly short-sighted attitude that might work disadvantage to himself, his philosophy dictated the following:

"If — — should sell off everything I possess, I would say, 'cheap at the price.' The dollars do not amount to anything to me where human relations are concerned. I think I am the same way with my neck. I would trust it willingly to a friend, a dear friend, and if that friend should chop off my head, my head, rolling on the ground, would say, I am sure, 'Cheap at the price.' So I shall let certain powers remain in So-and-So's hands. If such power is misused, why, what of it? The extent of its misuse would be as nothing to the fact that So-and-So had misused it, and I prefer to give the chance."

To Cloudesley he sent a scribbled note: "Am back, rushed to death, and trying to straighten things out. At present all money tied up (earned and unearned) and don't know where I'm at."

And this was not the worst. A dear and wonderful friend had been ruthlessly named as co-respondent in the separation complaint and of course there ensued all the malodorous notoriety which accompanies such attacks. A hue and cry went up from a hypocritical capitalist press, quite as if Jack London were the first youth who ever repented of a marital mistake.

The girl's chief reply to the astonishing accusations, as recorded in the Bay dailies, was that the same were "merely vulgar." Jack, grieved to the heart that his beloved friends should be soiled in his unfortunate affairs, declined to comment upon the latter otherwise than: "I refuse to say a word about my separation. . . . A man's private

affairs are his private affairs." And as might be surmised, the "Herbert Wace" of the "Letters" was widely quoted. To the girl herself, Jack wrote, in part:

"I do most earnestly hope that your name will not be linked any more with my troubles. It will soon die away, I believe. And so it goes, I wander through life delivering hurts to all that know me. . . . And so one pays . . . only, it is the woman who always pays.

"Unspoilt in your idealism? And think of me as unsaved in my materialism. . . . However, I am changed. Though a materialist when I first knew you, I had the saving grace of enthusiasm. That enthusiasm is the thing that is spoiled, and I have become too sorry a thing for you to remember."

The original complaint, a lengthy arraignment abounding in curious charges, was eventually withdrawn and another, this time for complete divorce instead of mere separation and maintenance, and on the ground of simple "desertion," went before the court on August 2, 1904. This was allowed by default, Jack London not appearing. Property interests were adjusted out of court.

Shortening down already insufficient sleep, beating his head with his fist to keep awake, Jack plunged deeper than ever into work. For he must immediately start building the new home for his little girls; and this home, in addition to his other driven obligations, he personally superintended. As if all this were not enough, the death of Mammy Jennie's husband made it incumbent upon him to take over her affairs.

The events of this summer of 1904 threw Jack into a melancholia that he tried to conceal under a carefree manner when with the "The Crowd" picnicking in the hills, or rollicking in the Piedmont swimming baths — his main recreations. A letter to me aired his depression over the minuteness of human generosity and fair play:

"It's sometimes a dreary thing to sit and watch the game played in the small and petty way. One who not only takes a hand in the game, but calmly sits outside as well and watches, usually sees the small and petty way, and is content to face immediate losses, knowing that the ultimate gain is his. It is so small, so pitifully small, that at worst it can produce only a passing glow of anger, and after that, pity only remains, and tolerance without confidence. — Oh, why can't the men and women of this world learn that playing the game in the small way is the losing way? They are always doomed to failure when they play against the one who plays in the large way."

So bleak was his spirit for a while, that more than once he considered, though with a terrible cheerlessness, returning to the old order, what of love and sorrow for the babies. In a letter: "Believe me, . . . it has taken all the resolution I could summon to prevent my going back, for the children's sake. I have been sadly shaken during the last forty-eight hours — so shaken that it almost seemed easier for me to sacrifice myself for the little ones. They are such joys, such perfect little human creatures." But in after years he reviewed his state at that time: "If I had gone back, it would have meant suicide or insanity."

As it was, he was with the children frequently, either in their home or his own.

My people wrote to me, in the east, that he had come to spend a week at Wake Robin Lodge, and his regard for the beautiful mountainside had only extended.

Manyoungi, the brightest Korean in Jack's train with the Japanese First Army, had been brought by him to California, for he needed just such a servitor to relieve him of all domestic friction in the little flat. This boy, resourceful and comely, took prideful charge from kitchen to study, and made entertaining an irresponsible pleasure to "Master, as he continued to designate his employer, to the playful horror of jeering friends, radical and otherwise. Finding it useless, Jack gave up trying to dissuade Manyoungi from his long-time custom with European travelers to Korea, and submitted willingly to the ministrations of the perfect servant who assumed entire care of his wardrobe, even to dressing him in the morning. Jack's attitude upon personal service was to the effect that it saved him priceless minutes for work and reading. "Why tie my own shoes when I can have it done by some one whose business it is, while I am improving my mind or entertaining the fellows who drop in!"

And many were the fellows who dropped in, persons from near and far flocking to look upon the face and hang upon the speech of the young writer. Jack, jealously conserving his every moment, saved hours by meeting them at mealtime:

"Manyoungi, there'll be two to dinner this evening — " or a dozen, or six; and the table blossomed forthwith by virtue of a complete set of exquisite Haviland china, with silver and crystal and napery as faultless; to all of which beauty Jack, hospitality in his eye, had treated his longing soul upon taking up bachelor life.

"If I had to be a servant," he would muse, "I'd be just such an one as Manyoungi. He possesses what I understand as 'the spirit of service' to the finest degree."

"The spirit of service" — he appeared to love the quality, despite the popular idea of his socialism. Out of his own mouth: "If I were a servant, I'd make myself the finest servant in the world."

"The Faith of Men," another series of Klondike yarns, and ninth volume on the stretching shelf, had been published by Macmillans in the spring, and autumn saw "The Sea Wolf" beside it. The latter was given especially high acclaim by the reviewers. However, they persisted in pigeonholing it as essentially a man's book — a book women would not care for;" and it was with loud glee that Jack later on received word that The Ladies Home Journal had purchased several thousand copies to be used as premiums to subscribers. Meanwhile, he tried his hand at writing a play, based upon his short story "Scorn of Women" — frankly an experiment. This play at various times intrigued the fancy of one and another of "America's foremost actresses," but was never performed. Referring to the comment of one star, Jack wrote me:

" — — ,in suggestion of making a struggle between Freda and Mrs. E. for Capt. E., violates the eternal art canon of UNITY. It is ANOTHER story.

"I violated all the conventional art-canons, but not one eternal art canon.

"I wrote a play without a hero, without a villain, without a love-motif, and with two leading ladies."

And to Anna Strunsky:

“Am on third and last act of play, adapted from ‘Scorn of Women,’ to be called ‘The Way of Women.’ Not a big effort. Wouldn’t dare a big effort.

An experiment merely — lots of horse play, etc., and every character, even Sitka Charley, is belittled.”

Then, in another paragraph, concerning his health:

“I have been working hard, and what of my physical afflictions have been a pretty good recluse. . . . Yes, I am thin — seven pounds off weight, and soft, which is equivalent to twelve pounds off weight altogether. My grippe was followed by a nervous itch, which heat aggravated, and I was prevented from exercising for weeks.”

The “nervous itch” referred to gave Jack much disquietude both mental and physical, and to the skin-and nerve-specialists not a little thought and experimentation. Under the most minute scrutiny, the skin revealed nothing that would lead to a diagnosis. Remained only to go into the question of nerves. The patient’s dynamic habits of overwork in every department of his intellectual life, and his relentless limitation of repose, afforded good reason; on the other hand, he had pursued this system for many years, with no such warning as the present.

By a process of elimination common to his drastic fashion, he hit upon an apparently innocent custom indulged for some months past — that of munching salted pecans and almonds while reading in bed. Possibly he had saturated himself with an excess of salt. (Physicians often reduce sodium chloride in the tissues and fluids for remedial purposes, a method known as dechloridation.) He dropped this saline element from his dietary. The itch disappeared. Resuming the nut-refreshment, the affliction took a new lease of his hypersensitive surfaces, which flamed intolerably at the slightest exertion. So acute was the disorder, that even the thought of it precipitated an attack.

After convincing himself that salt was the offending factor, Jack went gaily to the specialists with his findings, and they agreed with his conclusion. His diagnosis was verified to his entire satisfaction when in tropic climes re-lapses followed long exposure to salt air and water; and even under a bright California sky in long periods of midwinter yachting.

But there was no diminishing of his work; rather, he increased the staggering pace. Having reeled off an article entitled “The Yellow Peril” (now in collection “Revolution”), in which his sage views on the Asiatic situation were presented, he tackled a short novel. This was “The Game,” which might be termed a prizefight idyl its overarching motif being man’s eternal struggle between woman and career. He wrote me:

“Am slowly weaving The Game. You wouldn’t think it difficult if you read it. Most likely a failure, but it is a splendid exercise for me. I am learning more of my craft. Some day I may master my tools.”

He loved the writing of it, for, like Keats, he loved a fair contest between man and man. It was not for the prize nor for brutality s sake, but for the cleanness of a scientific game — Anglo-Saxon sport, square and true, as say against some other national sports like bull-fighting, where as a rule one contestant is doomed through trickery of superior intelligence.

He enjoyed the creating of Genevieve, line for line. "Why, you'd never guess where I got my model for her," he said to me afterward. "She was a candy-girl in a poor little sweet-shop in London. I never saw such a skin — sprayed with color like your Duchesse roses out the window there. I used to hunt up a thirst for gallons of soft drinks just for excuse to go and sit at the dingy little counter and look shyly at her face, as a silly boy might. I did not even want to touch her — and she hadn't a thing in her yellow head to talk about. It was just an abandonment to the prettiness and fragility of her English bloom."

"The Game" was serialized in The Metropolitan Magazine, illustrated by Henry Hutt in water-colors. And Jack had been right: it was for the most part a failure, so far as concerned the American public. For readers listened to the uncomprehending words of space-writers who totally missed the big motif, and neither knew nor cared to know aught of "the game" itself. Timely to the subject, I quote entire a letter Jack London wrote on August 18, 1905, to the editor of the New York Times:

"As one interested in the play of life, and in the mental processes of his fellow-creatures, I have been somewhat amused by a certain feature of the criticisms of my prize-fighting story, 'The Game.' This feature is the impeachment of my realism, the challenging of the facts of life as put down by me in that story. It is rather hard on a poor devil of a writer, when he has written what he has seen with his own eyes, or experienced in his own body, to have it charged that said sights and experiences are unreal and impossible.

"But this is no new experience, after all. I remember a review of 'The Sea Wolf' by an Atlantic Coast critic who seemed very familiar with the sea. Said critic laughed hugely at me because I sent one of my characters aloft to shift over a gaff-topsail. The critic said that no one ever went aloft to shift over a gaff-topsail, and that he knew what he was talking about because he had seen many gaff-topsails shifted over from the deck. Yet I, on a seven-months' cruise in a topmast schooner, had gone aloft, I suppose, a hundred times, and with my own hands shifted tacks and sheets of gaff-topsails.

"Now to come back to 'The Game.' As reviewed in the New York Saturday Times, fault was found with my realism. I doubt if this reviewer has had as much experience in such matters as I have. I doubt if he knows what it is to be knocked out, or to knock out another man. I have had these experiences, and it was out of these experiences, plus a fairly intimate knowledge of prize-fighting in general, that I wrote The Game.

"I quote from the critic in the Saturday Times:

Still more one gently doubts in this particular case, that a blow delivered by Ponta on the point of Fleming's chin could throw the latter upon the padded canvas floor of the ring with enough force to smash in the whole back of his skull, as Mr. London describes.

All I can say in reply is, that a young fighter in the very club described in my book, had his head smashed in this manner. Incidentally, this young fighter worked in a sail-loft and took remarkably good care of his mother, brother and sisters.

"And oh, — one word more. I have just received a letter from Jimmy Britt, light-weight champion of the world, in which he tells me that he particularly enjoyed 'The Game,' on account of its trueness to life.

"Very truly yours,

"Jack London."

Jack always remained a champion of this book of his, not only in view of its subject but also of his workmanship. When Great Britain received it with intense appreciation, placing "this cameo of the ring" alongside other favorites like "Cashel Byron's Profession," the author was exultant with vindication. And yet, only the other day in fact, I picked up an American newspaper clipping in which The Game" was tossed aside as "that Jack London novel with out an excuse!"

With reference to some tentative and evidently short sighted criticism I had made of the manuscript, he responded:

"And, by the way, remember that anybody, by hard work, can achieve precision of language, but that very few can achieve strength of style. What knocks E — ? Precision. To be precise he has pruned away all strength. What the world wants is strength of utterance, not precision of utterance. Remember that about all the precise ways of saying things have already been said; the person who would be precise is merely an echo of all the precise people who have gone before, and such a person's work is bound to be colorless and insipid. Think it over. Let us talk all these things over." I remember, when he referred to a rusty pipe as "a streak of rust," wishing that I had thought of it first!

Ere the ink was dry on the packet that inclosed his manuscript of "The Game" to the editor, he was busy upon memoranda for his next novel in mind, "White Fang." On December 6, I received a handful of notes by mail, with the following comments:

"Find here, and please return, the motif for my very next book. A companion to 'The Call of the Wild.' Beginning at the very opposite end — evolution instead of devolution; civilization instead of decivilization. It is distinctly NOT to be a sequel. Merely same length, dog-story, and companion story. I shall not call it 'Call of the Tame,' but shall have title quite dissimilar to 'Call of Wild.' There are lots of difficulties in the way, but I believe I can make a cracker jack of it — have quit the play for a day to think about it.

"May go East in January after all for two or three months — lecturing."

By now, I was back from the east and living at Wake Robin Lodge with my Aunt, putting in hours a day at the piano. Meanwhile my services were offered to Jack in the matter of relieving him of typewriting, a suggestion that met with glad response; and I was thus brought into closer touch with his work and aims. My remuneration — and that a treasure — was the possession of his handwritten pages. Except for a few short stories and articles, the play "Scorn of Women" was my first typing for him, and by mail we exchanged some lively discussions of its technique before final completion. One of his letters contains this lamentation:

“I did 1000 words (dialogue and direction) on the first act of the play to-day. Oh, how it puzzles me and worries me, that play. Sometimes all seems clear (and good) and next it seems all rot and a rotten failure. But I don’t care. Though I never get a cent for it, I’m learning a whole lot about play-writing.” Here are the last two 1904 communications to Cloudesley Johns:

“1216 Telegraph Avenue,

“Dec. 8, 1904.

“I had to tell Black Cat that the idea of my story was not original [this was ‘A Nose for the King,’ published in The Black Cat for March, 1906, and collected in ‘When God Laughs’] having been told me by a Korean. So I don’t know whether my chance is spoiled or not.

“Sure, I’ll come to stay with you — I can bring Manyoungi. Only too glad. Expect to be down in first part of January.

I went to look at the Spray to-day. First time since that night we came in from Petaluma. Won’t be able to get out on her this year.”

I have heard Jack London remark that Miss Mary Shaw, whom he met after a San Francisco performance of “Mrs. Warren’s Profession,” was the most intellectual actress he had ever talked with. And to Cloudesley:

“Yes — met Miss Shaw — went to dinner. Liked her better than any actress ever met.”

Every moment energy incarnate, he rushed and crowded as if to preclude thinking of aught except the work or recreation of the moment. Speed, speed — and he began saving for a big red motor-car to mend the general pace. He fell ill — another severe attack of grippe that compelled him to ease up ; but the instant his brain cleared of dizziness, his incredible activities were resumed. And he always made it a religious duty personally to answer every letter received. Often I read the following, at the end of hastily scrawled notes to me: “This is the last of 30 [or 40, or 50] letters I have just reeled off.”

And this:

“I never had time to bore myself — Do you know I never have a moment with myself — am always doing something when I am alone — I shall work till midnight to-night, then bed, and read myself to sleep.”

To which I, tinged with sorrow and foreboding:

“You make me sad. You haven’t time to live; so what’s the use of living?”

One of Jack’s relaxations, if the word can apply to the tense interest he took in game and sport, and his unquenchable joy in the pard-like beauty of an athlete, was following the monthly boxing bouts at the West Oakland Athletic Club, the scene of the prizefight in “The Game.” A characteristic incident has been offered me by a newspaperman, Mr. Fred Goodcell, who made his acquaintance one day when Jack had, for the first time in years, dropped in to see his old friend Johnny Heinold in the First and Last Chance. I give Mr. Goodcell’s version of one evening that Jack described to me at the time:

“It was some weeks later that I met Jack again. I call him Jack, not because close acquaintanceship would permit, but because I believe all the world thinks of him in that intimate way. He wasn’t a man to be Mistered.

“This second meeting was at the box office of the West Oakland Athletic Club. The bouts were staged in an upstairs hall, far too small for the crowds that came, a fire trap that would make a Hun bomb thrower envious, but sweating, shouting, smoking fight-fans gathered there and cheered the ‘ham and egg’ boys as they slugged through four rounds, unless a knockout brought earlier surcease.

“Jack was at the box office trying to buy a front seat. There was none to be had. Just then I arrived and with an extra press ticket in my pocket invited Jack to be my guest. He accepted and we occupied ringside seats.

“On the card this night there was one fighter called ‘The Rat.’ I never knew him by any other name. I knew ‘The Rat’ to be an Italian huckster. . . . To me he was a fifth-rate fighter, lacking brains to be anything better. But Jack became enthusiastic:

“‘What a beauty, he remarked.

“‘That’s The Rat, I answered.

“‘A beauty, he resumed, enthusiastically. ‘A perfect speci-men. Can’t you see it? Beautifully molded, young, full of life; the cautious tread of an animal and perfect symmetry in every limb.”

“As a matter of fact, The Rat’ possessed a face that became a fighter accustomed to taking the short end of the purse. He was homely — his face was, but Jack London looked and saw beauty in the perfection of his naked body. To me he was ‘The Rat’ and he was homely; to Jack he was ‘a beauty.’ He had seen beauty where I had missed it. Perhaps that is one of the secrets of his success — his ability to see more than the rest of us, to pick out the beauty from the drab.

“The fight over, I asked Jack to write me a brief account of the show. He agreed, but his 150 or 200 words were about ‘The Rat.’ His story, signed ‘By Jack London,’ was published in the Oakland Herald. The one story led to others. London yearned for the ringside seats, not because of any ambition to be ‘up in front,’ but because from the ringside he could have an unobstructed view of the ring, could watch every blow, see everything that took place. And so we made a deal, I to supply a ringside seat for each show and London to write a signed story regarding the show, or some feature of it. This continued three or four months and the Jack London stories became big features, features that are undoubtedly to-day prized by many old-time fighters, too old now to enter the padded arena, but proud that Jack London wrote about them.”

In addition to all else, he dashed off requested “stories” for The Examiner, one of which was “The Great Socialist Vote Explained” a similar article going to Wilshire’s Magazine. Many an evening was filled with a reading or a lecture at this club and that. One night he talked at the Home Club of Oakland, on Japan ; on another, he spoke at the Nile Club, in acknowledgment of an honorary membership; he read to the New Era Club, the men’s league of the Methodist Church, from “The People of the Abyss”; “The Call of the Wild” of course was often asked for; and whenever Mr.

Bamford sent out invitations to a Ruskin Club dinner, Jack was expected to be on the program. At one dinner he gave them "The Class Struggle," and again "The Scab." Both these papers were later collected in "War of the Classes," proof-sheets of which in the spring he sent me for correction. In among Jack's correspondence with me is laid away a little handwritten sheet from which he made a statement to the Ruskin Club of his Socialistic position:

"I am a socialist, first, because I was born a proletarian and early discovered that for the proletariat socialism was the only way out; second, ceasing to be a proletarian and becoming a parasite (an artist parasite, if you please), I discovered that socialism was the only way out for art and the artist."

The Ruskin Club several times mentioned was composed of what might be termed the intellectual aristocracy of the socialists about the Bay. Its father and moving spirit was Professor Frederick Irons Bamford, "the lion-hearted one," Jack lovingly called him, for despite an agonizingly supersensitive nature he was made of the stuff of martyrs. And to Comrade Lyon Jack one evening observed: "Bamford is the only man in the Ruskin Club who makes me feel small." The Club would meet here and there, at irregular intervals, say at Piedmont Park Clubhouse, or the Hotel Metropole of "Martin Eden" fame. Notable were these affairs, often in honor of big men in the movement, as well as in honor of men whom the Club strove to convert to its banner.

He would even go out of the Bay region to lecture, perhaps to San José where, as guest of Professor Henry Meade Bland, he addressed the State Normal; or to Vallejo where ashore from the Spray he had made friends; once or twice to Stockton, making headquarters with Johannes Reimers. One of Mr. Reimers' sons found himself abruptly unpopular with his teachers because of his father's firebrand socialist guest; a circumstance in which Jack's quick natural regret was tempered by the reflection: "That young fellow is the stuff that opposition will make a man of!" Perhaps I have not mentioned that Jack never attended any lectures except his own. "I do not waste my time listening to lectures," he put it. "I'd rather read. I get more for myself, without the personality of the speaker coming between. And I cover more ground." The following, from another's pen, seems to expess what Jack meant: "To attend a motion picture play is to be primitive; to listen to an orator is to be a cave man; to read is to be civilized!"

In a vast ledger, clipping-book of 1904, pasted by his children's mother and Eliza Shepard, I find several humorous newspaper squibs upon Jack's being made a member of the Bohemian Club despite his soft-collared silk shirt and other ineradicable preferences. Indeed, this was not the first capitulation of clubdom to his apparel. And the press was often the reverse of reliable, as in the case of a certain affair in Jack's honor given by the exclusive feminine Ebell Club of Oakland, when, it is to this day firmly believed by newspaper readers, he lectured in a red flannel shirt. I have Jack's word that outside of those brilliant Klondike undergarments, and possibly while stoking a steamship passage, never in his whole existence did he affect scarlet flannel. When he did don woolens at all, as say at sea, it was of navy-blue. Even his trusty sweater,

though as described in my Prologue he early wore it in making social calls on his bicycle, never appeared upon the platform. A white, soft shirt, with flowing tie, worn with a black, sack-coated suit, was his evening dress.

Handling the item of Jack London's entrance into the Bohemian Club, one San Francisco sheet, The Wasp, avoided the humorous note to such a virulent extent as to defeat its ends. Being by all counts the most venomous slam in all the scrapbooks, it is too comical not to quote entire — especially in view of the fact that at about the date of its publication a portion of "The Call of the Wild" had been incorporated into a text-book on English used in the University of California, forerunner of others of his books to be adjudged "classics" by that institution:

"Jack London's Shirt Vindicated.

"The Bohemian Club has relented toward Jack London's negligee shirt and taken the novelist into membership — honorary membership at that. Why honorary, I cannot say. Certainly, it is not on the strength of Mr. London's 'The Call of the Wild,' which deserves to take rank as an average Sunday supplement story in a yellow newspaper. Neither can it be his 'Sea Wolf' that has raised him into a niche in the Bohemian Temple of Honor beside Charles Warren Stoddard, Henry Irving, and Joaquin Miller. The Wasp would be only too glad to help in placing laurels on the brow of Mr. London if he deserved them, but he must furnish better evidence of his literary quality before this journal will assist in decorating him. The Wasp decorates as masters no apprentices whose work is more conspicuous for its blemishes than its finish. I have said that Mr. Jack London's 'Call of the Wild' belongs to the Sunday supplement order. His 'Sea Wolf' is better adapted as a serial for the Coast Seamen's Journal and the habitues of the 'Fair Wind' and the 'Blue Anchor' saloons on the city front than for the shelves of libraries or the tables of reading rooms frequented by people of even superficial culture. It lacks every essential of a thoroughly good novel except nice binding, careful printing, and excellent illustrations. The best that can be said of it is that it is a poor and clumsy imitation of the new Russian school of tramp literature, which has given to the world a series of novels dealing with the scum of humanity, with brutal frankness. When one has waded through 'The Sea Wolf' by a laborious effort the conviction is irresistible that the author shows more fitness for the post of second mate of a whaler than a leader of the great army of imaginative scribblers."

While on the theme, I might say in passing that Jack London was not at any period a zealous clubman. He belonged to no large club bodies otherwise than the Bohemian; and the famous rooms in San Francisco saw him little and at prolonged intervals, when he chanced to be in the neighborhood for some other purpose. After the Great Earthquake and Fire, the new clubrooms and the Sultan Turkish Baths were rebuilt in close proximity. We often, Jack and I, finished off a theater night at the Baths, but first he would drop in at the Club for poker or pedro or bridge, and I can still hear his drowsy-happy voice over the Baths telephone from the men's floor, telling me of his luck — for the voice was sure to be happy from his pleasure in the game, be luck good or ill. And whenever feasible, our world-wanderings led homeward in midsummer, that

he might spend at least one week of High Jinks at Bohemian Grove, situated but a few miles from the Ranch. For he dreaded foregoing the marvelous annual Grove Play, words and music, acting and staging, all done by members of the Club only.

January, 1905, was an especially full month. The first week saw Jack in Los Angeles, visiting Cloudesley Johns in the quaint rambling home at 500 North Soto Street, where he reveled in the companionship of his friend s family. The grandmother, Mrs. Rebecca Spring, was Jack's particular joy. She was one of California s most remarkable women, friend of Margaret Fuller, Emerson, Holmes, Longfellow; and she subsequently died in dissatisfaction with Life, because Life cheated her by a few short weeks of attaining her centenary.

He also visited the Mathers in Pasadena, for the daughter of the house, Miss Katherine, had been a fellow passenger on the Siberia to Japan. And of course he attended the yearly winter Rose Carnival of her city. This vacation, like his life in Oakland, was without repose of spirit or body — rush, rush from daybreak to even-fall, and for the best hours of the night. While in Los Angeles, he spoke for the Socialists, who rented the Simpson Auditorium for the occasion. Miss Constance L. Skinner, poet and historian, another member of the Johns' fascinating household, who evoked Jack's admiration and regard, ably reported the lecture, which was on the subject of "Revolution," for the Los Angeles Examiner. Strangely enough, the radicals of the "City of Angels," when publishing their favorite picture of Jack, replaced the sweater by a formal suit and collar, drawn quite to order, beneath which Jack scratched a disgusted comment.

His introduction at that meeting was not to his liking, according to his comrade J. B. Osborne, of Oakland: "The Chairman introduced him as a ripe scholar, a profound philosopher, a literary genius and the foremost man of letters in America. . . . When London arose, dressed in good clothes but wearing a soft shirt, he said:

"Comrade Chairman and Fellow Workers: I was not flattered by all the encomiums heaped upon me by the chairman, for the reason that before people had given me any of these titles which the chairman so lavishly credits me, I was working in a cannery, a pickle factory, had my application in with Murray and Ready for common labor, was a sailor before the mast, and worked months at a time looking for work in the ranks of the unemployed; and it is the proletarian side of my life that I revere the most and to which I will cling as long as I live."

Once more in his home town, Jack set others than the County of Alameda by the ears by consenting to an oft-repeated request from the President of the University of California, Dr. Benjamin Ide Wheeler (in 1919, Emeritus), to address the students in Harmon Gymnasium. And "choose your own subject — anything at all," Jack was left to consult his fancy. Now was his big chance to let loose a thunderbolt in the sacred groves, and he armed for the fray.

The day was the 20th of January. Humming across the campus from North Berkeley in the morning sunlight, fresh from an hour with my piano teacher, Mrs. Fred Gutterson, herself pupil of Bauer and Leschetizsky and Carreno, I turned westerly toward the

"Gym" where I had danced so many an evening away. And who should come stepping along with a smile in his eyes but our young friend, who explained that he had come out early in order to think quietly upon what he was going to say and how he was going to say it.

At the entrance we parted, I to become one of the several thousand, students and citizens, who packed the huge elongated octagon, Jack London to take his seat with the faculty convened upon the platform. President Wheeler presented the speaker, and the speaker went into action without preamble, head high, eyes grave and dark, voice challenging as he rapped out the short crisp sentences:

"I received a letter the other day. It was from a man in Arizona, It began, 'Dear Comrade.' It ended, 'Yours for the Revolution.' I replied to the letter, and my letter began, 'Dear Comrade.' It ended 'Yours for the Revolution.'"

The house thereupon settled to listen spellbound to the strangest statement of facts and opinions ever enunciated within the college walls. Dr. Wheeler, conventional embodiment of what by all tradition the head of a great university should be, sat aghast at what he had done. But it must be said that he was game; for when Jack, on the stroke of noon, realizing he was over his time, paused on tiptoe and asked, "Shall I stop?" the President came back hurriedly and with perfect courtesy: "No, go on — go on."

The last words of unequivocal indictment of society's mismanagement of society rang out clear from the upraised young face that had been imperially stern throughout, "The revolution is here, now. Stop it who can!" The audience, from whatever mixture of emotions, resounded in mighty applause. This was followed by a rouse from the Glee Club, composed for the renowned ex-student of the college. Meanwhile the faculty crowded about him, some in protest, some in curiosity, all with keen interest from one motive or another. One humorous incident crept in: Jack in the course of his indictment had attacked the antiquated methods common to institutions of learning. When he stepped from the rostrum, according to one who stood near, "Professor Charles Mills Gayley greeted him and congratulated him upon his literary success. The author during their conversation reiterated his opinion of the deficiencies in teaching methods. He said:

"'Dr. Gayley, permit me to make the criticism that English is not being taught in the right way. You are giving the students for their textbooks such antiquated authors as Macaulay, Emerson and others of the same school. What you need in your course is a few of the more modern types of literature — — .

"Here Dr. Gayley interrupted with a dry smile:

"'Perhaps you are not aware, Mr. London, that we are using your own "Call of the Wild" as a textbook in the University?'"

Jack surrendered, laughing with the others.

The evening papers and their morning associates treated the lecture with unexpected leniency. But when the press in general (Jack meantime repeating the speech at every opportunity) had had time to catch its breath, there was nothing too vicious

nor unfair that could be printed of his utterances. There were exceptions, to be sure, the Oakland Tribune being one of those which remained loyal to "our own Jack." But the majority deliberately distorted his words, and robbed of its context the quoted phrase "To Hell with the Constitution" — notorious exclamation made by Sherman Bell, when that capitalistic leader of troops for the employers in Colorado, during the recent scandalous labor war that had raged there, was reproved for riding roughshod over the Constitution. Jack was held up as a dangerous anarchist — the same platitudinous old charge of the capitalist press against the socialist. And carefully editors refrained from embodying in their columns the statement that the social revolution was, as announced by the speaker, "to be fought, not with bombs, but with votes." Nor did President Wheeler escape his share of criticism for having allowed so incendiary a character to sully the choice air of Berkeley. Again he was game, if a little condescending as befitted the dignity of his years and position, and the closing sentence in this excerpt from his letter to The Argonaut held him inviolate as concerned misapprehension of his own views:

"I think you ought to know that we never stipulate or inquire concerning the subject a speaker is to discuss at such a meeting. We intend to ask only such to speak as have by achievement earned the personal right to be heard. We seek the man and not the subject. I conceive it to be of highest value for students to meet and hear men who have honorably wrought and done in various fields. I introduce them to the students, and rarely, if ever, mention any subject. Jack London is a former student of the university, and has surely won an honorable distinction in the field of letters. And, after all, is it best for us to start an Index of tabooed subjects? One way to deal with a hard boiling tea-kettle is to take off the lid."

One paper, however, noted that Jack London, socialist, affected illustrious company, naming amongst others, H. G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw.

Some of the students of the old Oakland High wanted Jack to lecture, but promptly went up against the bars shut by Superintendent of Schools McClymonds and Principal Pond. Also, was he not a divorced man, inimical to the sanctity of hearth and home? How pitifully trivial and pettish all this hullabaloo of little editors squeaks amidst the slashing, smashing events following the World War!

On the 29th of January Jack read "The Tramp" — another "War of the Classes" article, at Socialist Headquarters in Oakland. And a few weeks afterward I wrote him:

"Probably you already know it, but I'11 repeat it anyway — that following your lecture at the University a few of the students organized a socialist club. This was announced at the Ruskin Club dinner last Friday evening. I know it will please you — I remember what you said to me the day of your lecture: that you would be satisfied if perhaps only a half dozen of the students were impressed.

This club was the nucleus of the subsequent Intercollegiate Socialist Society, of which Jack London was elected the first President.

Near the end of January, he went one evening to see Blanche Bates at the Macdonough Theatre in Oakland, in "The Darling of the Gods." Turning over in his mind

the suitability of Miss Bates to the character of Freda Moloof in his own play "Scorn of Women," he attended three consecutive performances from front-row vantage, the eager-eyed boy studying the young star carefully to this end. And naturally, by the time he had schemed an introduction, called upon her at the Hotel Metropole, and given a dinner in her honor, the papers had blazoned their plighted troth — the vigorous denials of both parties rendering new headlines in the next issues, and causing no end of mirth to the pair as well as the public.

It was not until the first week in February, 1905, that Jack and Cloudesley got the Spray up-river. Just before sailing from Oakland City Wharf, Jack accepted the socialist nomination for Mayor of Oakland. On the same ticket were Austin Lewis for City Attorney, with J. B. Osborne councilman for third ward. And who should be nominee for Mayor on the Independent Ticket, but John London's old friend John L. Davie? On the morning of election, one local sheet had it: "All the nominees for Mayor, with the exception of Jack London, socialist candidate, were conspicuous about the polls. And Jack polled 981 votes at that. Knowing how personally distasteful the holding of public office would be to him, I once asked: "What would you do if you should accidentally be elected to some of these political positions you let yourself in for?"

"There's not the least chance, my dear," he replied; then realizing he had not answered my question, he laughed, "I wouldn't let my name be used if I thought there was the slightest possibility of winning. If I did by chance get elected, I guess I'd run away to sea or somewhere with you!"

Meantime, I had taken to my room with an abscess in the left ear, made doubly torturing by neuralgia. For it is a nipping winter one may experience on Sonoma Mountain. The trouble was assumably due to long hours swimming and diving in the Oakland baths on cold days, and more especially a certain oft-repeated, twenty-two-foot jump in which Jack had coached me. Such an anomaly as unhealth on the part of "the Cheery One," as he liked to call me, was sufficient to make Jack desert the sloop somewhere along Petaluma Creek, leaving his friend and Manyoungi aboard, and footing it to the nearest railway for Glen Ellen. Reaching Wake Robin Lodge after nightfall, he stood for long contemplative minutes at the low casement of the redwooded living room, gazing in at the unwonted spectacle of said Cheery One supine upon a couch, her head swathed in warm bandages.

Two days he remained, reading aloud to me by the hour; and I can vouch that no one ever knew tenderer nurse. So improved was I that on the second evening I rose hungry for the first time in weeks, and joined my nurse in a stealthy raid upon Auntie's sweet-smelling pantry. Returning to the big fireplace with our spoils of honey and biscuits and sun-dried figs, we feasted and giggled like truant schoolfellows. Truly, in our long years together, so few are the memories of irresponsible tranquil hiatuses in Jack's driven habit, that they stand forth in relief apparently out of all proportion to their importance. Not so, however; they showed him capable of the purest en-joyment of that sheer nonsense which relaxes a brain ordinarily over-conscious.

I recall an uproarious afternoon a few months later, when we two spent hours in a hammock under the laurels, doing nothing more profitable than manufacturing the most absurdly banal of limericks. Again, years afterward, I see in memory the twain of us, replete with picnic luncheon and good nature, prone upon the green outer declivity of a fern-lined crater in Hawaii euphoniously styled Puuhuuluhulu. We peered over-edge into the giddy emerald cup and planned, in very extravagance of lazy foolishness, all the details of a country home in the pit, even to an adjustable glass roof against tropic showers!

Pain and house-confinement were happily mitigated by Jack's sympathy, both during his visit and thereafter, when such notes as these drifted to me from the Spray's pleasant course up the Sacramento river:

"Rio Vista, Feb. 10, 1905.

"I think continually of you, lying there through the long days and longer nights, and I look forward almost as keenly as you, I am sure, for the blessed time when you will be up and around and your old self again.

"Got here last night. The river is booming. Flood tide is not felt at all. Current runs down all the time. Expect to go to Walnut Grove and then down through Georgiana Slough to the San Joaquin and up to Stockton."

"Rio Vista, Feb. 11, 1905.

"Your short note just received. I am haunted right along by seeing you lying there, the bandage around your head and the cloth over your eyes. I do so look for improvement, and yet the north wind is blowing to-day which is bad for you. Do let me know every bit of improvement as soon as it comes.

"I have nothing to write in the way of news. Am working hard. Did 1000 words to-day. We have been here two days now, and I have not yet been ashore, though the town is interested in my existence. Have already 3 invitations to dinner, etc., and a launch is expected off in a few minutes with admirers (!). Also, Brown came aboard with a bunch of violets in his collar, sent, so Cloudesley avers, by the prettiest girl in California.

"Guess I'll take up one dinner invite to-night."

This mention of Brown calls to mind that Jack had become unexpectedly possessed of "twa dogs," one, a valuable lost Chow who presented himself at the front door, and tarried entirely at home for some weeks, when his rightful owner was discovered. The other was an Alaskan wolfdog, a true "husky," brown-and-white of furry coat and fine of brush, with slant, watchful eyes and pointed ears, and a limp in the off hind-leg that was eloquent of sled and trail. His master, an old Klondiker, had lately died; and though strangers to Jack London, the relatives asked him if he would accept "Brown." Jack was willing, but the animal had other views, and sought every loophole to escape from the little yard at the rear of the flat (which sometimes was the ring for spirited bouts with the gloves), or from the front door when he was entertained within, to return to his loved one's house. Jack, after trying every cajolement to win him over, and going himself or sending his nephew or Manyoungi countless times to retrieve the

estray, swore roundly that when Brown again ran away he could stay. But the dog had been making his own adjustment, and the next fruitless pilgrimage to the old home was his last. From the second story window Jack saw him cantering cheerfully back, and bounded downstairs to welcome him right comradely. Thenceforth Brown attached himself with the mute adoration of a soul disillusioned of all else in the world. Mute? Why, that dear lonely dog-fellow of our first married year was never heard to bark except upon two occasions when he thought Jack imperilled by a fractious horse. One day in the summer I asked: “Now, what do you suppose Brown Wolf would do, if his old master should suddenly pop up beside you?”

“A story right there — don’t breathe another word for a minute,” Jack flashed at me, scribbling like mad on a notepad, his deep mouth-corners turned up pleasedly with the scent of a new motif. The tale “Brown Wolf,” in collection “Love of Life,” was the sequel of the incident. That pleased expression recalls that always when lost in his morning’s work, no matter how reluctantly begun, there was a half-smile lurking about his lips the while he bent concentrated over the broad tablet upon which the inky-wet characters sprawled and sprawled.

Summer at Glen Ellen

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THE Spray’s ramblings were to lead aside into Napa River to the pretty city of the same name that lies in the next inland valley to Sonoma. Here Jack was to visit the Winships, friends made on the voyage to Japan; and he sent me word that he would ride across the hills to spend several days with us at Wake Robin Lodge. He arrived on February 12, a showery Sunday, astride a harassing livery hack, both horse and horseman much the worse for the twenty miles. Jack wore a nerve-racked look, and my Aunt and I were solicitous, although we avoided advertising the same. The boy was in veritable distress, never quiet for a moment. His great-pupiled eyes were haunted with a hopeless weariness, and glassy as from fever. He talked very hard, as if against time, or in fear of silence. In the evening, as we clustered about the fireplace, my Aunt asked:

“Jack, my dear, why don’t you get out of the city for a while, bring your work, and Manyoungi to look after your wants, take a little cottage here and rest and work far away from excitement and people?”

The eyes he raised to her face were as of some creature hunted. He shifted uneasily, almost as if embarrassed, and the corners of his mouth drooped like a child’s on the verge of tears. Yet when he replied it was with a tinge of impatience, though a pitiful tiredness lay under the tone: “Oh, Mother Mine — thank you. . . You’re kind. . . But. . . but I think that the very quiet would drive me crazy.”

It was a wail to be left alone in his impotence, and no further reference was made to the matter until the night before he departed.

The only recurrence of the temperamental joyance that was a large part of his nature was when he related the Spray's experience. For no sadness of soul could ever rob Jack London of his native delight in a boat. In relation to this very trip, I am tempted to quote from "Small-Boat Sailing" (in "The Human Drift"):

"After all, the mishaps are almost the best part of small-boat sailing. Looking back, they prove to be punctuations of joy. There are enough surprises and mishaps in a three-days cruise in a small boat to supply a great ship on the ocean for a full year. I remember taking out a little thirty-footer I had bought. In six days we had two stiff blows, and, in addition, one proper southwester and one ripsnorting southeaster. The slight intervals between these blows were dead calms. Also, in the six days, we were aground three times. Then, too, we tied up to a bank on the Sacramento river, and, grounding by an accident on the steep slope of a falling tide, nearly turned a side somersault down the bank. In a stark calm and a heavy tide in the Carquinez Straits, where anchors skate on the channel-scoured bottom, we were sucked against a big dock and smashed and bumped down a quarter of a mile of its length before we could get clear. Two hours afterward, on San Pablo Bay, the wind was piping up and we were reefing down. It is no fun to pick up a skiff adrift in a heavy sea and gale. That was our next task, for our skiff, swamping, parted both towing painters we had bent on. Before we recovered it we had nearly killed ourselves with exhaustion, and certainly had strained the sloop in every part from keelson to truck. And to cap it all, coming into our home port, beating up the narrowest part of the San Antonio Estuary, we had a shave of inches from collision with a big ship in tow of a tug." Once, during his five-days' stay, I prevailed upon him to walk up the tree-embowered mountain road that skirts Graham Creek; but, to my hidden sorrow, he appeared to have grown blind to the beauty he had so loved. His tongue ran on and on incessantly — we were discussing the English poets. It was an exquisite sunset that bathed us in its waves of colored light, and upon a green eminence I halted Jack and his speech and stretched my arm toward the valley to the east, welling to its rosy wall-summits with a purple tide of shadow from the mountain on which we stood. To an earnest query if the loveliness of the world meant nothing to him any more, he stilled for a moment, then let fall very sadly:

"I don't seem to care for anything — I'm sick, my dear. It's Nietzsche's 'Long Sickness' that is mine, I fear. This doesn't seem to be what I want. I don't know what I want. Oh, I'm sorry — I am, I am; it hurts me to hurt you so. But there's nothing for me to do but go back to the city. I don't know what the end of it will be."

During my late convalescence at Wake Robin, slowly working at the typing and word-counting of his play, "Scorn of Women," and brooding not a little over his mental condition, I had received from Jack several of Nietzsche's books, of which he had written me:

Have been getting hold of some of Nietzsche. I'll turn you loose first on his 'Genealogy of Morals' and after that, something you'll like 'Thus Spake Zarathustra."'

But I liked them all — "ate them up," as he said; and after digging through "Genealogy of Morals," "The Case of Wagner," "The Antichrist," and others, I polished off with "Zarathustra," which just happened to fill a need and accomplished more than any tonic to clear my own surcharged mental atmosphere and set my feet on the road to recovery. Here is a favorite bit I quoted to Jack: "At the foot of my height I dwell. How high my summits are? How high, no one hath yet told me. But well I know my valleys.

At Jack's side upon the grassy promontory with the west-wind in our hair, I called attention to the wholesome philosophy of Zarathustra. In return I was reminded by Jack of Nietzsche's ultimate fate. Oh, no — he was not "playing to the gallery," nor inviting sympathy to his spiritual dole. That was not his custom; he was but frankly, soul to soul, letting me know what was true of him at the time, and vouchsafing a glimpse at the worst symptom — his own uncaring attitude concerning it.

On the eve of parting I played my last stake — recurred to my Aunt's suggestion, picturing the sweetness of the spring and summer he might pass there among the redwoods by the brook that once had soothed, and the work we could accomplish. But the warning unrest leaped into his eyes and voice and he implored:

"No, no; it doesn't seem that I can. I could not stand the quiet, I tell you. I could not. It would make me mad."

"Very well, then," I gave up, with my best cheer; "the thing for you is to do what you feel you must, of course. — And we won't say any more about it."

He started, flushed, turned and looked at me. Reaching for my hand, in a hushed, changed tone that meant volumes, he breathed:

"Why — why — you're a woman in a million!"

That night he slept an unbroken eight hours, unprecedented repose for Jack at any time, and for many weeks he had been working on but three or four hours nightly — sufficient alone to account for his sorry plight.

In the morning I offered to pilot him a different way from the one he had come. It was up through Nunn's Canyon, a lovely defile out of Sonoma Valley to the east. Jack appeared pleased; in fact presented a much brighter aspect for his long night of rest, and I hoped vainly that he would have reconsidered the matter of coming to Wake Robin for the season.

Away we rode together, he and I, one of us with a heavy heart, no inkling of which was allowed to pass eyes and lips. For I felt this was the last of Jack, that he was slipping irrecoverably from us who loved and would have helped him; and, what was more grave, slipping away from himself. Flesh and blood and brain could not support much longer this race he was waging against the sum of his mental and physical vitality.

But a charm was working in him, although I think he did not know it. The morning was one of California's most blessed, a great broken blue-and-white sky showering prismatic jewels and sungold alternately. Even the jaded livery hack responded to the brightness as he vied with my golden Belle over the blossoming floor of that bird-

singing vale and up the successive rises of narrow Nunn's Canyon, where, on its rustic bridges, we crossed and recrossed the serpentine torrent a dozen times.

As we forged skyward on the ancient road that lies now against one bank, now another, the fanning ferns sprinkling our faces with rain and dew, wild-flowers nodding in the cool flaws of wind, I could see my dear man quicken and sparkle as if in spite of himself and the powers of darkness. The response to my own mood in the earth's enchantment, which had been so lamentably absent from him in the few days gone by, kept mounting and bubbling and presently was overflowing in the full measure I knew so gloriously of him. Truly, as the summit drew near, I do believe he still did not know that the crisis had been reached and passed in his Long Sickness for which the mad German philosopher had given him a name, and that he had staved off despair and death itself for many a splendid, fruitful year to come.

And now, could I credit my ears? — he was talking quite naturally with his old engaging enthusiasm, as if pursuing an uninterrupted conversation upon his intention to spend the year at Wake Robin; he would rearrange the interior of the tiny shingled cabin under the laurels and oaks, and ship up this and that piece of furniture, and such and such books, dwelling upon certain of these he wanted to read to me. What fun Manyoungi would have getting settled and keeping house; and could he, Jack, dictate his damned correspondence to me? "And say, can you, do you suppose, find me a good horse? All the riding I've ever done was what my mare Belle taught me in Manchuria, and I know I'd love riding if I had another horse as good. I've got $350.00 for the Black Cat story — could you get me a horse for that? . . . How I wish I'd had that mare sent me from Korea!" and he launched into reminiscence of her virtues.

Not by word nor look did I treat his reviving humor as if it had not been the same throughout his visit. Now was the thing — he had come over and out by some sweet miracle, I cared not what, from his valley of the shadow. Far be it from me to disturb the ferment of the magic. Out of a pleasant, sunny silence as we climbed the grade, Jack suddenly reined in and laid his hand upon my shoulder. It was one of the supreme moments of my life. I met a look deeper than thankfulness, and in my heart for ay will abide his voice from the mouth that was like a child's surprised in emotion:

"You did it all, my Mate Woman. You've pulled me out. You've rested me so. And rest was what I needed — you were right. Something wonderful has happened to me. I am all right now. Dear My Woman, you need not be afraid for me any more."

My face must have answered, for I know I said no word. Solemnly at the green height of the pass, we clasped hands and kissed good-by, solemnly, joyfully, all in one. And there was that in his eyes which brought tears to mine. But it was the happy rain of a new day, for me, for him, and my heart for one ached with the joy of it. Loath to part, Jack broke out: "Why not come on the rest of the way? No, never mind that you're not fixed up — the Winships are good sports and will welcome you with open arms."

Long we waved and waved until a descending bend into the hinterland buried him from sight, and I turned and retraced the royal road we had come together, hardly able

to contain myself. Years thence, the Winships and Cloudesley told me that another man than the Jack who had left them five days, rode in that afternoon on the same dispirited steed. But Cloudesley knew; once they were aboard the Spray he was told of the miracle.

Winding up his voyage mid-March in Oakland, Jack discovered through Dr. Nicholson that he was suffering from a tumor consequent upon an old injury he had thought of little moment, and which should be removed as soon as he could be put in proper condition. The red-cheeked physician had him to bed at the flat, on a diet, and "no cigarettes, young man, for a week." The "young man" compromised, of course — or was it the practitioner who compromised?

I bought a rose-pink lawn frock for his pleasure, and went daily to help a very gay patient with his piled up correspondence, dictated from high pillows. After the operation, when I called at the hospital, Jack told me he was greatly relieved by the report that his tumor had been pronounced non-malignant, and the assurance there would be no relapse — an opinion that time corroborated. "I wonder," the bedridden philosopher speculated with a half-abashed grin, "how much of my intellectual 'Long Sickness' could have been traceable to this damned thing draining my system?" Then suddenly grave, he rejoined: "No, my dear — I won't belittle the real diagnosis. I know, and you know, that when the sudden healing of that malady took place, it was before I even knew I had a physical ailment. . . . My dear, my dear."

Back at the little flat, he resumed his dictations, and our readings progressed. During these days Jack made the better acquaintance of Tennyson, and, for the first time, "Idylls of the King," never ceasing to mourn that he had not "grown up with them" and their pure glamour of poesy. "And I never knew the gnomes and fairies as you did, either, to my loss," he regretted.

With boyish raptures he looked forward to summer at Wake Robin, and once interrupted himself in the middle of a sentence to say: "Oh, for the days when you can play, play for me!" One warm late afternoon, listening for the end of a pause in his dictation, something caused me to raise my eyes to Jack's face. His thread of thought lost, he had forgotten all else in the world but the wonder of loving:

"I'm quite mad for you, my dear, my dear," he repeated in the rare golden voice that returned in shaken moments. "Indeed, quite mad — with all the old madness of before the Long Sickness. And so we poor humans, weak and fallible, and prone to error, condemn ourselves liars, for I would not have believed I could be so mad twice!"

Then and then only, was I quite assured that he was saved to himself. But perhaps, when all is said, the best influence I had for him was the repose he said I brought — a repose that otherwise life seemed to have denied. Often I was reminded by him of the first story in which he employed any portion of his many-sided love for me. It was "Negore the Coward," last of the "Love of Life" collection, and will be found at the ending in one of Jack London's masterly depictions of death:

"And as even the memories dimmed and died in the darkness that fell upon him, he knew in her arms the fulfilment of all the ease and rest she had promised him. And

as black night wrapped around him, his head upon her breast, he felt a great peace steal about him, and he was aware of the hush of many twilights and the mystery of silence."

I have before me the letter of the editor to whom the author first submitted this manuscript. And he comments with surprise and delight upon the intangible "new touch" in Jack's work.

In the fly-leaf of "Love of Life" stands his inscription, of date November 23, 1909:

"Dear Mate-Woman: —

"There is within these pages a story you wot of well, wherein, long ago, I told of my love for you, and, more and better, of all that you and your love meant, and mean, to me."

My friend recovered rapidly — so rapidly that the surgeon was horrified to hear from the irrepressible's a smilingly-rebellious, smoke-wreathed lips that he intended to ride his new horse as soon as ever he got to Glen Ellen, which would be on the 18th of April. The first time he left the house, was to walk around the corner to look over the beautiful animal which I brought for him to see. For I had bought the horse — Washoe Ban, blue-blooded Thoroughbred, his veins of fire throbbing through a skin of purest chestnut-gold. He was owned by Dr. H. N. Miner of Berkeley, and I had ridden him a number of times in the past. Two hundred and fifty dollars of Jack's Black Cat prize went for Ban, and I rode him from Berkeley to Oakland, thence by ferry to San Francisco, river steamer to Petaluma, where I slept, and next day sat the incomparable, exhaustless creature the twenty-two undulating green miles to Glen Ellen.

Jack further reminded Dr. Nicholson that before he spurned the haunts of men he had given his word to deliver "Revolution" in Shattuck Hall, Berkeley, on the 14th, and at the Alhambra Theatre in San Francisco on the 21st; also a talk at a Ruskin Club dinner to the Social Progress Club of the University of California. It was at one Ruskin dinner that year he "made the members take notice" most unexpectedly. Mr. Bamford had charged each guest to be ready with a definition of "Happiness," To me Jack said: "What's yours going to be?" And I: "I haven't thought it out yet. What's yours?" "A coöperative commonwealth!" he grinned. "I'd like to speak up with 'Just loving,'" I laughed. "Great!" shouted Jack, "couldn't be better. Tell you what: I'll trade with you." "Done," said I. And at the banquet, upon the heels of Anna Strunsky's "Happiness is adjustment," my borrowed witticism raised the expected applause. "And yours?" Mr. Bamford called upon Jack London:

"Just loving," that wicked person breathed softly, his long-lashed eyelids demurely drooped.

A blank silence was broken by a smothered "Just WHAT?" from Mrs. A. A. Dennison, and Jack, raising his eyes, looked calmly about the company with a charming "What-are-you-going-to-do-about-it" expression as he repeated, "Just loving."

In passing, I want to relate, as nearly as possible in his own words, an occurrence that crystallized Jack London in certain personal habits more than any other self-argument. He put it something this way:

"You remember Dr. Nicholson? He was a magnificent specimen of a man, you will agree? Tall, straight, with the beauty of the athlete — girl's complexion and all that; not a vicious habit — drink, nor tobacco — not an injurious leaning. And he warned me that this and that vice of mine would ruin my health in a short time. Well, listen: Only a few short months after he talked so seriously to me, he died in screaming agony — rheumatism of the heart or some such horribly excruciating thing. Probably he had exposed himself in his practice; I don't know. But what I do know, is, that there are all sorts of bad habits in this world, and he must have landed on one of them peculiar to his way of life, or it landed on him. Cigarettes, or overwork — I tell you it's all one; one's as bad as the other; and I'll bet you even money that cigarettes don't kill me!" A man's argument, verily, and one that supersedes man's finest logic.

Washoe Ban and my Belle were housed amicably in a little shack-barn on a small property across the road from Wake Robin Lodge. This was the Caroline Kohler Ranch, familiarly known as the Fish Ranch because it had once been the scene of an ambitious failure in fish-hatchery. Jack had painstakingly considered the type of my Australian saddle, but decided upon a McClellan tree that we found in San Francisco, which had been fitted with a horn. Ultimately, however, he adopted my model. And he was almost as good as his challenge to Dr. Nicholson, for it was but a few days after his arrival on the 18th that he actually mounted and took his first lesson in Ban's easy, rocking-horse stride. I had yet to learn the man's giant recuperative power, and was fully as apprehensive as the man of medicine, but made no protest.

Not long afterward, at a request from Oakland, he bought a mare and surrey for his children and their mother. The animal later developed an incorrigible balk, and the family tiring of this kind of recreation, Jack brought the whole outfit up-country, where the mare came eventually to do light work and to negotiate the mountain trails under saddle. I am minded of the day she inconveniently lay down and rolled with her rider, none other than Johannes Reimers, in a pestiferous hornet-nest in the grass, as a means of escape from the stinging.

Jack's abrupt relinquishment of the city occasioned considerable press comment, with which I was connected, but even The Examiner failed to command any statement from either of us relating to matrimonial intentions. Jack informed the paper's representatives that when he had anything to say in the matter, he would give them the "scoop," and with this they had to be content. As for his new choice of residence he said to reporters: "I have forsaken the cities forever; winter and summer I shall live at Glen Ellen."

Would to heaven-upon-earth that every mating pair of men and women could know the privilege of the illuminating sort of experience which was Jack's and mine this six months before marriage. In the course of strenuous work and play of whatsoever nature, by our wedding date in November there was little of which we did not have a fair inkling as concerned each other's temperament and idiosyncrasies.

For the most part the study was smooth sailing, though at times beset by snags. Once, I shall never forget, it came to light that I had been accused by friends of

Jack's, whom I had believed my own, of disloyalty and unveracity. With his invincible courage in seeking and gaging truth, he put even his Love impartially on the stand. To be other than sanely judicial even in so intimate a situation was contrary to his nature and method. True to what he called his "damned arithmetic," he undertook to thresh out the difficulty. Oh, he staked his love and his proudest judgment upon my guiltlessness; and, having satisfied himself, he set his every faculty to demonstrating to my detractors, if he perished in the attempt, that they were wrong on every count. All this not so much for personal gratification as for the pleasure of confounding them with my innocence and his faith. To be sure, he had taken the chance in a million that I prove false to his firm idea of my integrity. I met his infinitely sincere eyes on that, and laid at his disposal all that I had, and was. Amongst other expedients at my hand, a little pocket diary routed the most important charge that had been preferred. Well, indeed; but better still, when Jack, excitedly fishing up his own notebook for the same year, found it tallied with mine. Other evidence dove-tailed to his entire enlightenment of heart and brain, and I stood unassailable to our mutual joy, and the vindication of his "damned arithmetic."

"If you only knew — you can't possibly know — " he burst out one day near the end of the discussion by mail, "what it means to me to have some one fighting with me shoulder to shoulder, fighting my own fight, in my own way!"

When it was all over and certain apologies demanded by him had been written me by the unhappy complainants:

"Let me tell you something," he said. "This matter was broached to me sometime ago, before I went on the Spray trip. I want to show you a bit of my philosophy, in general as regards mankind, in particular as concerns you alone and in relation to me:

"When friends, ostensibly for my own good, came to me with a tale about you, I told them, first, that it was a pity they should soil their hands in gutter politics; and then I earnestly tried to help them know me a little better, as a matter of pride if you will, by telling them that even were these absurd things true — and I would stake my best judgment and my soul that they were not — they would make no possible difference to me. I said to them: 'I love Charmian, not for anything she may or may not have done, but for what I find her, for what she is to me. I know human beings pretty well — I make my living through my understanding of them — and I know Charmian better than to credit these calumnies. But the point is: Charmian might have murdered her father and mother, and subsisted solely upon little roast orphans — it is what I know of her, now, what she now is, that counts with me.'"

"And really," he once confessed in our married years, "I could almost have wished you'd had a past like my own, or worse, if you'd been just the same as when I knew I loved you. It would have made you seem almost greater to me — I mean, if you could have come up through degrading experiences that did not degrade but left you as I have always seen you!" Since there was no way of actually manifesting how he would have regarded me in this suppositions premise, the question remained a moot one.

He always pleaded not guilty to the passion of jealousy, despising and deriding it as a low, bestial trait. With an exceptional capacity for tolerance toward almost every human weakness save disloyalty, he could not harbor any sympathy with that calamity of the ages, sheer animal jealousy. “Should you turn from me to another man, if I could not make you happy, I’d give that man to you on a silver platter my dear,” he would declare, “and say ‘Bless you, my children.’ — But I don’t believe I could send you on a silver platter to a man — quite!”

What better place than this, further to interpret Jack London’s relation toward the element feminine? I, who have known the clasp of his soul, known him at his highest, can yet withdraw from that passionate fellowship and regard his masculinity as a whole. Asking my reader to bear in mind earlier manifestations of his philosophy and emotions toward the little woman of his adolescence, I shall enlarge upon his attitude.

He was not prone to allow women to interfere with the business of life and adventure. He liked to think of himself as in Augustus’s class — that women could not make nor mar. In short, he was not a man who lost his head easily. “God’s own mad lover dying on a kiss” was an appealing line to his sense of poesy; but Jack preferred to live, rather than die, on that kiss! Love, in brief, should be a warm and normal passion that made for fuller living. At one period, after soaking himself in the vast accumulation of erotic literature, pro and con, he told me, with a shake of his fine shoulders, that he felt himself lucky to have been born so rightly-balanced, that no abnormalities of his early rough days, nor contact with decadences of super-civilization, had touched him to his hurt. The alienists in-terested him intellectually, but he was nicely avert to perversion of any stripe.

I had supposed that there would be little of the proprietary in the regard of so broad-minded an individualist. One of my most vital surprises was to find that Jack was as delightfully medieval as many another lover in this world when it came, say, to matters financial. Having been myself independent, and believing that he would take this into consideration, I looked for him to make no matter of a separate bank account, or at least the “allowance” loved of wives, that I might not suffer a sense of bondage. But no — like the bulk of men his was the pleasure of spending his own money upon the “one small woman.” Any other arrangement was frowned upon — at the suggestion a frost seemed to spread over his face. And, seeing that it was he, I found the bondage sweet.

Jack charmed women of all classes; and while he held a reserved opinion as to the intellectuality of the average female brain, he could not abide a stupid woman. His adventurous mentality had made him pursue women in curiosity, and learn them too well for his own good. He was of two distinct minds about them, and swung from one to the other: their innate goodness and staunchness commanded his worship, while their pitiable frailty and smallness wrung his spirit. “Pussy! Pussy!” I can hear him purr in the ear of any backbiting among his friends. Women, weighed by his biological judgment, represented the Eternal Enemy, and he liked the line:

“Her narrow feet are rooted in the ground,”

from Arthur Symons's "The Dance of the Daughters of Herodias." Yet this very concept, not always voiced without contempt, must have given rise to his pronouncement in "John Barleycorn": "Women are the true conservators of the race."

He has been heard to speak of woman as "the immodest sex." And "Men are far more modest than women!" he would step into the heated air of argument, bringing down storms upon his unrepentant head. But he considered that he had several blazoned names to bear him out, among them Jean Paul, who said: "Love increases man's delicacy, and lessens woman's" and Bernard Shaw: "If women were as fastidious as men, morally and physically, there would be an end of the race!"

I must admit that I have seen him play down, not always up, to women and their vanity; but to his credit and theirs, he never left them long deceived. And he would not try to deceive those who spoke his own language, though he made it extremely difficult for them to understand his.

He had struggled against misogyny, winning out be cause he had had experience enough with exceptional women of conscience and brain to keep him healthy in viewpoint. Besides, in the last extremity, he was a one-woman man, glorying in the discovery of this. In my copy of "Before Adam," in 1907 he wrote: "I have read Schopenhauer and Weininger, and all the German misogynists, and still I love you. Such is my chemism — our chemism, rather." He showed an actual reverence for the woman who "informed" her beauty, or, better, her lack of beauty, who waged incessant warfare upon her imperfections, who wrought excellently with the material at her hand.

Jack owned to annoyance that the public denied he could write convincingly about women. "And yet," he would say, "I know them too well to write too well about them! I'd never get past the editor and the censor!"

Despite that he would often merely appear to take women at their own valuation and act as if he gave them credit for logic, he was possessed of a fine sense of chivalry. As instance: Once, bound to a foreign country, war-corresponding, a girl friend, who had received a similar commission, informed him that they would be sailing on the same boat. Jack was in despair because he knew, from knowledge of her want of practicality, that she would be on his already full hands. "What would you have done?" I asked him once. He reflected, working those brows that were like a sea-bird's wings: "I'd have had to marry her before I got through with it, I suppose!" "But," I expostulated, "but you loved another woman!" "Surely," he rejoined; "but what is a man to do? Her reputation would have been shattered so I say, what can a man do in such circumstances, but marry the girl!"

Women have loved Jack London, aye, and died for love of him. And I can imagine, had he been situated so that it would have been possible, that his chivalry and sweetheartedness could have led him into marrying such, for their own happiness.

Once, I asked him how he had behaved himself toward the girls of yesterday, as he passed beyond them into the world that he was making his — the Lizzie Connollys, the Haydees. "I saw them occasionally," he said. "One must be kind, you know."

Little of love had he bought in his life, except in the course of laying his curiosity. A passion, with him, must be mutual, else worthless.

And so I became conversant with that "swarm of vibrating atoms" which men knew as Jack London, the youthful literary craftsman who had, as one critic put it, "Lived with storms and spaces and sunlight like a kinsman." — That was it; the dominant note of him was spaciousness, for the inflowing and out-giving of all available knowledge and feeling — the blood of adventure, physical and mental, scorching through life's channels.

"Visualization is everything for the teacher," he said, "and I love to teach, to transmit to others the ideas and impressions in my own consciousness."

It always seemed to me, observing, that while others were merely scratching the surface of events, Jack was get-ting underneath them, deeper and deeper into their significances.

Religion, as the average man knows religion, had no part in him. Spiritualism had been the belief in his childhood homes, a thing of magic and fearsomeness; but his expanding perceptions could not countenance that belief. His hope for bettering human conditions had filled depths of being which might have responded to divine philosophy. Again his norm: Somehow, we must ever build upon the concrete." Again his oft-repeated criticism rings in the ears of memory: "Will it work will you trust your life to it!"

In a little book of Ernest Untermann's, "Science and Revolution," which Jack gave me to read at that time, I come upon a sentence underscored for my benefit: "My method of investigation is that of historical materialism."

It is also to be Her narrow feet are rooted in the ground of my man that had been told and impressed upon me in the past, even by persons who should have known better or who did know better and cruelly misrepresented him. In fact, Jack forever claimed to nurse a small grievance that I should ever have been misled, no matter by whom, from my direct early conclusions upon him. I recall, however, in the old Piedmont days, that while reserving certain few uncomplimentary opinions, so ready was I to stand up to any one who made unjust remarks in his disfavor, that more than once I was accused of taking undue interest in the young celebrity.

To the exclusion of all else, I devoted myself to mastering the open book that he tried to render himself to me. Even the piano was silent except when I played for Jack, and the trips to Berkeley with my music roll became less frequent and eventually ceased, I will say to his unqualified disapproval. (He never could entertain the idea, in the long years of our brimming life, why I could not give more time to music, since he too loved it so.) I learned the eloquence of his tongue; the fine arrogance of his certitudes; convictions I came to respect for their broad wisdom; and I knew, too, and richly, the eloquence of his silences in the starry moments that come to those who loved as we loved, and, loving, understand mutely. More than once, Jack has broken a comprehending pause, or even interrupted speech to say to me the dearest and finest of all his salutations in my thrilling ears:

“My kin — my very own Twin Brother!”

One thing, in that earlier association with Jack, was almost uncanny: he never seemed to fail of my high expectation. Tremulous, I all but looked for him to fail of making good, to my ideal, in this or that small, fine particular. But in vain: usually he surpassed the tentative demand I made upon his quality. His own failings he had, to be sure; but they were not those ordinarily suspected of lesser men.

The frankness which we continued to practise and exalt, made of our mate ship, through thick and thin, a gorgeous achievement.

So I walked softly that spring and summer and fall, dedicated to discern with my own soul’s best all of him that was possible, that I might enlarge and fix this kinship for ever and forever. Upon one star I was intent: Never must our love and its expression sink into commonplace, but it must be kept from out “the ruck of casual and transitory things. “And this was Jack’s answer:

“Commonplaceness shall have no part with us unless I myself should become commonplace; and I think that can never be.”

And Jack London learned his woman, playing her game as she tried to play his. With his broad sympathies, to his own peculiar interests he subjoined mine; and I, in return, widened my focus to include hobbies for which I had theretofore had no caring, thus creating fresh interests for my own sphere. Jack, for example, loved keenly a good card game. I had little use for cards; but I applied myself, to the end that before long I could play a fair game of whist, or cribbage, or pinochle. And when Jack found that certain stern methods of instruction distressed and stood in the way of quick absorption on my part, in all gentleness he went right-about in his lifelong tactics, exhibiting due appreciation of the harmony that had come to prevail in his life. He had until then rather prided himself upon an ability to shake knowledge into others, and I credited him with altering his way to favor me. He told me of how he had once, in half an hour, taught a rather moronic young girl to tell time by the clock — all others having failed. But that’s no reason, I laughingly contended, “that you can teach me whist by the same rules!”

With regard to our hard work together, and making toward a co-existing love and comradeship, I said: “We can’t fail, because everything we do is compensatory life and living. His reply was: “So try to enjoy the fight for its own sake!”

Critics then as now were prone to dispatch the subject of Jack London’s personality with words like “primitive,” “uncouth,” “brutal.” He saw the primitiveness in all life, in himself as he saw everything else, and made all things come under the empery of his thought and written language; but he did not live primitiveness, inasmuch as he was delicate, complex, withal simple in the final analyses of him. The chastity of the last analysis is like the chastity of his art that so often showed the last least perfection of chiseling. Robustness of body and mind offset, almost contradicted, the sensitiveness to impressions, that reaction to beauty of every sort — though particularly intellectual beauty — and to sympathy from others in his mood, his aims; and his shrinking from hurt, although only from the very, very few. Yet in himself, in his actions, in his work,

there existed a regnant overtone, a cogency. Again I say: there was no paradox in him. Beleaguered ever with the thousand-thousand connotations, factors, in the chaos he did not falter, but somehow achieved unity, and a great rhythm. He knew himself; and it was a day of rejoicing when one departed guest, Everett Lloyd, sent him Weininger's "Sex and Character," with the author's definition of a genius: "A genius is he who is conscious of most, and of that most acutely."

Jack's writing, his thousand words a day, was done in a little "work-room" established in the two-room cottage, quite without any of that work-fever often necessary to writers. And whensoever art conflicted with substance, he invariably maintained:

"I will sacrifice form every time, when it boils down to a final question of choice between form and matter. The thought is the thing."

As some one has said, "He cared little for writing and a great deal for what he was writing about."

Here is further expression of his unrelenting realism, "brass-tack" reality — although it seems to me, all having been said, that his materialism incarnated his idealism, and his idealism consecrated and transfigured his materialism:

"I no more believe in Art for Art's sake theory than I believe that a human and humane motive justifies the inartistic telling of a story. I believe there are saints in slime as well as saints in heaven, and it depends how the slime saints are treated — upon their environment — as to whether they will ever leave the slime or not. People find fault with me for my 'disgusting realism.' Life is full of disgusting realism. I know men and women as they are — millions of them yet in the slime state. But I am an evolutionist, therefore a broad optimist, hence my love for the human (in the slime though he be) comes from my knowing him as he is and seeing the divine possibilities ahead of him. That's the whole motive of my 'White Fang.' Every atom of organic life is plastic. The finest specimens now in existence were once all pulpy infants capable of being molded this way or that. Let the pressure be one way and we have atavism — the reversion to the wild; the other the domestication, civilization. I have always been impressed with the awful plasticity of life and I feel that I can never lay enough stress upon the marvelous power and influence of environment.

"No work in the world is so absorbing to me as the people of the world. I care more for personalities than for work or art."

And he always stuck to it that Herbert Spencer's "Philosophy of Style" helped him more in his youth, than any other book — save Ouida's "Signa," his initial impetus — to success in literature. "It taught me," he said, "the subtle and manifold operations necessary to transmute thought, beauty, sensation and emotion into black symbols on white paper; which symbols through the reader's eye, were taken into his brain, and by his brain transmuted into thought, beauty, sensation and emotion that fairly corresponded with mine. Among other things, this taught me to know the brain of my reader, in order to select the symbols that would compel his brain to realize my thought, or vision, or emotion. Also, I learned that the right symbols were the ones that would require the expenditure of the minimum of my reader s brain energy, leaving the

maximum of his brain energy to realize and enjoy the content of my mind, as conveyed to his mind." But "In my grown up years, he surveyed, the writers who have influenced me most are Karl Marx in a particular, and Spencer in a general, way."

So never was I able to wring from him any worship of art for art's sake, although he strove for art with every well-selected instrument of his chosen calling; attained art, high art at times; and, being a potential Teacher, he could explain the means of it — this because he knew so exactly how he produced his effects.

"You're the genius of us two," he flabbergasted me one day when I, who never knew how I did the very few things I did well, had excelled perhaps in a dive, or a passage in music, or the revamping of some sentence that had eluded his own skill. "You don't know at all how you do things, you see," he went on, "You just do them. And sometimes you fall down and cannot do them again. Now that's genius, or of the nature of genius. Take George Sterling; hand him a problem of almost any sort, something he had probably never thought of before, certainly never studied. And ten to one in a short time he will have given a masterly solution. That's genius — big genius. No, there's no genius in mine — unless it's the Weininger kind. I'm too practical — that's why I'm a good teacher. Now you, my dear," in candidness he offset some of his praise, "make a, rotten teacher! For instance, that riding lesson to-day, — you ride as if you had ridden into the world in the first place, — but I'm damned if you can show me how to 'post' on a trot as you do!"

The pleasurable course of our companionship had its normal interruptions. I had to become familiar with his man humors. But he never moped, and seldom was taciturn. And his immoderate smoking was a trial; but after once broaching the subject and finding it a tender one with him, I dropped all reference to the matter. Although he admired frankness, courage, the pettish side that women know of the biggest men where their personal comforts are in question, prevented my courage from demanding what I had confidently hoped for. I should have known better; but then, I was learning. At no time did I ever hear him advise against smoking; yet he promised his nephew, Irving Shepard, a thousand dollars if he would refrain from smoking until he was twenty-one. From our conversation on smoking, I gathered that his habit was a rather negligible detail in comparison with the thousand and one larger issues that occupied his mind. How shall I say? . . . that this one habit, a mere habit, which required none of his conscious attention, should not be too seriously considered by him or others. Also, Jack seemed of a mind that the nerve-strain of refraining offset any advantage that might be derived from abstinence from cigarettes. Long hot afternoons of typewriter dictation under the trees sometimes got on our mutual touchy nerves, and we became cognizant of still more of each other's caprices. Or suddenly, not yet versed in his "brass-tack" reasoning, his "arithmetic, I might unwittingly start disputes in which I had no chance against the assault of his logic, and would struggle with nerves that urged me to weep in sheer feminine bafflement, hating myself the more heartily. But always before me rose an honest warning with which Jack had forearmed us both previously to his coming:

One thing I want to tell you for your own good and our happiness together. I do not think you are a hysterical woman. But don't ever have hysterics with me. You may think I'm hard. Maybe I am; but very earliest in my environment, in the very molding of the tender thing I was, I came to recoil from hysteria — all the bestiality of uncontrol and its phenomena. In my manhood I have seen tears and hysteria, and false fainting spells, all the unlovely futility of that sort of thing that gets a woman less than nothing from me. So never, never, I pray, if you love me, show yourself hysterical. I promise you I shall be cold, hard, even curious. And I will admit, in your case, that I should be hurt as well. But remember, always, this coldness is not deliberate of me: it's become second nature — a warp. I cannot help shrinking from tantrums as from unforgotten blows. . . . Once, when I was about three (and this is burned into me with a hot iron), flower in hand for a gift, I was brushed aside, kicked over, by an angry, rebellious woman striding on her ego-maniacal way. Well, I made an unhappy mouth and went on my own puzzled, dazed path, dimly wounded, non-understanding. And that woman I believed the most wonderful woman in the world, for she had said so herself. So, this and other hysterical scenes have seared me, and I cannot help myself."

It is a privilege to serve under a great captain; and I sat at his feet and endeavored with all my womanhood to come up to his fine, sane standard of companionship, the thing he had missed even with men, it would seem. His free confidence and his Grand Passion were my guerdon. And there blossomed in him a new and wonderful patience that his older friends could hardly credit — patience in the little things that, handled rightly, or ignored, make for the day's harmony. And I hastened to discount his harshness in argument, in order to partake of the kernel, realizing that when he called a spade a spade, it was a battle against artificiality, toward soundness of thought and speech upon vital truths — or vital lies.

A woman whom he greatly admired had acquired Christian Science and wanted to argue upon it with Jack. With her enunciated premise, I saw Jack's blood begin to rise: "Can no-being be?" she shot at him, and sat back waiting his verdict. Although they had it hammer and tongs for hours, they actually never got beyond the premise. Jack refused to consider such a posit — his scientific mind revolted from it and the two failed to come together on even the definition of words, without which there could be no reasoning. For days he went about muttering, "Can no-being be! Can no-being be! — "What do you think of it!"

But inasmuch as his arguing was impersonal, I think the following letter to Blanche Partington, written in 1911, after a warm discussion upon Christian Science generally and Christ's Temptation in the Wilderness in particular, is of value as an illustration:

" Dear Blanche: —

"Bless you for taking me just as I am, and for not implying one iota more to me than what I stand for.

"I am, as you must have divined ere this, a fool truthseeker with a nerve of logic exposed and raw and screaming. Perhaps, it is my particular form of insanity.

"I grope in the mud of common facts. I fight like a wolf and a hyena. And I don't mean a bit more, or less, than I say. That is, I am wholly concerned with the problem I am wildly discussing for the moment.

"The problem of the 'language of the tribe,' I fear me, is more profound than you apprehend also more disconcerting than you may imagine for the ones who attempt to talk in the lingo of two different worlds at one and the same time.

"Affectionately thine,

"Jack London."

Sometimes, when he had been shockingly literal in language of interpretation in one field or another, with blazing unrepentant eyes he would lash out:

"Am I right? You don't answer! Am I right? If not, show me where I am wrong. I must be shown!"

The intense effort required to "show" where I thought him wrong would keep poor me on tiptoe morning, noon and night — more especially since I nearly always had to own to myself and finally to him that he was right. Slowly I commenced to lean upon his judgment, for time and again I found he could not fail me. In the beginning I have in sheer exhaustion been guilty, though very rarely, of the unworthy ruse of giving in when I was not convinced. But let him suspect the attempted deceit, and the dawning light in his face fell into dark disapprobation. So I came to face every issue with him squarely, no matter what the price in time, inconvenience, nerves, everything.

As if in reassurance, he indited in my copy of "War of the Classes":

"Dear Mate:

"Just to tell you that you are more Mate than ever, and that the years to come are bound to see us very happy.

"Mate."

This is not a wail — oh, quite the opposite. The education to me was an inestimable treasure. It insured a teeming intellectual life for all my days on earth. Jack so loved, and avowedly, to jar people out of their narrow ruts and their preconceived notions about themselves. The insincere shrinking of smug souls from the onset of argument was sustenance to his missionary mind. He would make them uncomfortable to sleep with their niggling little petty viewpoints, he would. I can see the flags of battle in his eyes, hark again to the old war-note strike in his fresh young voice. And when he had reduced them to powder without a spark left in it, he was delicious, irresistible, in his expression of contrition:

"Don't mind my harshness," he would plead. "I always raise my voice and talk with my hands; I can't help it. — But don't you see! Don't you see," more often than not he would come back. "Tell me, am I right or wrong? I beg you to show me where I am wrong. It was his intrepid way of expressing the abounding life and thought that were in him. On sentry-go at the gates of observation and conscience, he was the Apostle of the Truth if ever there was one.

Luckless was the victim who could not benefit by the brusk tonic of his argument; and indeed, it was a tonic to himself, until the years when he grew too weary with the

hopelessness of leavening the inert mass of humanity. H. G. “Wells’s definition of the average mind — ”A projection of inherent imperfections” — would have suited Jack.

He was an undisappointing wonder to us all. Despite his boredom with small minds, one would see him completely possessed, enthralled, by the simple goodness of someone in the humblest walk of life. There were in the neighborhood certain characters who had fallen into ways of hopelessness; and Jack’s manly tenderness, always augmented by an unostentatious hand in his pocket, was a speechless pleasure to me, one to emulate for his sweet sake. Then there would be his unbounded appreciation of some tiny farm where perhaps a by-gone workman of Jack’s with wife and child, lived happily with one cow, one horse, a few chickens. Delight shone all over him if he detected an idea of his own which had been incorporated into the other’s agricultural equipment. One shining example of that manly kindness I shall never forget: Once, at sea on a great square-rigger, the skipper, probably from illness that rendered him otherwise than his usual self, issued an order that all but piled us upon a famous “graveyard of ships.” But Jack, jealous of a good seaman’s reputation, protected the captain’s blunder from the eyes of the world.

He cared almost not at all, except as it might affect his market, or his authority, for public opinion of himself or his books. But I came to find him simply, touchingly sensitive to approval from the exceeding few whom he loved, and another exceeding few whose discrimination he revered.

It is beyond hand of mine to draw with strong and supple strokes a convincing picture of this protean man-boy. To me he stands out simple enough in all his complexity; yet I can scarcely hope to leave this impression with the reader — so numberless were the factors in the sum of his personality. The greatest, perhaps, of all ingredients in his makeup, was the surpassing lovableness that made his very deficiencies appear loveworthy. No matter what the irritability of mental stress from whatsoever source, appeal to him with love and desire of understanding, and the world was yours could he give it to you.

Needing immediate cash, Jack delayed beginning “White Fang,” and the young master of the short story went to work spilling upon tales like “Brown Wolf” the warmth and color of rural California that had got into his pounding blood; “Planchette” — the material for this last was founded upon an incident that had once come under my observation, and I passed it on to him; and presently, requiring the frozen spaces once more for scenes of other motifs, he wrote “The Sun Dog Trail,” “A Day’s Lodging,” “Love of Life,” and “The Unexpected” all these to be found in “Moon Face” and “Love of Life” collections. In a letter to me during absence in the city, answering my query if his description of death were founded upon his own late bout with chloroform, he wrote:

“Yes — the death lines of ‘All Gold Canyon’ came from my experience with the ‘little death in life,’ ‘the drunken dark,’ ‘the sweet thick mystery of chloroform,’ — you remember Henley’s ‘Hospital Sketches.’“

Meantime “The Sea Wolf” held sway among the “best sellers,” and was much discussed. Reviewers especially girded at the details of Humphrey van Weyden’s lovemaking to Maud. “I don’t think it’s silly,” Jack considered. “I think it is very natural and sweet. It’s the way I make love, and I don’t think I am silly!” As for the main motif, I find this:

I want to make a tale so plain that he who runs may read, and then there is the underlying psychological motif. In ‘The Sea Wolf’ there was, of course, the superficial descriptive story, while the underlying tendency was to prove that the superman cannot be successful in modern life. The superman is anti-social in his tendencies, and in these days of our complex society and sociology he cannot be successful in his hostile aloofness. Hence the unpopularity of the financial supermen like Rockefeller; he acts like an irritant in the social body.”

“Tales of the Fish Patrol” was appearing serially in Youths’ Companion, and the critics worried over what they dared commit themselves to about “The War of the Classes” group of articles. Mostly, of course, it was severely slated for its radicalism, as the young evangel of economics had naturally forecast.

Better than all other accomplishment, the boy was so happy, gone the Long Sickness, and now living a new manner of life. It was the first time he had ever “let himself go for long,” to relax and rest in the assurance of an atmosphere of eager comprehension. He came to realize the value and practice of the little thing that offsets the strain of the big thing. To saddle his horse leisurely, to direct its lesser intelligence; to play with Brown Wolf and delve into that reticent comrade’s brain-processes; to see that a hammock was properly swung down the mossy streamside under the maples and alders — oh, no, he did not hang it himself, but “bossed” while Manyoungi did the work. Aside from learning to saddle and harness horses, he was in the main faithful in his vow never again to work with his hands. The only exception I recall was when he became interested in cultivating French mushrooms. Spawn was ordered from the east, and he made the bed down by the Graham Creek near where he had once written on “The Sea Wolf,” planted and tended and reaped, to the astonishment of all who knew him.

One peculiarity I never could fathom. Despite the smallness of his hands, the taper fingers and delicacy of their touch, he was all thumbs when it came to manipulating small objects — say rigging up fishing gear, buttoning or hooking a garment, tending his stylographic ink-pencils. He might easily have been the original model of the humorists’ exasperated husband playing maid to his wife’s back-buttoned raiment. He did it willingly enough when no one else was about, but with much unsaintly verbiage of which he gave due heralding. Yet with this clumsiness which was a fount of speculation to Jack, he was able to pride himself that he never destroyed anything — this all the more remarkable when taking into account that he invariably “talked with his hands.” Once, waving his arms at table, I saw him sweep a “student” lamp clear, which he caught before it could reach the floor; but he never broke a dish.

Here he gives me proof of my guerdon, written in the fly-leaf of "The Game," which came to Glen Ellen in June: "Dear Mate:

"Whose voice and touch are quick to soothe, and who, with a firm hand, has helped me to emerge from my long sickness 7 so that I might look upon the world again clear-eyed.

"From your Mate."

And in "John Barleycorn," eight years later:

"Dear Mate-Woman:

"You know. You have helped me bury the Long Sickness and the White Logic.

"Your Mate-Man,

"Jack London."

We rode all over the Valley, and explored the sylvan mazes of its embracing ranges and the intricacies of little hills with their little vales, that to the north divide the valley proper. And we visited the hot-springs resorts southerly in the valley, Agua Caliente and Boyes, for the tepid swimming tanks. Once or twice we met Captain H. E. Boyes and Mrs. Boyes, who asked us into their quaint English cottage; and I remember that the Captain showed Jack a letter received from Rudyard Kipling, asking if he had run across Jack London around Sonoma, and in closing a copy of "Mainly About People" containing a flattering criticism of Jack's work.

We boxed, we swam, we did everything under the sun except walk. Jack never walked any distance save when there was no other way to progress. I was in entire accord with this, as with a thousand and one other mutual preferences. I have seen him deprive himself of a pleasure, if walking was the means of getting at it. "You're the only woman I ever walked far to keep an engagement with," he told me; then spoiled the pretty compliment by adding mischievously, "but I rode most of the way on my bicycle — that night, you remember? when I got arrested for speeding inside Oakland's city limits!" Those who regarded Jack London as physically powerful were quite right; but they would be astonished to find that his big, shapely muscles of arm and shoulder and leg, equal to any emergency whether from momentary call or of endurance, were not of the stone-hard variety, even under tension. Why, I, "small, tender woman," as he liked to say, could flex a firmer bicep than Jack's, to his eternal amusement. But we were as alike as some twins in many characteristics — particularly our supersensitive flesh. I had always been ashamed that in spite of years of horseback riding, let me be away from the saddle for a month or even less, and the first ride would lame my muscles. To my surprise Jack, who became an enthusiastic and excellent horseman, showed the identical weakness to the end of his life.

As the weeks warmed into summer, campers flocked to Wake Robin, and the swimming pool in Sonoma Creek, be low the Fish Ranch's banks, was a place of wild romping every afternoon. Jack taught the young folk to swim and dive, and to live without breathing during exciting tournaments of under-water tag, or searching for hidden objects. Certain shiny white door-knobs and iron rings that were never retrieved,

must still be implanted in the bottom of the almost unrecognizable old pool beneath the willows, or else long since have traveled down the valley to the Bay.

There were madder frolics on the sandy beach at the northern edge of the bathing hole, and no child so boisterous or enthusiastic or resourceful as Jack, "joyously noisy with life's arrogance." He trained them to box and to wrestle, and all, instructor and pupils, took on their varying gilds of sun-bronze from the ardent California sky that tanned the whole land to warm russet.

I am suddenly aware of the fact that much as Jack shared his afternoons in sport with the vacation troops of campers, many as were the health-giving things of flesh and spirit which he taught them, not one learned from him in the sport of killing. Nor can I remember him ever going out hunting in this period. The only times I saw firearms in his hands were at intervals when we all practised shooting with rifle and revolver at a target tacked against the end of an ancient ruined dam across the Sonoma. Once, years afterward, in southwesern Oregon, Jack was taken bear-hunting in the mountains. When he returned to the ranch-house he said:

"Mate, these good men don t know what to make of me. They offered me what the average hunting man would give a year of his life to have — the chance of getting a bear. As it happened, we did not see any bear; but coming into a clearing, there stood the most gorgeous antlered buck you ever want to see, on a little ridge, silhouetted against the sunset. The men whispered to me that now was my chance. They were fairly trembling with anxiety for fear I might miss such a perfect shot. And I didn't even raise my gun. I just couldn't shoot that great, glorious wild thing that had no show against the long arm of my rifle."

So the children at Wake Robin — how little a child will miss — resurrected the old ditty of two summers gone, about "The kindest friend the rabbits ever knew," and loved their big-hearted play-friend the more.

One small Oakland shaver, badly out of sorts with his maternal parent, one afternoon began "shying" pebbles at all and sundry. After every one else had gone to supper, Jack excepted, the little fellow sullenly turned his jaundiced attention to the one live mark remaining — friend or foe it mattered not. Jack admonished him to stop, but instead he selected larger missiles and went on firing them. Furious because Jack laughingly dodged them all, the mite jumped up and down in baffled wrath and shrieked: "You hoodlum! You hoodlum!"

"Now, I wonder," Jack reflected through a cloud of cigarette smoke after supper, "Where he heard me called a hoodlum?"

Again recurring to Jack's alleged brutality, I smile to think how considerate he usually was. In all the rough-and-tumble play with the children and often young folk of maturer growth, any one who was hurt by him quickly smothered the involuntary "ouch" because all knew it was unintentional.

With the girls and women — I speak from long experience. Yes, I have been hurt — one does not box for cool relaxation, but for the zest of rousing the good red blood and setting it free to race through sluggish veins to clear lungs and brain and give one

a new lease on life. To Jack, who loved gameness above all virtues, it was his proudest boast that on two or three occasions gore had been drawn from one or the other of our respective features; but it was of his own undoing he was vainest, because "the Kid-woman squared her valiant little shoulders and stood up with her eyes wide open and unafraid and delivered and took a good straight left."

The point I am leading to is this: I never was even jarred in any part of my feminine anatomy that Jack knew was taboo. Allowing that a woman's head, neck and shoulders are about all it is permissible for her opponent to assail, Jack, with greater surface to cover from her quick gloves, worked out and benefi tted immeasurably by a system of defense that was my despair and that few men could win through.

About the water hole, not one playfellow but would gladly drop the strenuous fun to listen to Jack read aloud; and sometimes at special urging from the charmed ring, he would with secret gratification respond to a request for some story of his own making. Joshua Slocum's "Voyage of the Spray" came in for its turn, and suddenly, one day, Jack laid down the book and said to Uncle Roscoe Eames:

"If Slocum could do it alone in a thirty-five-foot sloop, with an old tin clock for chronometer, why couldn't we do it in a ten-foot-longer boat with better equipment and more company?"

Uncle Roscoe, devoted yachtsman all his life, and to all appearance as devoted as ever at nearly sixty, beamed with interest. The two fell with vim to comparing models of craft, their audience open-mouthed at the proposition. All at once Jack turned to me, and I am sure there was no misgiving in his heart:

"What do you say, Charmian? — suppose five years from now, after we're married and have built our house somewhere, we start on a voyage around the world in a forty-five foot yacht. It'll take a good while to build her, and we've got a lot of other things to do besides."

"I'm with you, every foot of the way," I coincided, but why wait five years? Why not begin construction in the spring and let the house wait? No use putting up a home and running right away and leaving it! I love a boat, you love a boat; let's call the boat our house until we get ready to stay a little while in one place. We'll never be any younger, nor want to go any more keenly than right now. — You know," I struck home, "you're always reminding me that we are dying, cell by cell, every minute of our lives!"

"Hoist by my own petard," Jack growled facetiously, but inwardly approving.

This was the inception of the Snark voyage idea, most wonderful of all our glittering rosary of adventurings.

Aside from the campers, who did not invade his sanctuary, Jack saw almost no visitors. "One," he told a reporter, "was a Russian Revolutionist; the other I avoided!" We were swinging in his hammock at the far end of "Jack's House" from the road, when we glimpsed the latter unannounced and unwelcome figure on the pathway from my Aunt's home. Undetected, we slipped from the hammock, and kept still invisible as we soft-padded around the cottage, always keeping on the opposite side from the searching

caller, who shortly went away. "I'm going to put up two signs on my entrances, "Jack giggled.

"On the front door will be read:

NO ADMISSION EXCEPT ON BUSINESS;

NO BUSINESS TRANSACTED HERE.

On the back:

PLEASE DO NOT ENTER WITHOUT

KNOCKING. PLEASE DO NOT KNOCK."

He was as good as his word. I lettered the legends, and Manyoungi nailed them up, to the scandal of the neighbors. But this summer was the one and only period of inhospitality of any length in Jack's whole life — an instance when he really wanted to be let alone — a necessity in his development at that phase. A few months later, in Boston, he gave this out to one of the papers:

"No, I do not care for society — much. I haven't the time. And besides, society and I disagree as to how I should dress, and as to how I should do a great many other things. I haven't time for pink teas, nor for pink souls. I find that I can get along now less vexatiously and more happily without very much personal dealing with what I may call general humanity. Yet I am not a hermit; I have simply reduced my visiting list."

Society always had him at bay about his clothing. Once he wrote: "I have been real, and did not cheat reality any step of the way, even in so microscopically small, and comically ludicrous, a detail as the wearing of a starched collar when it would have hurt my neck had I worn it." How he would have bidden to his heart that "Shaw of Tailors," H. Dennis Bradley of London Town, who wishes, amidst other current post-bellum reconstruction, a revolu tion in the matter of starch: "If starch is a food," he adjures, "for goodness' sake eat it; do not plaster it on your bosom and bend it round your neck. The war has taught the value of soft silken shirts and collars; and we shall not return to the Prussianism and the Militarism of the blind, unreasoning 'boiled' shirt without a murmur."

Now and again Jack tore himself from his happy valley, to lend his voice to the Cause. One of these occasions was on May 22, when he lectured at Maple Hall, at Fourteenth and Webster Streets, Oakland. In the same month we two rode one day to Santa Rosa, to call upon Luther Burbank, who was an old friend of my family. On August 22, together he and I traveled to San Francisco to see the presentation of a one-act play done by Miss Lee Bascom, "The Great Interrogation," based upon Jack's "Story of Jees Uck," from Faith of Men collection.

Jack, as collaborator, was ferreted out from where we had made ourselves as small as possible in the Alcazar's gallery, and appeared before the curtain with Miss Bascom, to whom he gallantly attributed whatever excellence the pleasing drama possessed.

About this time a dramatization of "The Sea Wolf," which was unintentionally farcical in the extreme, was put on at an Oakland playhouse. Catering to the finicky theater-goer, the playwright had introduced a chaperone, who evidently called for

company in the shape of an ingenue. This young person was portrayed by no other than the winsome Ola Humphrey, of Oakland, whom later we were to know in Sydney, Australia, as a leading woman, and still in the future as the Princess Ibrahim Hassan.

As in the Alcazar, Jack chose the most inconspicuous position from which to view what had been done to theme of his. On the present occasion he remained undiscovered, and was able to shed his tears of mirth on either shoulder he desired, Sterling's or mine, when the shrieking melodrama became too much for his control. "O Gawd! O Gawd!" he mimicked the Ghost's cook, Muggridge; and "If they should hunt me out and get me on the stage, what could I say but 'O Gawd! O Gawd!' " The unfortunate Van Weyden, if I remember aright, chose to wear, from rise to fall of curtain, a well polished pair of tan shoes for which the rigors of the salt sea had no terrors.

On September 9, Jack went to Colma, as one of a constellation of The Examiner's star writers, to do the Britt-Nelson prizefight. It was in the course of this writeup he coined another catch-phrase that went into the language of the country, as "the call of the wild," "the white silence," and even "the game" had become almost household words. This time it was "the abysmal brute," to which certain pugilists took exception until they came to realize the author's meaning — the life that refuses to quit and lie down even after consciousness has ceased.

"By 'abysmal brute,' " Jack would extemporize, "I mean the basic life deeper than the brain and the intellect in living things. Intelligence rests upon it; and when intelligence goes, it still remains. The abysmal brute life," he illustrated, "that causes the heart of a gutted dog-fish to beat in one's hand — you've seen them do that when we were fishing off the Key Route pier," I was reminded. "Or the beak of a slain turtle to close and bite off a man's finger; it's the life force that makes a fighter go on fighting even though he is past all direction from his intelligence." So enamored was he of his own phrase that eight years afterward he used it for title of another prize-fight novel.

In addition to his regular work, Jack would find time to review a book, as for instance "The Long Day," which critique occupied a page in an October Examiner; or to contribute an article, like "The Walking Delegate," in the May 28th issue of the same paper.

It was in August of this year that he sent to Collier's Weekly the article entitled "Revolution," based upon the lecture. He had already sent it to The Cosmopolitan, but owing to some disagreement upon the price had with-drawn the manuscript. This article was published in London in the Contemporary Review. Jack's letter to the Editor of Collier's I give below:

"I am sending you herewith an article that may strike you as a regular firebrand; but I ask you to carry into the reading of it one idea, namely, that the whole article is a statement of fact. There is no theory about it. I state the facts and the figures of the revolution. I state how many revolutionists there are, why they are revolutionists, and their views — all of which are facts.

"It seems to me that this article would be especially apposite just now, following upon the wholesale exposures of graft and rottenness in the high places, which have

of late filled all the magazines and newspapers. It is the other side of the shield. It is another way of looking at the question, and half a million of voters are looking at it in this way in the United States. And it might be interesting to the capitalists to see thus depicted this great antagonistic force which they, by their present graft and rottenness, are not doing anything to fend off. But rather are they encouraging the growth of this antagonistic force by their own culpable mismanagement of society.

"Of course, should you find it in your way to publish this article, it would be very well to preface it with an editorial note to the effect that it is a statement of the situation by an avowed and militant socialist; and of course you would be quite welcome to criticize the whole article in any way you saw fit."

All those bright, vitalizing months, there was growing in his bosom a seed sown two years earlier when he had come to love Sonoma Valley. "The Valley of the Moon," he called it, having nnearthed the fact that Sonoma stood for "moon" in the early Indian tongue of the locality. I have since heard Sonoma defined as "seven moons," because, driving in the crescent of the valley, one may see seven risings of the orb behind the waving contours of the summits.

His eyes roved over the forested mountainside, and yearning heightened to make some part of it his own, for home when we should be man and wife — his very own while life should last. But it appeared not to be for sale. One prospect above all others filled our eyes whenever we rode side by side up a certain old private road three inexpressibly romantic knolls crowned with fir and redwood, rosy-limbed, blossom-perfumed madroño, and scented tapers of the buckeye — wooded islets rising out of a deep, tossing sea of tree-tops. And one day a neighbor said:

"Why, those knolls there belong to a section of over a hundred acres owned by Robert P. Hill down at Eldridge, yonder, the next station below Glen Ellen. Go and see him, and I bet he'll sell it to you. I'm sure I heard it could be bought."

In no time at all, Jack was possessor of one hundred and twenty-nine acres of the most idyllic spot we were ever to behold — later to be glorified in his novel "Burning Day light." Its irregular diamond-shape was bounded by the magnificently wooded gorge of old Asbury Creek to the southeast, and the whole sweet domain was wilderness of every sort of Californian timber and shrubbery, save some forty acres of cleared land that had once yielded wine-grapes and now waved with grain.

Jack paid $7000.00 for the property, which turned out to be a portion of the original grant of some two hundred square miles from the Mexican Government to General Vallejo. Mr. and Mrs. Hill declare to this day that they fear Jack could probably have beaten their figure if he had stood out. But there is another aspect to the happening. Jack, alas, had no chance; he accused me of precluding any such move on his side, by any unthinking ravings over the land in question. And I meekly refrained from protesting when he excluded me from all business sessions thereafter.

Mrs. Hill, who was President of the California Woman's Federation of Clubs, amongst other engaging customs displayed the one of welcoming a guest with both her hands clasping the other s one. And after a little acquaintance with our new friends, I

noticed that Jack adopted the gracious habit with his own guests quite unknowingly, I am sure, for he was not addicted to copying manners. This reminds me that when I first met Jack London, it was with surprise I noted that he shook hands rather limply. It must have been a reminiscence of childhood diffidence; it could not be coldness, for he radiated warmth and sincerity from head to foot. Later, I had dared tell him of my be-puzzlement, and found that he had no idea his clasp was not a hearty one. He set about remedying the lack of firmness. Looking through his 1905 clipping book, I come upon this from an interviewer in an Iowa town where Jack had lectured:

"The words and hearty clasp were with boy-like frankness, a boy's greeting to another boy."

We called it our Land of Dear Delight, but, to the world, simply The Eanch. What Jack thought of it, and his enthusiasm, taking the place of his old unrest, in all the simplest details of his new farm, is indicated in his letters to George Sterling and Cloudesley Johns. To George he wrote:

I have long since given over my automobile scheme; it was too damned expensive on the face of it, and I have long since decided to buy land in the woods, somewhere, and build. . . . For over a year, I have been planning this home proposition, and now I am just beginning to see my way clear to it. I am really going to throw out an anchor so big and so heavy that all hell could never get it up again. In fact, it's going to be a prodigious, ponderous sort of an anchor."

What the neighbors thought of the transaction, he words in "The Iron Heel:"

"Once a writer friend of mine had owned the ranch. . . . He had bought the ranch for beauty, and paid a round price for it, much to the disgust of the local farmers. He used to tell with great glee how they were wont to shake their heads mournfully at the price, to accomplish ponderously a bit of mental arithmetic, and then to say, 'But you can't make six per cent on it."'

"Jack London,

"Glen Ellen,

"Sonoma Co., Cal.,

"June 7, 1905.

"Dear Cloudesley:

"Yea, verily, gorgeous plans. I have just blown myself for 129 acres of land. I'11 not attempt to describe. It's beyond me.

"Also, I have just bought several horses, a colt, a cow, a calf, a plow, harrow, wagon, buggy, etc., to say nothing of chickens, turkeys, pigeons, etc., etc. All this last part was unexpected, and has left me flat broke. . . . I've taken all the money I could get from Macmillan to pay for the land, and haven t any now even to build a barn with, much less a house.

"Haven't started 'White Fang' yet. Am writing some short stories in order to get hold of some immediate cash."

And this fragment from his next, dated July 6, 1905:

“As regards the ranch — I figure the vegetables, firewood, milk, eggs, chickens, etc., procured by the hired man will come pretty close to paying the hired man’s wages. The 40 acres of cleared ground (hay) I can always have farmed on shares. The other fellow furnishes all the work, seed, and care, while I furnish the land. He gets 2/3 of crop of hay. I get 1/3 — about 25 or 30 tons for my share.

“I’m going swimming. I take a book along, and read and swim, turn and turn about, until 6 P.M. It is now 1 P.M.

“Wolf.”

“August 30, 1905.

“Dear Cloudesley:

“. . . By the way, Collier’s has accepted ‘Revolution.’ What d’ye think o’ that? Robert J. Collier wrote the letter of acceptance himself, saying: That he was going to publish my fire-brand as a piece of literature, even if it did lose him several hundred thousand of his capitalistic subscribers. Also, wanting to know how much I asked for the article, he said, ‘Don’t penalize me too heavily for my nerve in publishing it.’

“I am racing along with ‘White Fang.’ Have got about 45,000 words done, and hope to finish it inside the next four weeks, when I pull East on the lecturing-trip.

“Have you read Jimmy Britt’s review of ‘The Game’? It is all right!

“Say, read ‘The Divine Fire,’ by May Sinclair, and then get down in the dust at her feet. She is a master.

Of all books of fiction we read at this period, “The Divine Fire” and Eden Phillpotts’s “The Secret Woman” made the deepest mark upon us both.

When laying foundation for a novel, Jack would isolate himself for the forenoon, in a hilly manzanita grove adjoining the Wake Robin acres — the “wine-wooded manzanita” he named it in “All Gold Canyon.” But for all short work he made his notes at a table in the redwood-paneled room where he worked and slept. He liked music while he composed, and was never so content as when open windows brought my practising to him from the other house.

One day, returning from San Francisco, he said: “We’ve got to have a phonograph!” “Awful!” I countered. You don’t know what you’re saying, he reproved in sparkling tone. “I’ve been listening for hours to the most wonderful records, and there’s a man down in Glen Ellen who has an agency, and we’re to come down to-night and hear the thing. No — don’t say a word — you’ll go perfectly crazy over it!”

I did; and a Victor came to stay at Wake Robin, subsequently sailing with us to the South Seas with one hundred and fifty records presented by the manufacturers. This music Jack also liked while he worked, so long as he could not distinguish the words of songs, which would distract his attention from the words he was juggling with.

At that time he cared far more for orchestral than for vocal harmonies, especially the Wagnerian operas. In the latter, as well as in qnite a repertory of other operatic work, he had been well coached by his friend Blanche Partington, musical and dramatic critic on the San Francisco Call for seven years, who had taken him with her to many performances. I, on the other hand, favored the voice records above the instrumental.

After several years, as one manifestation of his searching into the human, Jack leaned more and more to the voice, until he seldom put on the orchestral disks.

"Sept. 4, 1905.

"Dear Cloudesley:

"So you're going to begin writing for money! Forgive me for rubbing it in. You've changed since several years ago when you place A R T first and dollars afterward. You didn't quite sympathize with me in those days.

"After all, there's nothing like life; and I, for one, have always stood, and shall always stand, for the exalting of the life that is in me over Art, or any other extraneous thing.

"Wolf."

George Serling had affectionately dubbed him "The Wolf," or "The Fierce Wolf," or "The Shaggy Wolf." In the last month of Jack London's life, he gave me an exquisite tiny wrist-watch. "And what shall I have engraved on it!" I asked. "Oh, 'Mate from Wolf,' I guess," he replied. And I: "The same as when we exchanged engagement watches?" "Why, yes, if you don't mind," he admitted. "I have sometimes wished you would call me 'Wolf' more often."

"I wish I had called you 'Wolf,' then," I said remorsefully, "since you would have liked it. But it seemed preciously George's name for you, and that is why I seldom used it." The wee Swiss timepiece was lettered accordingly, this after his light had gone out forever, for I had not been again in town.

Jack was generous about helping his friends out in time of need, but the following, to one of them in October, shows how closely he was running, and again mentions his intended lecturing trip:

"To buy the ranch and build barn, I had to get heavy advances from my publishers. I had already overdrawn so heavily, that they asked me, and in common decency I agreed, to pay interest on these new advances made.

"At present moment my check book shows $207.83 to my credit at the bank. It is the first of the month and I have no end of bills awaiting me, prominent among which are: (Here follows list of payments to his own mother, his children s mother, his rent, tools for the Ranch, and some smaller bills.)

"Now, I have to pay my own expenses East. Lecture Bureau afterward reimburses me. I haven't a cent coming to me from any source, and must borrow this money in Oakland. Also, in November I must meet between seven and eight hundred dollars insurance. My mother wants me to increase her monthly allowance. So does B. I have just paid hospital bills of over $100.00 for one of my sisters. Another member of the family, whom I cannot refuse, has warned me that as soon as I arrive in Oakland he wants to make a proposition to me. I know what that means.

"And I have promised $30.00 to pay printing of appeal to Supreme Court of Joe King, a poor devil in Co. Jail with 50 yrs. sentence hanging over him and who is being railroaded.

"And so on, and so on, and so on — Oh, and a bill for over $45.00 to the hay press. So you see that I am not only sailing close to the wind but that I am dead into it and my sails flapping."

"I'm always in debt," Jack said to Ashton Stevens, who interviewed him for The Examiner. "Look at that hand! See where the light comes through the fingers? That hand leaks. It was explained to me by the Korean boy that took me through Manchuria. All I'd like to do is to be able to get enough money ahead to loaf for a year — that's my little dream."

"And buy some dress shirts and evening clothes?" Mr. Stevens slyly baited.

"Oh, I have them," Jack grinned; "I've got them. But I'm willing to put 'em on only when I can't get in without them. I loathe the things, but if the worst comes to the worst I've got 'em; I insist I've got 'em."

"Then your dream of rest realized wouldn't be all purple teas?"

"Indeed it would not. At Glen Ellen I've got a farm, and I'm going to build a house and a lot of things; it'll take me about two years to make improvements and settle down. And then I'm going to build a forty-foot sea-going yacht and with two or three others cruise around the world. We'11 be our own crew and cook and everything else, and the first port will be twenty-one hundred miles from San Francisco — Honolulu. Thence on and on. Maybe I'll realize on that trip some of my dream of rest."

In the months before he came to Glen Ellen that year, he would ask musical friends for "The Garden of Sleep," a song by Clement Scott and Isidore de Lara, and for "Sing Me to Sleep," by Clifton Bingham and Edwin Green. As time went on, he called upon me less and less for these restful melodies. When they had at length served his need, in characteristic manner of not looking backward, he was through with the songs.

Concerning the world voyage, he wrote to Anna Strunsky:

"You remember the Spray in which you sailed with me one day? Well, this new boat will be six or seven feet longer than the Spray, and I am going to sail her around the world, writing as I go. Expect to be gone on trip four or five years — around the Horn, Cape of Good Hope, Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, Australia, and everywhere else.

Jack's "dream of rest" had more than once, in my hearing, been associated with death itself. Never was he so happy, he who at the same time so exalted life, that he could not descant upon the repose of death. One of my earliest memories of him is such a remark as this: "To me the idea of death is sweet. Think of it — to lie down and go into the dark out of all the struggle and pain of living — to go to sleep and rest, always to be resting. Oh, I do not want to die now — I'd fight like the devil to keep alive. . . . But when I come to die, it will be smiling at death, I promise you."

Early in our married life I entreated:

"Don't, don't plan so many great things that you will always have to slave for the means. Make your money and loaf for a while. But in all the years we were together, the day of living rest fled before him. His vast plannings widened as widened his fund

of knowledge — there was no horizon at any point of his compass. So I came to give up, and cooperate with him wherever his ambition chose to express itself.

Yes, Jack was always in debt; but never to the point of failing to see his way out. Which, after all, is merely good business. He was aware of his augmenting earning power; but timid ones lacking his vision refrained from depending upon him because their prognosis was that he would fail through poor judgment. And yet, after his death, as many as depended upon him in lifetime are still cared for by his foresight — even more than those. Any one who gave voice to the opinion that Jack London was a poor business man was a source of irritation to him, such was his realization his own efficiency.

Second Marriage; Lecture Trip

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXVII 1905-1906

IT is of record, in the files of every American newspaper, that the final decree in the Jack London divorce was granted on November 18, 1905 — this after a separation of two and a half years between the parties thereto. Jack had once said to me:

"If a divorce had not been allowed me, I would not have given you up — that would be unthinkable. We would have gone somewhere, if you would, and I think you would — on the other side of the world, and dignifiedly lived out our lives, 'on the square, like a true married pair.'"

But this was thought of by him only as an extreme. For, as in most considerations, Jack supported law, holding that society rested upon monogamy; though that all-round mind of his as firmly stood behind his biology with regard to man s polygamous place in the animal kingdom. "And anyway, our love and mateship is of the stamp that bonds cannot tire, thank God, he would rejoin. Then, in a note: "We will respect the world and the way of the world."

Once, out of a spell of despondency before he came to Glen Ellen, Jack wrote me a letter which I give below, so that all may have access to the solid foundation upon which reason stood, upholding romantic love:

"Dear, dear Woman:

"Somehow, you have been very much in my thoughts these last few days, and in inexpressible ways you are dearer to me. "I will not speak of the mind-qualities, the soul-qualities — for somehow, in these, in ways beyond my speech and thought, you have suddenly loomed colossal in comparison with the ruck of women.

"Oh, believe me, in these last several days I have been doing some thinking, some comparing — and I have been made aware, not merely of pride, and greater pride, in you, but of delight in you. Dear, dear Woman, Wednesday night, how I delighted in you, for instance! Of course, I liked the look of you; but outside of that, I delighted — and not so much in what you said or did, as in what you did not say or do. You, just you — with strength and surety, and power to hold me to you for that old peace and

rest which you have always had for me. I am more confident now than a year ago that we shall be happy together. I am rationally confident.

“God! and you have grit! I love you for it. You are my comrade for it. And I mean the grit of the soul.

“And the lesser grit — you have it, too. I think of you swimming, and jumping, and diving, and my arms go out to the dear, sensitive, gritty body of yours, as my arms go out to the gritty soul of you within that body.

“My first thought in the morning is of you, my last thought at night. My arms are about you, and I kiss you with my soul.

“Your Own Man.”

But he was also the mad lover, gloriously, boundlessly so. As witness this, written three weeks before our wedding, after he had gone East:

“Blessed Mate:

“I do not think that I have yet parted with you, so full am I, heart and soul, with the vision of you.

“Standards are nothing, judgments are nothing; I need not reason about you except in the simplest way, and that way is that you mean everything to me and are more to me than any woman I have ever known.

“Your own man,

“The Wolf.”

Editors have repeatedly approached me on the subject of publishing Jack London’s letters to myself. All argu-ments were barren of result, save one: that Jack London’s love nature is little known or reckoned with in the average estimate of him; or, worse, misunderstood. This slant of argument of course had not been unthought of by me. And because no just study of the man can otherwise be made, I present, throughout this book, the letters I have chosen from the uncounted ones in my possession. Below I quote the very first in which he mentions his regard, something that had theretofore been undreamed of by me. We had been discussing something about my own make-up which he said had always eluded him — and I had gathered that it was not especially complimentary. My curiosity being aroused, I wrote and asked him if he could not definitely word his feeling. Here is the reply:

I see that what I spoke of worries you. It would worry me equally, I am sure, did it come from a friend. But the very point of it was that I did not know what it was. If I had, I should not have brought it up. If you will recollect, it was one of the lesser puzzles of your make-up to which I merely casually referred. None of your guesses hits it: I have seen and measured your inordinate fondness for pretty things and for the correct thing. These are logical and consistent in you, and the fact that they are arouses nothing but satisfaction in me. I referred to something I did not know, something I felt as I felt the vision of you crying in the grass. Perhaps I used the word conventionality for lack of adequate expression, for the same reason that I spoke from lack of comprehension. A something felt of something no more than potential in you and of which I had seen no

evidences. If you fail to follow me I am indeed lost, for I have strained to give definite utterance to a thing remote and obscure.

"You speak of frankness. I passionately desire it, but have come to shrink from the pain of intimacies which bring the greater frankness forth. Superficial frankness is comparatively easy, but one must pay for stripping off the dry husks of clothing, the self-conventions which masque the soul, and for standing out naked in the eyes of one who sees. I have paid, and like a child who has been burned by fire, I shrink from paying too often. You surely have known such franknesses and the penalties you paid. When I found heart's desire speaking clamorously to you, I turned my eyes away and strove to go on with my superficial self, talking, I know not what. And I did it consciously — partly so, perhaps — and I did it automatically, instinctively. Memories of old pains, incoherent hurts, a welter of remembrances, compelled me to close the mouth whereby my inner self was shouting at you a summons bound to give hurt and to bring hurt in return.

"I wonder if I make you understand. You see, in the objective facts of my life I have always been frankness personified. That I tramped or begged or festered in jail or slum meant nothing by the telling. But over the lips of my inner self I had long since put a seal — a seal indeed rarely broken, in moments when one caught fleeting glimpses of the hermit who lived inside. How can I begin to explain? . . . My child life was uncongenial. There was little responsive around me. I learned reticence, an inner reticence. I went into the world early, and I adventured among different classes. A newcomer in any class, I naturally was reticent concerning my real self, which such a class could not understand, while I was superficially loquacious in order to make my entry into such a class popular and successful. And so it went, from class to class, from clique to clique. No intimacies, a continuous hardening, a superficial loquacity so clever, and an inner reticence so secret, that the one was taken for the real, and the other never dreamed of.

"Ask people who know me to-day, what I am. A rough, savage fellow, they will say, who likes prizefights and brutalities, who has a clever turn of pen, a charlatan's smattering of art, and the inevitable deficiencies of the untrained, unrefined, self-made man which he strives with a fair measure of success to hide beneath an attitude of roughness and unconventionality. Do I endeavor to unconvince them? It's so much easier to leave their convictions alone.

"And now the threads of my tangled discourse draw together. I have experienced the greater frankness, several times, under provocation, with a man or two, and a woman or two, and the occasions have been great joy-givers, as they have also been great sorrow-givers. I do not wish they had never happened, but I recoil unconsciously from their happening again. It is so much easier to live placidly and complacently. Of course, to live placidly and complacently is not to live at all, but still, between prizefights and kites and one thing and another I manage to fool my inner self pretty well. Poor inner self! I wonder if it will atrophy, dry up some day and blow away.

"This is the first serious talk I have had about myself for a weary while. I hope my flood of speech has not bored you.

"When may I see you?"

When, so shortly afterward, we had discovered, almost as with love-at-first-sight, the great glory that was rising in us, this was his next message — a burst of sunshine after dark days:

"I am dumb this morning. I do not think. I do not think at all. Talk of analysis! I should have to get a year or so between me and the last of you in order to generalize, in order to answer the everlasting query: 'What is it all about?'

"What IS it all about? I do not know. I know only that I am off my feet and drifting with the tide; drifting and singing, but it is a flood tide and the song a paean.

"Younger? I am twenty years younger. So young that I am too lazy to work. I am lying here in the hammock thinking dreamily of you. No, I am not lazy at all. I am doing no work because I am incapable of doing it. Wherever I look I see you. I close my eyes and hear you, and still see you. I try to gather my thoughts together and I think — You. But it is not a thought — it is a picture of you, a vision a something as objective and real as when I used to see you crying in the grass.

"An hour has passed since I wrote the last word. I am still in the hammock, and what I have written is the history of that hour, as it is of all the other hours.

"Well, they are good hours. Though I never saw you again, the memory of them would be sweet. To have lived them, here in the hammock, is to have lived well and high.

And again: "This I know — that you will come to me, some time, some where. It is inevitable. The hour is already too big to become anything less than the biggest. We cannot fail, diminish, fall back into night with the dawn thus in our eyes. For it is no false dawn. Our eyes are dazzled with it, and our souls. We know not what, and yet WE KNOW. The life that is in us knows. It is crying out, and we cannot close our ears to its cry. It is reaching out yearning arms that know the truth and secret of living as we, apart from it and striving to reason it, do not know. O my dear, we give and live, we withhold and die.

"You may laugh and protest, but you ARE big. A thousand things prove it to me — to me who never needed the proof. I knew — knew from the first. I, who have felt and sounded my way through life like some mariner on a fog-bound coast, have never felt nor sounded when with you. I knew you from the first, knew you and accepted you. This is why, when the time for speech came, there was no need for speech.

"I do not know if I shall see you to-night, and, such is the certitude of our tangled destiny, I hardly think I care. Did I doubt, it would be different. But it must be so, I know, not sooner or later, but soon. It is the will of your life and mine that it shall be so, and we are not so weak that we cannot keep faith with the truth and the best that is in us.

"You are more kin to me than any woman I have ever known."

The next letter gives a deathless picturing of Jack London's loneliness of old and his new-found happiness:

"Do you know a happy moment you have given me — a wonderful moment? When you sat looking into my eyes and repeated to me: 'You are more kin to me than any woman I have ever known.' That those words should have shaped to you the one really great thought in the letter, the thought most vital to me and to my love for you, stamped our kinship irrevocably. Surely we are very One, you and I!

"Shall I tell you a dream of my boyhood and manhood? — a dream which in my rashness I thought had dreamed itself out and beyond all chance of realization? Let me. I do not know, now, what my other loves have been, how much of depth and worth there were in them; but this I know, and knew then, and know always — that there was a something greater I yearned after, a something that beat upon my imagination with a great glowing light and made those woman-loves wan things and pale, oh so pitiably wan and pale! "I have held a woman in my arms who loved me and whom I loved, and in that love-moment have told her, as one will tell a dead dream, of this great thing I had looked for, looked for vainly, and the quest of which I had at last abandoned. And the woman grew passionately angry, and I should have wondered had I not known how pale and weak it made all of her that she could ever give me.

"For I had dreamed of the great Man-Comrade. I, who have been comrades with many men, and a good comrade I believe, have never had a comrade at all, and in the deeper significance of it have never been able to be the comrade I was capable of being. Always it was here this one failed, and there that one failed until all failed. And then, one day, like Omar, 'clear-eyed I looked, and laughed, and sought no more.' It was plain that it was not possible. I could never hope to find that comradeship, that closeness, that sympathy and understanding, whereby the man and I might merge and become one in understanding and sympathy for love and life.

"How can I say what I mean? This man should be so much one with me that we could never misunderstand. He should love the flesh, as he should the spirit, honoring and loving each and giving each its due. There should be in him both fact and fancy. He should be practical insofar as the mechanics of life were concerned; and fanciful, imaginative, sentimental where the thrill of life was concerned. He should be delicate and tender, brave and game; sensitive as he pleased in the soul of him, and in the body of him unfearing and unwitting of pain. He should be warm with the glow of great adventure, unafraid of the harshnesses of life and its evils, and knowing all its harshness and evil.

"Do you see, my dear one, the man I am trying to picture for you! — an all-around man, who could weep over a strain of music, a bit of verse, and who could grapple with the fiercest life and fight good-naturedly or like a fiend as the case might be. . . . the man who could live at the same time in the realms of fancy and of fact; who, knowing the frailties and weaknesses of life, could look with frank fearless eyes upon them; a man who had no smallnesses or meannesses, who could sin greatly, perhaps, but who could as greatly forgive.

“I spend myself in verbiage, trying to express in a moment or two, on a sheet of paper, what I have been years and years a-dreaming. “As I say, I abandoned the dream of the great Man-Comrade who was to live Youth with me, perpetual Youth with me, down to the grave. And then You came, after your trip abroad, into my life. Before that I had met you quite perfunctorily, a couple of times, and liked you. But after that we met in fellowship, though somewhat distant and not so very frequently, and I liked you more and more. It was not long before I began to find in you the some thing all-around that I had failed to find in any man; began to grow aware of that kinship that was comradeship, and to wish you were a man. And there was a loneliness about you that appealed to me. This, perhaps, by some unconscious cerebration, may have given rise to my vision of you in the grass.

“And then, by the time I was convinced of the possibility of a great comradeship between us, and of the futility of attempting to realize it, something else began to creep in — the woman in you twining around my heart. It was inevitable. But the wonder of it is that in a woman I should find, not only the comradeship and kinship I had sought in men alone, but the great woman-love as well; and this woman is YOU, YOU!”

Let himself say what Love meant to him:

“Once you strove to write me a love letter with tolerable success. But you have now written me a love letter. When it came this morning, and I read it, I was mad — mad with sheer joy and desire. The bonds tighten, my love; we grow closer and closer. Ah, God. You are so close to me now, so dear, so dear. You are in my thought all the time. I am swimming, and as I poise for a dive, I pause a fleeting second to think of you. No matter what I do, now, I make the little pause and think of you. I do it when I am working, when I am reading, when people are talking to me. At all times it is you, you, you.

“Love? I thought I was capable of a great love, as one will think, you know. But I never dreamed so great a love as this. I have stood on my own feet all the years of my life, was independent, self-sufficient. Men and women were pleasant, of course, but they were not necessary. I could get along without them. I could not conceive a time when I could not get along without them. But the time has come. Without you I am nowhere, nothing, You are the breath of life in my nostrils. Without you, and without hope of having you, I should surely die. Oh, woman, woman, how I do love you.

“I have no doubt, now, of your love for me. You do love me, must love, or life is false as hell and there is no sanity in anything. But I do not measure your love thus. I just know you love me.

“I write this while people wait; and I kiss you thus, and thus, on the lips, and hair, and brow — thus, and thus.

Before even dreaming of coming into the country to live, Jack had pledged himself to lecture in the east and middle west. He had never really enjoyed public speaking, but was bent upon hunting a protracted session of it — a first and last tour. Moreover, and very important, here was opportunity to spread propaganda for the Cause, and

it was stipulated with the Lyceum Bureau that he should be at liberty to expound Socialism wherever and whenever it did not conflict with his regular dates.

As our Indian Summer drew on, however, more and more he fretted that he must pull up stakes and tear himself from the happy camp that had wrought so marvelously upon him. But the third week in October saw him on his strenuous way, having demanded expenses for two, that Manyoungi might relieve him of all distracting personal details. My face laughed into his from the inside cover of that thin gold watch I had given him; and one unforgotten item of luggage was an exquisite miniature of his two little girls which he had had painted by Miss Wishaar months before.

Shortly after his departure, I, too, did some packing — of a simple trousseau in the pretty bureau-trunk Jack had presented me. This trunk was the result of one of his advertisement-answering hazards, as was one of the early models of wardrobe-trunk. The latter was so tall that, after expending more than its original cost in excess-length charges, he had the thing cut down to regulation size.

In Newton, Iowa, I visited my friend Mrs. Will Mc-Murray, for a November 25 lecture had been scheduled for the college town of Grinnell, but a short distance from Newton; and it was our intention to be married at the McMurrays' and spend with them an idle week occurring in the tour. But the lecturer, fulfilling an engagement with the People's Institute in Elyria, Ohio, upon receiving a telegram from California that he was entirely free, decided on the spur of the moment not to delay until the Grinnell date.

On the eve of the 19th, I had his wire in hand for me to be in Chicago the next night, since he was to pass through on the way to lecture in Wisconsin. Being Sunday, he was obliged to arrange a special license with the County Clerk of Cook County. And when in obedience to his summons I stepped off my train in the Windy City at nine of the evening, three hours behind-time, a very weary but happily patient bridegroom elect was pacing the station pavement. In his pocket was the license, in mine my mother's wedding-ring; and at the curb waited two hansom cabs, one containing an interested and beaming Manyoungi, who wanted to see an American wedding.

The informal suddenness and speed of this termination to our courtship savored of the age of chivalry, when knight-errant with doughty right arm slung his lady love across the saddle bow on a foaming black charger. Let none say that ours was less romantic. What mattered it that our vows were spoken in a civil ceremony! After Notary Public J. J. Grant had made us one, we drove to the old Victoria Hotel where Jack interlined 'Mrs. Jack London" between his and Manyoungi's signatures registered the previous day. I meanwhile, by another entrance, slipped upstairs.

No one connected intimately with this "most advertised writer in America" could hope to escape the more or less notorious consequences. By me it had to be regarded as part of the game, if I were to observe my responsibilities. Therefore my philosophy of life had fortified me against the worst. Before Jack could procure his key, he was way laid by three newspapermen — but they chanced to be merely in search of items about his trip and his books. But a fourth had discovered the hardly-dry interpolation

on the register, and hovered anxiously about the quartette to learn if he was the only sleuth who had made the find. Jack sensed the situation, and presently excused himself and ran upstairs. In three minutes the four reporters were at our door, imploring an interview. Reënforcements began to arrive, and into the small hours besieged by knocks, notes, telegrams, cards, telephone calls from the hotel office — streams of entreaties in every guise flowing under the door and over wire and transom. To all of which my husband remained deaf and dumb, for he must scrupulously redeem his promise made months before, to give the Hearst papers the "scoop" in return for their discretion. This he had done on Saturday, and the Chicago American city editor, Mr. Harstone, was instrumental in obtaining the special license; also, with a reporter, Mr. Harstone had served as witness to the ceremony.

The appeal which came nearest to stirring Jack was the whispered and written: "Come on through with the news, old man — be merciful; we've got to get it. You're a newspaperman yourself, you know. Come across and help us out."

When the Chicago American had appeared Monday morning with the heavily leaded item, the disappointed dailies sent representatives to call upon the bride and groom; and I must take occasion to congratulate those gentlemen upon the good-natured courtesy which cloaked their chagrin. Nevertheless, the end was not yet. Vengeance was theirs. On Tuesday morning, coming back into Chicago from Geneva Falls, Wisconsin, on the business-men s train, we had slipped into a rearmost seat. What was our horror to behold, upthrust before the greedy eyes of "commuters" the entire length of the car, full-page photo-graphs of ourselves with large headlines announcing Jack London's marriage "Invalid."

"What the hell!" spluttered Jack, laughing in spite of himself. "The other sheets are getting even. We're in for it!" and thereupon delivered himself: "A fellow's got to pay through the nose for being loyal to his own crowd!" They won't stop to consider that I'd have done the same for them, if most of my newspaper work had been for them!"

The "other sheets" had merely endeavored to tangle the divorce laws of California and Illinois; but a noted Judge pronounced all straight. The Chicago American gave due space to the refutation, and we went on our path rejoicing. But for weeks we could not pick up a paper, great or small, that did not contain publicity of one sort or another concerning the most advertised writer in America whether reviews of his books, of our marriage, of the lectures, the round-the-world yacht voyage, the Ranch, and what not.

Jack maintained to all interviewers, "If my marriage is not legal in Illinois, I shall re-marry my wife in every state in the Union!"

A comical thing happened in California, when one of Jack's little-girl swimming pupils hurriedly scanned the title, "Jack London's Marriage Invalid." Hastening to her mother, in accents of distress she cried:

"Oh, mama, mama, how awful! Mr. London did not marry Miss Kittredge after all! This paper says he's married an invalid!"

One day, from Lynette McMurray's parlor, there issued Jack's irrepressible snicker, increasing to a wild call for me:

"Oh, I've got you now, Mate Woman! You can never look me in the face again after you hear this!" And proceeded to read aloud a libelous squib from a Washington, Iowa, weekly paper. It was to the effect that the "ugly-faced girl from California, so ugly that the children on the streets of Newton ran screaming to their mothers when-ever she passed by, had married Jack London. That it was reported the pair were soon to go to sea in a small boat, to be gone for years. That it would be a mercy to everybody if they were drowned at sea and never came back.

"You think I'm making it up, don't you!" Jack read my scornful face. "But here — look at it! — why, the old sour-ball — the wretched old slob! I wonder what he'd had for breakfast!"

But it was I who first happened upon a reference to Jack London as being possessed of a "bilaterally asymetrical countenance," and it may correctly be assumed that I pressed the same home with all dispatch.

"I'm NOT bilaterally asymetrical, though," indignantly he defended; "and anyway, I don't know what bilaterally asymetrical means. Take a look at me," studying himself in my hand-mirror. "I'd say my features are fairly straight . . . The man that said bilaterally asymetrical was looking for a chance to work off the expression!"

The time Jack was really sorry for his wife was in 1909, in Hobart, Tasmania, when another reporter with something funny to work off, wrote: "Jack London's speech is as that of an American with an Oxford education; but as for Mrs. London, hers is Americanese, undefiled, and unfiled." What irritated Jack in this instance was: "But you didn't open your head; and the man scarcely saw you, there in the dark of the carriage!"

From November 26 until December 7, on which latter day Jack spoke at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, we shared the journey, and a unique one it was for me. Seldom was I so tired from travel that I missed a lecture, whether upon Socialism, or his experiences as tramp, Klondiker, War Correspondent, Sailor, or Writer. I never wearied of seeing Jack step out upon stage or platform, with that modest-seeming, almost bashful boyishness which so charmed his audiences, and yet which so quickly, when he raised his splendid head and launched into any serious theme, changed to the imperiousness of certitude. Once, well appreciative though I was of his beauty in this one of his myriad phases, I remonstrated:

"I wonder if you realize how forbidding you look when you walk out of the wings. Your expression is positively haughty! — as if you considered your audience mere dust under your feet!"

He laughed outright.

"Why, I don't feel that way at all, of course. Don't forget — I'm making up my mind what I'm going to say, and really not thinking of my hearers busy with my thought. And then, too, he figured it out, "it may be a left-over of the system by which I first overcame stage-fright. It was something like this: I've got something to say. I've got to

say it. I'm going to say it the best way I can, even if it's not oratory. If I try to make a good speech and fail — well, I shall have failed, that's all. I very soon had decided not to take too seriously any failure to speak graciously. What of it? I said. I won't be the only one; others have fallen down and why should I be proud! And anyway, diffidence arises from conceit, I don't care who disagrees with me . . . So remember, Mate, when I assume what you are pleased to call my imperial pose, it is done quite unconsciously, being an outgrowth of my early search after a shield for backwardness. I am not consciously thinking of myself at all; I am busy with my thought and the imminent business of putting my thought in the best way possible."

At the next lecture, when he moved out upon the boards he looked over at my box, his face breaking into that unstudied morning smile that wrought lovers out of enemies, and a little rustle passed through the house as if wings were ruffling and stretching. But in a flash the smile had fled behind the lordly mask of his concentration, and I knew I had ceased to exist for him.

But never, in any presentment of himself, was he so splendid, so noble, as when, with starry eyes, he flamed out the vision of his conversion to the only religion he was ever to know: "All about me were nobleness of purpose and heroism and effort, and my days were sunshine and starshine, all fire and dew, with before my eyes, ever burning and blazing, the Holy Grail, Christ's Own Grail, the warm, human, long-suffering and maltreated but to be rescued and saved at the last."

Jack swore he was getting enough train-travel to last all his life, and loathed it ever after. But very merrily, whether in Pullman or jerky day-coach, we put in hours that might otherwise have been irksome, reading aloud, playing casino and cribbage, writing letters, and altogether enjoying our companionship. Moreover, and blessed assurance of its continuance undimmed, we respected each other's solitude and independence — Jack at intervals spending hours in the smoker, listening profitably to the conversation of his own sex, or napping to make up for broken nights of travel. The all-around "good time" we invariably found together is best pointed by an incident several years later, when we were returning home from South America by way of the Gulf and New Orleans. As usual, we were bound up in each other and the interest of our occupations, at cards, sharing in books, the scenery, or in speculation upon the passengers. During one of Jack's absences, I was resting with closed eyes, when a beautiful matron in the section ahead, whom we had noticed with two younger women, came and sat beside me:

"I hope you'll not think me too rude," she opened, "but I want to ask a very personal question. Are you really Mrs. Jack London?"

There was such entire absence of offense in her eager, frank address that I could only laugh delightedly while assuring her this bliss had been mine for four years. But again she pressed:

"Are you really she?" and before I could protest in sur-prise, she hurried on, "My daughters and I have been discussing you two with the greatest curiosity, and said we were sure there must be some mistake — the thing is incredible; married people

don't act as you do. Never have we seen a married couple, except possibly on their honeymoon, have such a good time together!"

All I could do, in return, was to assure her that we were on our honeymoon.

From Brunswick, where Jack averred to President Hyde that if his college days could come again he would attend Bowdoin, we filled another lecture-blank week with my father's people in Ellsworth and Mt. Desert Island, Maine. A day here, a day there, in the dear homesteads that had once been my homes for a long free year, we spent with this and that aunt or cousin — solid hearts of the very granite of old "State o' Maine," with their own glow and sparkle that renders them instantly aware of sham of any kind. One and all they pronounced the captivating boy I had wedded, with his irradiation of sweetness and sympathy and the open boyish face and heart of him, "Just one of us!" and called him their own forever and ever. Jack in turn dubbed them "salt of the earth," and gave them of his best.

Around Bar Harbor ("Somesville"), West Eden and Northeast Harbor, in an ideal "Down East" winter, we drove over the snow-packed, glinting roads that skirt the toothed coast of this isle of seafarers. Oddly enough to those who think of Jack London in terms of icy Alaska with its white ways of transportation, Jack had never before driven in a sleigh. So varied had been his adventures, that it was a prize of life for me to participate with him in an unknown one. Smothered to the ears in a borrowed coon-coat, head and hands snug in sealskin cap and gloves he had bought in Boston, he took keen interest in managing a span of spirited blacks harnessed to a smart "cutter," their red-flaring nostrils tossing white plumes of steam in the crackling, sun-gilt air.

Again in Boston, we became the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Merritt Sheldon, in their handsome colonial home at Newton — with whom I had gone to Europe. Jack's advent must, have been an illuminating if not disturbing one to them, for many and ofttimes weird characters found their way up the driveway to the pillared portico of the lofty white house on a hillock. And of course newspapermen came and went. One of those my husband hoped to meet again some time, preferably in a dark alley where a nose might be tweaked unseen by the police; for, in reply to this man's question as to how it seemed to be the wife of a celebrity, he had made me deliver the ecstatic cry, "It's just grand!"

It was nothing unusual for some inebriated derelict to press the button upon the stroke of midnight; and once an indubitably insane crank perturbed the early hours and the housemaid. But our host and hostess were ideal, sparing no pains to place their home and themselves at their guests' disposal in every finest sense and detail, and apparently enjoying it all thoroughly.

Jack was driven nearly to the limit of endurance in the week before the twenty-seventh, when, with a holiday month in store, we sailed for Jamaica. Boston cameras pictured him hollow-eyed; but be he driven or not driven, I came to learn that he was wont to look other than his fresh, virile self whenever cities laid clutch upon him. Never did he thrive in a great metropolis.

In Tremont Temple, and in historic Faneuil Hall, under the noted Gilbert Stuart of the Father of His Country, to packed audiences Jack London sent forth his voice for the Cause. In the latter auditorium, that sweet and unvan-quished fighter, "Mother Jones," marched up the central aisle to the rostrum, and greeted the young protagonist of her holy mission with a sounding kiss on either cheek. He spoke also at Socialist Headquarters.

The Intercollegiate Socialist Society had been organized for a month or two, and the Harvard members got together and saw to it that the first President, Jack London, should be heard in Harvard Union.

Aside from Mrs. Sheldon, myself, and one or two others, there were no women present in Harvard Union that night. We sat with Frank Sheldon and Gelett Burgess in a tiny gallery hung upon the rear wall of the high hall. A thrilling sight it was, that throng of collegians, not only those crowded both seated and standing on the floor below, but the scores hanging by their eyebrows to window casements, welcoming Jack with round upon round of ringing shouts and cheers — an ovation, the papers did not hesitate to call it.

He gave them, unsparingly, all and more than they had bargained for, straight from the shoulder, jolting " Revolution" into them. Once, when a statement of starvation facts, concerning the Chicago slums, was so awful as to strike a number of the chesty young bloods as a bit melodramatic, a laugh started. Jack's face set like a vise, and he hung over the edge of the platform, a challenge to their better part flaming from black-blue eyes and ready, merciless tongue. Be it said that the response was instantaneous and whole-hearted, the house rising as one man and echoing to the applause until I, for one onlooker, choked and filled with emotion at the human fellowship of it. At the close of the lecture, Jack and Mr. Sheldon were carried off to the fraternity houses and royally entertained the rest of the night.

One afternoon, at the request of the Boston American, Jack attended and wrote up a performance of the Holy Jumpers, whose breezy antics, I dare opine, he did not regard as any more outlandish than certain metaphysical gymnastics he wotted of — and thought them far more whole somely cheerful.

Still another afternoon, we put in three breathless hours in Thomas W. Lawson's private office at Young's Hotel, entirely absorbed (in a room peopled with replicas of elephants of every size, breed, and composition), in that brilliant and energetic gentleman s proposed "cure" for the ills and shams of modern society. Be it known, that the assertive and vehement conversationalist Jack London was also a prince of listeners. His was the perfection of attention to any speaker who was worth while. True, he seldom squandered precious time upon one who was not, but would proceed to harry unrelentingly until he had routed the other; after which he would try to make up in various ways for his aggressiveness.

One of our most interesting acquaintances in Boston was Dr. George W. Galvin, staunch Socialist and clever surgeon; and one day he arranged to take us through the Massachusetts General Hospital. Once inside, would we care to see an operation? Dr.

Eichardson was in the theater and about to remove an appendix. While my lips formed Yes, swiftly I roved my adventurously promising career beside the bright comet I had taken unto myself for better or worse, a future wherein I might be required to reckon with singular emergencies in war or travel by sea and land. I must never fail my man who despised a coward beneath all things under the sun. Here was chance for a certain kind of prepa ration. Nerves I confessed in abundance: had I nerve also?

And so, curious concomitant of a honeymoon, I witnessed the masterly elimination of an appendix from a patient who bore startling facial resemblance to my own husband; thence to a second operating theater where we were present at the sanguinary trepanning, for tumor of the brain, of a woman's skull — "a Sea-Wolf operation, eh!" Dr. Galvin chuckled.

Through all of which, placing myself in a rigidly scientific frame of mind, I emerged with flying colors, to Jack's congratulation. Two months later, never having viewed a corpse in my life, except when too young to remember, I was introduced to such for the first time — when they ushered me into the dissecting chamber of the University of Chicago, where some dozen or so cadavers stiffly bade greeting to my unaccustomed gaze. These two trials, trials in a number of senses, reënforced by a day among the bleeding horrors of the stockyards in the same City, graduated Jack London's wife forever out of apprehension as to similar tests that might overtake her.

Jamaica, Cuba, Florida, New York City

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXVIII 30th Year

THE Admiral Farragut, in ballast, rode high and rolled prodigiously. Our cabin, well aft, suffered the full wallowing effect of the vessel's "sitting down in the sea-hollows," and I, for the first time in adult life, fell violently sick. Great mortification was mine, before a sailor husband, who eyed me with surprise and some misgiving, looking to our aqueous future. But on the third day out, he sat him down in the stateroom and regarded me, with eyes in which there was the pleasure of a discovery:

"I've been learning something about myself, and I may say about you," he launched forth. "I never thought I had it in me to feel any accession of tenderness toward a seasick woman! But somehow, I seem to love you more than ever before — I don't know why, unless because each new environment, whatever it may be, seems to make you still dearer to me."

Inside the month, crossing in a dirty little Spanish steamer from Jamaica to Cuba, to our mutual astonishment, Jack himself went to pieces. A slight shock precipitated the attack. Only one steamer chair being visible, we had appropriated it; and in a heavy surge the flimsy thing collapsed. A moment's pause, and Jack picked himself up and walked aft without a word. He did not return. Inquisitive, I went to investigate, and halted petrified to behold my hardened tar, hanging, green-pallid and audible, over the stern-rail, thoroughly seasick for the initial time in his nautical history. And in the

years to come, he accepted a recurrence as a matter of course in rough weather. He likened the phenomenon of mal de mer to our native poison-oak — catch it just once, and immunity is a lost blessing. In passing, I must state that Jack continued immune to that irritating scourge of California, poison-oak.

The Admiral Farragut docked at Port Antonio, Jamaica, on New Year's morning, 1906. In the harbor was anchored the Howard Gould yacht, and at the Hotel Titchfield we made the acquaintance of Ella Wheeler Wilcox (whom Jack had championed so valiantly of old to the Lily Maid), and her husband, Robert.

In the afternoon I had my first revel in milk-warm, tropical waters, coral-girt, and we made sport for our party by diving for coins and practising life-saving as we had done in Wake Robin pool. The next day was spent in the saddle. Our mounts were spindly, blood-bay race-horses, and Jack's never for a moment let out of our minds the fact that he had been first under the wire in the previous day's races. But we saw the more, by our involuntary speed, of the British-neat island paradise, exploring the town itself, a pineapple plantation, and the romantic hill-stronghold of Moortown, still inhabited by the maroons — descendants of Spanish slaves.

The sharpest impressions carried away of that journey, in our first foreign clime together, were of the buxom, broad-smiling, broad-hipped negro wenches, basket-on-head, met on the dustless mountain roads that were in reality fern-hedged boulevards; the spiritual featured Hindoo women, weighed with their family wealth of silver adornment, specimens of which we purchased; the foolish luncheon out of queer, tempting tins, accompanied by English "biscuits," consumed while we dangled blissful heels from the counter of a little wayside store with a superb sea-view leagues below, the ebony proprietor and his indolent friends loafing genially about. But clearest of all re-mained the raffish spectacle, at Moortown, of a home-made merry-go-round. It was weather-grayed, witchy, rickety, and ridden by grinning black natives to a rhythmic chant from their own throats that affected us strangely — as if by some potent incantation dragging into the sunlight of civilization the most abysmal of racial reticences. It bestirred that mental unease which sometimes overtakes one who listens over-long to the primitive, disturbing call of modern "jazz" orchestration.

Leaving Port Antonio on the third day, by train for Buff Bay, we were there met by a dusky guide with horses, we having chosen this route across the green, fern-forested mountains to Kingston. It was all "unspeakably beautiful," I read in a pocket diary. We lunched and siesta'd at Cedarhurst, an English plantation, where Barbara Francis brewed incomparable coffee from beans which, by a true lady of the land, are roasted to a crisp for each meal. Three large cupfuls, black and strong, I, Jack's "insomniast," dared to tuck away; and three long hours afterwards, I, the insomniast, slumbered peacefully. "Why, our coffee cures insomnia," crooned Barbara Francis, as she snuggled me into a downy four-poster from "Home." "It's the way we roast it and percolate it, I fancy besides being the best coffee in the world to begin with!"

Her husband led us about the plantation before we swung again into our saddles for the next lap, and Jack, irresistibly enthusiastic, made it very plain to me how coffee must be served on the Ranch when we should go to housekeeping.

Out we fared into a sunset of tropically crude blue and copper and rose, slipping through swift twilight into starlit blue dark. Trustingly behind the mellow-throated guide our sure-footed little beasts dropped steeply down a fragrant trail, lighted fitfully by darting fireflies, into Chester Vale. Here, at Sedgwick's, the very picture of an ancient, rambling English country home, we spent the night. "You couldn't pack a Broadwood half a mile," Jack quoted, coming beside me where I was examining my first Broadwood pianoforte. "Try it, do." But the stately relic answered back in tones probably such as Kipling's Broadwood might have rendered up had it been "packed" to the humid river region he rimed with "mile."

In the dewy, singing morning, it was boots and saddles over the Blue Ridge Range — through Hardware Gap, Silver Hill Gap, Greenwich, Newcastle Barracks, Gordontown, sometimes in lanes and driveways made especially beautiful by tree-ferns and crimson hibiscus blossoming tree-high, and into Kingston by the sea. Here at the Park Lodge Hotel, our first caller was Ben Tillett, M. P. and labor leader, he and Jack of course being known to each other.

Ah, it was so softly exciting, so wondrous, seeing the world together, all the glamorousness enhanced by that lovely old hostelry with its long French windows that let in the scented tropic air. My husband, who had pleasured exceedingly in my wintry Boston shopping for "flimsies" to be donned in the warmer latitudes, now had the satisfaction of seeing the light apparel in use — then, as always in the future, appreciative and critical of every detail of my wardrobe. Nothing would do but he must take me curio-seeking in quaint shops, more particularly for a bejeweled, flexible silver girdle of Hindoo origin, and snaky bracelets to match.

Only one incident arose to mar the holiday perfection. It was on the very night of arrival that I came abruptly upon the stone wall of one of Jack's self-styled "disgusts." In review, I cannot place the cause perhaps it was some hitch on Manyoungi s part regarding the luggage, or Jack's dinner-clothes; at least, I saw no large concern back of his silent anger, unless . . . unless, indeed, some trifle had connected his memory with some unhappy occurrence in his past. But it was black, that mood, from whatever deeps it rose; and ruthlessly he sent me, alone, to the viny bower that was the hotel's dining-hall, in a court of flowers that screened the musicians, to keep an engagement we both had made with a fellow traveler from Boston.

Puzzled and hurt I was, but held my peace, and made smooth wifely excuses for a severe headache that was not altogether an untruth. In the morning Jack woke his sunniest, save for a wordless penitence that looked out of eyes which went so darkly-blue under a generous emotion.

It was ages before the matter ever came up between us. But although we spoke of it, I never made sure of the underlying impulsion that had sent him agley. It was not the only instance of its kind, but I came timely to sense the causes, and avert them

wherever in my power. Yet I hasten to undo any impression I may have given that in our lives such “spells” were the order of the day. On the contrary, months and years might elapse during which no trace of the old blues intervened; and, in this connection, I am reminded of the gradual disappearance, after our marriage, of certain terrible headaches to which he had been subject. This was, I think, largely due to his seeking more adequate sleep.

The Spanish steamer aforementioned, the Oteri, landed us in Santiago de Cuba on the 6th, where, from the Hotel del Alba, we drove about the city and to San Juan Hill, and strolled lace-hunting in cool little shops. And Jack bought some lovely fans to gratify my slight Spanish streak, which I called up to play its part in its own congenial habitat. A dinner which we enjoyed in the Café Venus, guests of a charming gentleman who was living out what of life was still vouchsafed by one remaining lung, was always a colorful memory to Jack, who incorporated it somewhere in his fiction. I, in a soft rosy gown, swaying languidly my spangled, pearl-handled fan to the lilt of a plaza band in the lazy warm airs under the palms, wondered if anything to come in our wanderings could approach the romance that was here.

After the final act at a theater, when the pretty victoria had left us at the hotel, we ascended to our vaulted chamber and drifted out upon a balcony railed in fretted gilt iron, and lounged a restful hour, shamelessly gazing into luxurious Spanish interiors and balconies across the narrow street, where señoras and señoritas entertained in their courtly manner. I am certain that Jack reveled in that night; but more certain am I that some seven-eighths of his content was vested in that of his bride, to whom every moment was as a pearl of price and as such abides.

Jack, his manhood revolting at the brazen falsity of a cab-driver who delivered us at the railroad station, became the nucleus of a gesticulating and to all appearances not harmless mob. As the moment of departure neared, he called to me to go aboard with Manyoungi. Only the fact that Jack had tickets and money in his possession restrained him from going to jail at the last instant rather than abase his Anglo-Saxon pride before the impudent half-breeds. As it was, mad as a hatter, he paid for an extra passenger who existed solely in the crafty imagination of the cab-man, and boarded the train after it was in motion. There was some consolation, however, when in Havana the same ruse was tried, and the American Consul, himself a Spaniard, to whom Jack appealed, in short order sent to the right-about a much-cowed coachman who had sworn by the Virgin to two extra fares!

The rich country across which we sped that golden day, and an Egyptian sunset athwart little hills for all the world so like pyramids that one’s eyes went questing through the rose and yellow and lilac for a Sphinx, all wrought upon Jack’s creative faculties. He withdrew into himself at intervals, to make notes for a novel which I now realize never was written — ”The Flight of the Duchess.” In the Spanish city of Havana, with its dream-tinted palaces, instead of putting up at a hotel, we found cool gray rooms in a flower-girt patio at Consolado and Neptune Streets. Of course, we did and saw everything there was to do and see in so short a sojourn: a launch trip around

the twisted wreck of the Maine; visits to Moro Castle and Cabañas Fort, and to the swimming baths of hewn coral; and we drowned our souls in the fairy coloring of the isle and the waters of the Gulf. Notable amid our entertainment was a sportive evening watching the Basque game of Jai Alai, followed by a gorgeous banquet in the famous Hotel Miramar, originally built by a rich American for the pleasure of his guests.

A book in itself would be required to relate an afternoon we spent in the lazar-house — an experience that for all time interested us in the tragedy of the leper.

"We hated to leave Havana," says my red booklet, "but all the world's before us!"

The steamer Halifax set us down at Key West, where we transferred to the Shinnecock for Miami. Jack, who from his omniverous reading knew considerable about almost everything under the sky, was curious to hook a few of the six hundred-odd varieties of fish reputed to swim in Miami waters. "Just think, Mate," he said to me, "one-fifth of the entire fauna of the American Continent, north of Panama, inhabit this part of the coast." Boating, angling for edible fish and hooking outlandish finny shapes, driving in the Everglades, calling at the alligator and crocodile farm, and shopping for curios and snakeskins, filled the Miami visit. Next we stopped at Daytona Beach, where from the Hotel Clarendon we branched out on automobile trips over the beautiful stretches of sand, fished off the long pier, and took a day's launch-exploration up the tropical Tomoka Kiver.

Jack had been drooping, dull and listless, for a day or two. On the return cruise he became rapidly worse, so that I was up all night with him, and in the morning sent numerous telegrams delaying New York appointments.

No doctor would he let me summon, "Because I simply can't be laid up long, with New York and the rest of the lecture schedule to be lived up to," he demurred. "Besides, it's only grippe — I know the symptoms; and I also know myself and my recuperative abilities better than any doctor.

I sat by his bedside reading aloud and running to the window whenever a racing car whizzed past, while the patient grumbled and groaned with splitting head: "And I came to this damned place mainly to see those cars at practice; and now look at me!"

The next I knew, glancing up from a totally unemotional page of Shaw's "The Irrational Knot," was that Jack was weeping copiously, the tears coursing down his hot cheeks. Much perturbed, I yet failed to wring from him any explanation. But I was to learn through painful experience that very night, for I was struck down by the identical malady and myself fell emotional to a degree upon the mildest provocation.

Manyoungi, fortunately, remained untouched by the sickness, and nobly nursed the pair of us, sending further telegrams that moved ever ahead our New York arrival. Crawling in to Jack from my room, he received me with feeble arms and trembling voice:

"Mate Woman, I know I shall love you always!" and we both cried sumptuously over the sentiment. And how we laughed in memory of our mawkishness, once the attack of dengue, or "boo-hoo" fever, which it proved to be, was a thing of the past.

As soon as we were slightly better, we took a drawing-room for New York, stopping over at Jacksonville for an afternoon in which to totter around the Ostrich Farm. The foregoing is by way of preparing the reader for receiving into New York City a white, hollow-eyed, very miserable Jack London, burdened with an almost insupportable number of engagements to fulfil in half the days he had originally alloted them. The first was a socialist meeting in Grand Central Palace, his lecture advertised for eight p. m., and our belated train gave him scant leeway. In no wise aided by the fact that I had to go to bed, too blind with pain in head and muscles to lend cheer by word or smile, Jack, ill, travel-worn, dinnerless, got into his black suit and somehow carried off the occasion. His audience, a mixed one, totaled nearly four thousand.

More than once Jack had forewarned me, in similar strain to his remarks in the Johns Letters, of the baleful influence exercised upon him by this mighty man-trap, New York City. Even so, that early, I was inclined to discount the mental factor, laying his condition mainly at the door of fever and social over-strain. But I was forced to change my mind. His own diagnosis was that his experience with the City, first from the viewpoint of tramp and beggar, and afterward from that of successful author at whom "publishers were trying to throw money in the form of advances on unperformed work, seemed to have unbalanced his preceptions and sent him reasoning in a circle like that of certain young German philosophers.

"It's all a madness," he would gird. "'Why should anybody do any thing?' is my continual thought when I am in New York. I am being shaved: I look up into the face of the man who is using the razor on me, and wonder why he doesn't cut my throat with it. I stare with amazement at the elevator-boy in the hotel, that he doesn't throw everything to the winds and let loose in one hell of a smashup, just for the whimsey of it!"

At the opera, he brooded and made notes. If the music reached him at all, it was not as music, but as an urge toward other thoughts and speculations. "Music? It is a drug," said he. "I have asked several men and women for a definition of music. George Sterling comes the nearest to satisfying — a drug. It sets me dreaming like a hasheesh-eater."

We sat at the Winter Garden. He filled the evening agonizing mentally over the probable careers, in the theatrical shambles, of the choms girls, beautiful mere children that they were, flown like moths to the bright lights that were consuming them.

We supped at the Revolutionists' Club, and afterward inspected a mile or so of the Ghetto, peering into the unventilated gloom of "inside rooms," at the sullen pasty faces of the inmates. Jack moved about, either silently, as if playing his part in a nightmare, or arguing strenuously as if against time.

Up-town or down-town, it seemed as if all normal spontaneity had fled from him, and I could but exist in hope that the man, who was as though a thousand-thousand leagues apart from me, might one day come suddenly to his own again, to the healthy, vital boy that was himself.

After one reception that was given in our honor, when a newspaperwoman had seized the occasion to poke a little fun at the bride's obvious devotion, Jack sneered

with mirthless laugh: "What did you expect? — Any natural human appreciation of anything natural and human, in New York?"

It was about this time that The Cosmopolitan Magazine had issued a challenge to a few of America's thinking writers, to contribute articles on the theme "What Life Means to Me." Jack had not yet found leisure in which even to ponder what he should say; but a conversation with Edwin Markham stirred him to action:

"How are you going about it?" asked the white-maned poet, his splendid dark eyes bent upon the younger man.

"Damned 'f I know!" smiled Jack. "How are you?"

Followed a discussion, Mr. Markham appreciating Jack's uncompromising socialist approach to the subject, but doubtful of its expediency as regarded the magazine editors.

But when the Jack London production appeared in The Cosmopolitan, it was without editorial blue elision, "Which is why I like to work for Hearst," Jack repeated an oft-voiced opinion. "Writers for Hearst, special writers like myself, are paid well for expanding their own untrammeled views. (Once he expatiated: "Why, when I returned from Manchuria and presented my expense account, the Examiner editor said, 'For God's sake, London, do itemize this a little before I send it in!' I did this, and the unquestioned total was remitted in due course." So meticulously, indeed, had The Examiner observed the details of Jack's war correspondence, that he had been greatly entertained, upon his return, to notice that wherever he had queried his own spelling, the "(Spl?)" with which he had preceded the word was left untampered!)

In Jack London's "What Life Means to Me" (final article in book entitled "Revolution"), one reads what is perhaps his most impassioned committal of himself as a rebel toward the shames and uncleannesses of the capitalist system. Here he dedicates himself to what he sees as his Holy Grail, to "the one clean, noble and alive" thing worth working for — George Sterling's definition of Socialism. In the essay Jack hints at some of his experiences, east and west, more than one of them in the immediate past of his lecturing tour, and what he learned therein concerning the women and men of the tottering edifice of the upper crust of Society. His challenge is flung to that thin and cracking upper crust as he saw it: "with all its rotten life and unburied dead, its monstrous selfishness and sodden materialism."

The only break in the New York days was when Jack went to New Haven to give the "Revolution" lecture at Yale University, under title of "The Coming Crisis." To my everlasting regret I was too weak to accompany him. He was invited to speak by the author of that exquisite, human Irish idyl, "My Lady of the Chimney Corner," Reverend Alexander Irvine, who represented the state committee and the New Haven Local. Jack cut out several less important affairs, and gave to Connecticut January 26. No theater nor hall being available, the Socialists, including members of the Intercollegiate Society, had held an informal Smoker in an ivied tower in Vanderbilt Hall of the august college, and hatched the critical scheme of getting the Faculty interested in bidding

Jack London, famous young litterateur, to grace Woolsey Hall, Yale's million-dollar white marble memorial.

Dr. Irvine commissioned an astute, socialistically-bent student to take the matter up, first, with an officer of Yale Union, a debating society. The seed fell on fertile ground. "The officer of the Yale Union," says Dr. Irvine, in a delightful illustrated brochure which he afterward compiled, "was a youth of exceeding great callowness.

"'They say he's socialistically inclined, Doctor,' he said.

"'Rather, I replied.

"'Well, he said, 'I suppose we'll have to take our chances.'"

Dr. Irvine guaranteed the hall rent, advertising, and so forth, provided an admission fee of ten cents might be charged, which was agreed upon.

It really was a shame, what these graceless free-thinkers put over upon President Hadley. One of the leading Professors, although apprehensive of Jack's "radical tendencies," was yet reasonable: "Yale is a University," enounced he, "and not a monastery. Besides, Jack London is one of the most distinguished men in the world."

Dr. Irvine tells: "A few hours after it was decided that we could have Woolsey Hall the advertising began. The factories and shops were bombarded with dodgers. Every tree on the campus bore the mysterious inscription: 'Jack London at Woolsey Hall.' Comrade Dellfant painted a poster which gripped men by the eyes. In it Comrade London appears in a red sweater and in the background the lurid glare of a great conflagration. . . . On the morning of the 26th Yale — official and unofficial — awoke as if she had been dreaming. She rubbed her eyes and again scanned the trees and the billboards. Then the officers of the Yale Union were run down. They had previously run each other down. Explanations were in order all around. Several of the Yale Union boys — in pugilistic parlance — lost their little goats. They were scared good and stiff. Several Yale Dons got exceedingly chesty over the affair. But the New Yale took a hand, and Professors Kent and Phelps counseled a square deal and fair play. One student, in sympathy with the meeting, said: "Yale Union and many of the Faculty are sweating under the collar for fear London might say something socialistic.'"

But it was definitely settled that the lecture could not be called off and the only thing was to make the best of it. "When we arrived on the scene," Dr. Irvine refers to Jack and himself, "the boys still believed that any reference to Socialism would be merely incidental." Jack's friend, by the way, in his spirited account attires the speaker, with marked respect, in a white flannel shirt! Friends and enemies alike insisted upon his wearing flannel!

The crowd that packed Woolsey Hall represented every social phase of New Haven and its suburbs a hundred professors and ten times as many students ; many hundreds of workingmen; many hundreds of citizens; many hundreds of Socialists. "But," the humorous Irish divine remarks, "the Socialists were so overwhelmed by the bourgeois atmosphere that there was not the slightest attempt to applaud during the entire length of the lecture." And the Socialist "bouncers" who had been surreptitiously sta-tioned throughout the big audience, in reserve for possible ructions, held their idle hands.

“For over two hours the audience gave the lecturer a respectful hearing. A woman — a lady — went out swearing. A few students tried hard to sneer, but succeeded rather indifferently. Jack London gripped them by the intellect and held them to the close. Following the lecture, Comrade London was invited to a student’s room — one of the largest — and there he answered questions until midnight. As the clock struck twelve a member of the Yale Union came to me and asked me seriously if I thought there was any hope of keeping London for a week! ‘We can fit him up here,’ he said, ‘in fine shape.’

“There was a second conference at Mory’s and some tired intellects were handled rather roughly by the guests of the evening — but the students clung to him and escorted him in the we sma hours up Chapel Street toward the Socialist parsonage where another reception was awaiting him.

“A Professor of Yale,” Dr. Irvine concludes, “told me a few days after the lecture that it was the greatest intellectual stimulus Yale had had in many years, and he sincerely hoped that London would return and expound the Socialist program in the same hall.”

Jack had been advised beforehand as to certain faulty acoustics in the beautiful auditorium. That he lent no deaf ear may be judged from one of the newspapers, which also gives a hint upon his platform personality at that time:

“. . . he walked to the edge of the stage and began to speak in a clear voice, which reached easily to the farthest corner of the hall. He used scarcely any gestures, and rarely raised his voice even to emphasize a point. His emphasis he got by reiteration.

As for his countenance, in a photograph taken with Dr. Irvine, there can be noticed the strange, haggard look he wore during that period.

His immediate treatment by the New Haven dailies was one of leniency, not lacking the dignity of at least trying to quote him verbatim. He was not flattered by the portrait they published, since it was of some one else, youthfully apostolic in appearance, arrayed quite differently from Jack’s reputed “white flannel shirt.”

While the local press was minded to be indulgent and the University as little unduly excited as had been Harvard in its turn, the trustees of Derby Neck Library, in the same State, rose in a denunciatory body and repudiated, to all intents and purposes forever, the entire works of Jack London. Further misquoting his “to hell with the constitution” pronouncement, those opinion creators exhorted the public, in no uncertain terms, likewise to spurn all periodicals containing Jack’s stories.

It had happened that Mr. Melville E. Stone, general manager of the Associated Press, spoke in New Haven upon the same evening with Jack London. But whenever asked, by sympathizers, regarding the policy of the Derby Neckers, if he thought Mr. Stone’s presence had anything to do with the deluge of adverse newspaper notoriety which followed. Jack invariably insisted: “Not in the least. I am personally convinced that Mr. Stone had nothing to do with it.

But it was ludicrous how the tune of the press changed from “the brilliant young author” to criticisms such as, “pathologically he is a neurasthenic,” or it disposed of him lightly as “that socialist sensation-monger who calls him self Jack London.” It

is noteworthy, however, that his mother's home town, Massillon, Ohio, supported an editor with a sense of proportion, for he naively propounded, in The Morning Gleaner, "Must a novelist necessarily admire the Constitution?"

The truth is, that the wide controversy as to black listing Jack's books caused an alarming slump in sales for some time to come. He, who always maintained his unfitness for physical martyrdom: I'd tell anything under torture!" — thus sacrificed unflinchingly for his beliefs, martyred his brain faculties in the cause of Truth.

About the nearest the capitalist editors leaned toward championing him, or at least reacting to the high-handed imposition of arbitrary standards upon readers of Derby Neck or other communities, was when they voiced something of President Wheeler's earlier sentiments as to the unlidding of highly explosive propaganda.

Came the ninth and last day that parted us from our western trek. Whisked from a luncheon of celebrities to the Twentieth Century Limited, we were settled in our section and the car gliding homeward, when Jack, suddenly, with a sigh, nodded his curly head and as suddenly fell asleep. All strain was erased from his features — it was the face of a dreaming child that slipped into the hollow of my shoulder, ordained from aforetime. When he awoke, and consciousness had focused in his eyes, they looked up into mine with a matter-of-course recognition of content. Upon his tongue was speech of home — and how were the dear Brown Wolf, and that rabbity little bay mare, Fleet, which the young Aliens had sold us along with other farm perquisites when they vacated the old house on the Hill place?

It was preciously similar to the way he had emerged from his thrall on that epochal spring day in Nunn's Canyon. And I was to learn, whensoever great Gotham claimed its price and prize of his unresting heart and brain, that I must deal with another personality than the wonted Jack London.

Return to Oakland; Earthquake

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CHICAGO, noises and drafts and sifting soot and all, seemed to reach to us east-worn travelers like home and peace, despite the rushing stop-over that had been charted.

On Sunday, January 28, Jack lectured to the Socialists at the West Side Auditorium, introduced by A. M. Simons, editor of the International Socialist Review. Standing-room only, and that all taken, was the situation long before Jack had risen to speak.

On Monday he repeated "The Social Revolution" at the University of Chicago, and the Socialists were more than ever elate that the "magnificent lecture of Comrade London" should be staged in the "intellectual stronghold of Standard Oil." Kent Hall, which had been opened to the Sociological Club, was incapable of holding the mob bent upon seeing and hearing its famous mouth-piece, to say nothing of the students themselves and a horde of citizens.

It was a fine sight to me, the hundreds overflowing on to the stage itself, sidewalks jammed outside, and more coming every second. Things were growing tense. The dissatisfied murmur of the many denied admission floated into the packed playhouse. Then an usher climbed before the foot lights and announced that the meeting would adjourn to Mandel Hall — Mandel Hall! the auditorium consecrated to the most dress-parade functions of the great University, and even known to have been refused to the minor colleges for their commencement exercises. The galleries had been barred; but when the throng had swept aside the helpless ushers and occupied every foot of space, seat and aisle, fear of infringing fire regulations caused the galleries to be thrown open.

The dailies of Chicago, still smarting under the suppressed wedding news, as well as from Jack's late attacks, from the Atlantic Coast, upon her sweat-shop atrocities, naturally let him have the broadside of their ridicule and enmity. But somehow, so fond were we of the city, it failed to offend.

Before we said good-by, Mr. Simons and his attractive and learned wife had us to the University dissecting rooms aforementioned, as well as to the Armour and Swift stockyards and slaughtering plants. And while we were on the trail of unpleasant but instructive sights of the world in which we live, we spent a night going through one section of Chicago's "red-light" district.

Our last sight-seeing, ere we left on the 31st for St. Paul, was of Hull House, where we made the acquaintance of Miss Jane Addams. It was a treat to listen to a discussion between Miss Addams and Jack London — each approaching the same heartfelt problems from widely divergent angles.

"Well," Jack observed, stretching himself in the Pullman, the Little Woman has added a number of strange experiences to her life. And you don't know," he broke out, "you can't guess, what it means to me, to have you by my side everywhere, in everything I do and see. I am not lonely any more. Wherever I go, — at least, wherever it is possible for me to take you, I want you with me — I want you to know the world as I know it, the good and the bad of it. It means the world to me that you don't flinch from any of it, so far as I can see. — In fact," his tone went grave and his brow severe, before breaking into laughing speech, "the way that you, shameless women that you are, tenderly raised a vegetarian, put away that hearty lunch after seeing animals slaughtered all forenoon, worries me about your immortal soul!"

"But you will kindly remember," I came back, "that I confined my depredations solely to bivalves and prawns!"

In the little diary of that day's ride I find: "Jack says we two are living in a Land of Love, wherever we are." There is less tender notation to the effect that I was sorely beaten at both casino and cribbage; also mention of our finishing Turgenev's "On the Eve" and beginning Gissing's "The Unclassed," reading aloud, turn about.

At St. Paul, Jack lectured for the Lyceum Bureau. We visited the handsome State Capitol, fashioned throughout, marbles and all, from native American materials. We sat through an exciting wrestling match in the Armory. And nothing would do but Jack must take part in an impromptu "curling" tournament. It was with keen enjoyment

he drove the heavy but elusive disks over the constantly swept ice-rink, and the very picture of a Scotch laddie was he, in borrowed tam o'shanter and woolen plaid. We heard later, much to his amusement, that the driver of the automobile that returned us over the hard snow to the hotel, had been arrested for speeding!

Grand Forks, North Dakota, was the next jump, where we were entertained by President Merrifield of the State University, and in this city on February 3 were given Jack's two final lectures. The "first and last tour," so far as the speaking end of it was concerned, had terminated untimely, for Jack was tired and ill from the long siege, and had crossed off a number from the itinerary. On the train he wrote Cloudesley Johns:

"I called off the Mills [B. Fay Mills, The Evangelist] debate because he requested me to, and because the only alternative was a refined and sublimated statement that had nothing in it to debate about. Have been miserably sick, and have cancelled a whole string of lectures, including all California lectures. I sent you a wire canceling Owen debate. . . . I won't get down to Los Angeles this spring."

The remainder of the journey was without special event, except that our train was delayed above beautiful Dunsmuir, in California, by a freight wreck ahead in a canyon. The passengers made a picnic of it, wandering about the adjacent country; and we twain, being immersed in Selma Lagerlof's "Gosta Berling," reclined upon a grassy slope and read to each other. I think it will be seen, by now, why Jack and I were never bored, no matter how long nor uninteresting, in the estimate of some mortals, our traverse. Life was not long enough in which to read the books we desired, to do the work laid out, to talk of the myriad things suggested by other myriad things; nor to love.

At three o'clock, the last but one morning before we reached Oakland, Jack woke me in my berth. Disturbing my rest being a tacit taboo, I was startled; but his instant whisper, shaken with eagerness, reassured: "Throw on your kimono and come out on the platform with me. I want to show you something — you've got to see it!"

It was indeed "something" — great Shasta, upthrust 14,000 feet, snow-crowned, into the moonlit, night-blue dome of the sky; and the Lassen Buttes, stark and flat in the beams of a setting moon, like peaks cut from heavy dull-gold cardboard. Eight years thereafter, in Mexico, when General Funston remarked that he had read in "El Imparcial's" telegraphic column that Mt. Lassen was in eruption, my mind flew back to that hour before dawn when Jack and I, so airily clad, arm-in-arm on the lurching vestibule platform, gazed out upon the fairy scene, and spoke in hushed tones.

The Oakland reporters flocked to Jack upon his return, and to their queries he repeated that if his marriage had proved invalid in Illinois, he would have remarried in every state in the Union. Referring to some misreport about himself, I find this from the Oakland Herald:

"Yes, that was another case of being the victim of reporters readjustment of facts. Oh, I know I have been a newspaperman myself — thereby perhaps I know so well how impossible it is for reporters to avoid perverting facts. Oh, heavens, no! I am not trying to demonstrate that reporters are natural-born liars, and yet. . . .

"Why, do you know, while I was in Chicago the other day, I had two reporters struggle with my immortal soul for hours trying to get me to say that I am a believer in free love — which I am not at all. They struggled nobly, but I stood firm to the argument that the family group is the very hub of things.

"But then I rather enjoy this misrepresentation. It is amusing; and besides you know, it's fine advertising! And I don't take myself seriously, so can take all that's said about me as a joke, for I always try to laugh at the inevitable."

Jack had concluded to cease paying rent in Oakland; and shortly after our arrival, as man and wife, at the little flat in Telegraph Avenue, we set about finding a suitable house for his mother and Johnnie, as well as Mammy Jennie. One was purchased on Twenty-Seventh Street, Jack's ultimate decision influenced by the handsome woods of its interior finishing, for he was fond of good lumber. One room in the upper story we reserved for town headquarters.

By mid-month we were on the way to our true home, and were met at the Glen Ellen station by "Werner Wiget, who had long since changed his abode from the Fish Ranch to the farm-house up the mountain, where now he was in charge, under my Aunt's supervision in Jack's absence.

"Jack's House," at Wake Robin, as it has ever since been known, served as formerly for writing quarters and Manyoungi's sleeping place. Other living rooms, added to Wake Robin Lodge proper, and spoken of as the Annex, were in readiness for our use, and a neat and comely neighbor, Mrs. Grace Parrent, who wanted to swell her own family exchecquer for some special purpose, had engaged to cook and ply her deft French needle in preparing me for the round-world voyage.

It was a sort of sublimated camping. Our winter table was set in a corner of the spotless kitchen that was odorous of new pine; and later on, when spring's caprices had quieted, the table was removed out under the laurels at the brookside, where our crocked butter and cream cooled in the ripples. Mrs. Parrent's excellent repasts were enjoyed to the music of tuneful Korean treebells that Manyoungi knew well how to place to advantage among the bays and oaks. Jack and I had discovered many tastes in common, even to a fondness for olive oil as a culinary lubricator, in preference to the animal fats. He had acquired his among the Greek fishermen, I in my Aunt's vegetarian household.

Jack was not yet looking quite himself, the sunken shadows still lurking about his eyes; and a marked decrease in weight was noticeable. I was aware of an almost painful relief in that he was once more out of the turmoil of urban life and immersed in laying plans for the summer's work and play, the building of his deep-sea, boat, and the modest improvement of the "Blessed Ranch," as he lovingly referred to it. Consequently, it was with positive alarm that I regarded the managing editor of a large eastern monthly, who arrived from New York two days after our return to Wake Robin, his mission to induce Jack immediately to recross the continent, for the purpose of making a first-hand study of the southern cotton-mills in relation to child-labor.

Caring — perhaps sinfully, who shall say? — more for the imminent welfare of this man of mine than for all the serfs of all ages, I sat at the interview silently exerting every fiber of me against his going. I was certain, from observation of his internal restlessness, that if he went back into the cities so soon, there might be dire consequences. Reasoning back to his state antedating the summer of 1905, I knew he had had enough, for the time being.

The editor was plainly anxious not to find his journey in vain. Eloquently he pleaded. Jack pondered with troubled eyes, and would not give answer until he and I had talked it over. He wanted to do the thing; his conscience pressed him to do it. And though he recognized as well as I the need in which he stood of freedom from what he had only just escaped, he would not have shirked even if his actual life had depended upon it. But balanced against this new work was the work he had already pledged, together with other responsibilities; and there came to aid his ultimatum a slight misstep of the editor, who let drop that if Jack did not undertake the commission, another man, only a little less noted — Socialist — was in view. “Let the other fellow have a chance,” often a slogan of Jack London’s, was the outweighing grain in the scales.

Jack knew, and why, though I said little and tried not to look too much, that I was dead-set against his going. I never learned precisely what he thought of my attitude — whether he blamed me for being instrumental, by mere woman-mothering possessiveness and solicitude, in with holding him from a duty, or was glad I agreed that he stay west for a while. If there resided in his mind any unflattering criticism, it died with him. It may be that something restrained me from asking; and joy in his augmented well-being — always my religious care — took the place of morbid self-examination. Before I desert the subject, let it be said that the second-choice of author and investigator did a splendid piece of work — ”Better than I could have done it, by far!” Jack enunciated his satisfaction; hence the ultimate good was served. Furthermore, one of Jack’s finest bits of writing, after our return, was a story of the making of a hobo by the process of cotton-mill child-slavery. This was “The Apostate,” which, following serial publication, came to have wide circulation in pamphlet form through a Socialist publishing house in Chicago. (The book “Revolution” contains this tale.)

How more than busy we were! Aside from regular writing, which was soon resumed, Jack, with eye to homebuilding, ordered fruit-trees of all descriptions suitable to the latitude, and seventy-odd varieties of table-grapes — orchard and vineyard to be planted upon an amphitheater behind a half-circle we had chosen for the house-site. Johannes Reimers tendered the benefit of his professional advice about the trees and vines, and ordered for us a hedge of Japanese hawthorne to flourish between orchard and house-space, which in time grew into a glory of orange and red berries alternating with a season of white blossoming. The plot was on the lip of a deep wooded ravine which was the Ranch’s southern boundary, ancient redwood and spruce, lightning-riven and eagle-nested, accenting the less majestic growth. We never wearied of riding Belle and

Ban to the spot, in our minds' eyes the vision of a rugged stone house that was to rise like an indigenous growth from the grassy semi-circle.

While occupied upon two Alaskan tales, "A Day's Lodging" and "The Wit of Porportuk" (bound in "Love of Life" and "Lost Face"), Jack arranged the manuscripts for two short-story volumes, "Moon Face" and "Love of Life," published in 1906 and 1907 respectively. Next, Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" was reviewed. Jack, who apositely dubbed it "The Uncle Tom's Cabin of Wage-Slavery," sadly observed thereafter that the most conspicuous result of this expose of labor conditions in the stockyards was only to make the public more careful what it put into its stomach.

While he was working on another story, "When God Laughs," a letter was received from Mr. E. H. Sothern, asking him to write a socialistic play for himself and Miss Julia Marlowe; but nothing ever came of this.

Before starting upon a new novel, "Before Adam," Jack had, in addition to the above-noted short work, completed an article, "The Somnambulists" (in "Revolution"), also the stories "Created He Them" and "Just Meat" (both in "When God Laughs" collection), and "Finis" (in "The Turtles of Tasman.") Then, by way of relaxation and practice on drama form, he did a curtain-raiser from his story "The Wicked Woman" — this flick of drama going into the volume "The Human Drift," brought out posthumously.

During March, he visited Oakland to deliver a Socialist lecture at Dietz Opera House. Following this event, Jack London was talked of for Socialist Governor at the next elections. While in Oakland, we selected a two-seated rig and a runabout. Jack had set his heart upon a buckboard, such as one in which his neighbor, Judge Carroll Cook, used to meet friends at the railroad station. But we were in urgent need of a vehicle for the same purpose, and snapped up the neat uncovered wagon with yellow wheels, looking forward to a buckboard later on. Jack never acquired that buckboard. Instead, when the Napa Winships went in for gasolene, we bought out their other rolling stock, which came to serve all purposes.

Mrs. Louise Clark, a neighbor, sold us the horse Selim, a black handful of abounding energy. Jack, in the process of subduing Selim and the silly Fleet to gentle uses, waxed in soft-spoken patience unbelievable to his old pals who came to look on. We took much interest, also, informing different spans with our four light horses, harnessed to the new four wheelers.

And oh, yes — the good Brown Wolf, tiny pointed ears flattened ingratiatingly back into his russet ruff, and long pink tongue lolling dumb delight and pride, presented us to a new family of puppies. One of these went to Jack's children. "I don't think much of the rest," he ruefully surveyed them and their mongrel if excellent mother; so we kept none of the litter.

Presently the astounding booksmith had begun his atavistic "Before Adam," which came out in Everybody's Magazine. Upon its publication a hue and cry went up, originating in a men's club, to the effect that Jack London had plagiarized Stanley Waterloo's "The Story of Ab." Be it said, however, that Mr. Waterloo did not start the trouble. Jack was frank to admit that "The Story of Ab" had been one of his sources

of material. "But Waterloo was not scientific," he stoutly defended, "and I have made a scientific book out of my re-creation on the subject." So correct was his assumption, that "Before Adam" went into the universities of the United States as a text-book in Anthropology. To George Sterling, in June, he wrote:

"Have just expressed you MS of 'Before Adam.' It's just a skit, ridiculously true, preposterously real. Jump on it."

England, even that early, in the character of Red Eye saw a "cryptic reference to the German Emperor."

Jack, who derived material from every available source and especially from the newspapers as representing life, was eternally dogged at the heels by small men at home and abroad who charged plagiarism — these having little commerce with one, more generous, who said, "If I could by hook or crook write anything worth Jack London's copying, I should consider it a privilege. As for Jack, he did not try to boycott those who benefited by his creations. Rather was he pleased that he had been first!

That year of 1906, sketchy as was our domestic menage, many visitors came to the Lodge annex, and Auntie let us spill over into the main house. Among the names in my journal I come upon our good friends the Granville-Shueys — Dr. Shuey was custodian of the welfare of Jack London's troublesome teeth to the end of the patient's life; Mr. Bamford; I. M. Griffin, the artist, a number of whose canvases, painted in the neighborhood, Jack purchased; Henry Meade Bland, of San José, at all times one of Jack's most tireless biographers; Felix Peano, sculptor, in whose house, La Capriccioso, Jack had once lived; young Roy Nash, of whom "The People of the Abyss" had made a Socialist; Ernest Untermann, author, and translator of Karl Marx; the George Sterlings; different members of the talented family of Partingtons; George Wharton James, who charmed with his social qualities and music, and later published most readable articles upon his visit; Elwyn Hoffman, poet; Herman Whitaker; Xavier Martinez, artist and prince of bohemians "Sometimes I think," Jack once remarked, "that George Sterling and Marty are the realest bohemians I have ever known!"; Maud Younger, settlement worker and philanthropist; and a long list beside.

Our amusements consisted in exploring, alone or with our guests, the infinite variety of the one hundred and twenty-nine acres of Jack's "Beauty Ranch"; driving or riding to points in the valley — say Cooper's Grove, a stately group of redwoods; or to Hooker's Falls across in the eastern range; or to Santa Rosa, as when we drove Professor Edgar Larkin, of Mt. Lowe Observatory, to call upon Luther Burbank; or to the valley resorts to swim, for a change from Sonoma Creek, in the warm mineral tanks.

During the Moyer-Haywood trouble in Idaho, Jack was urger by The Examiner to go there and report proceedings in his own way; but he was too involved at home to spare the time. Nevertheless, he managed to sandwich in a rousing article, which was printed by the Socialist Voice, of Oakland.

All of which reads like the crowded year it was; yet it is but a sample of eleven surpassingly full years we were to live out together. In addition to what I have set

down, Jack read numberless books of all sizes and titles, and we still found opportunity to share, aloud, H. G. Wells, de Maupassant, Gertrude Atherton, Sudermann, Phillpotts, Saleeby, Herbert Spencer, and countless others, including plays — among them Bernard Shaw's, Clyde Fitch's, Ibsen's; and, above all, endless poetry. It is a curious jumble, I know; but Jack read rapaciously — both of the meatiest and the trashiest. He must know "what the other fellow is doing."

One day, he received a letter from a bank in Billings, Montana, informing him that two checks bearing his signature had been returned from Chicago marked "No Funds." It was an instance of the "doubles" who were fast coming into being. The nearest Jack had ever been to Billings was when, a few months previous, we had passed through on our westward way. Jack promptly forwarded to the bank his photograph and signature, and also an outside cover of the current Everybody's Magazine, on which under a sort of "footprints-on-the-sands-of-time" illustration for "Before Adam" his autograph was reproduced. The Bank was finally convinced; but from all accounts the imposter had closely resembled Jack London, and the handwriting was not dissimilar.

This was, I think, the only time a "double" passed worthless checks; but several others worked the country incapacities more or less injurious to the original. One of them stirred up revolution in Mexico, long before 1914, at which time Jack London paid his first and last visit to that restless republic, as war correspondent with General Funston. Another winnowed Oklahoma and adjoining territory, and the celebrated "101 Ranch," for all they were worth in board and lodging and information. Still others led girls astray, and many the piteous letters, addressed to places where Jack had never set foot, or when the pair of us were on the other side of the world, begging restitution for anything from stolen virtue to diamonds. Jack tried to get in touch with these floating impersonators, promising safe departure if they would only come to the Ranch and entertain him with their methods. But even when his letters never returned, there were no replies. While we were honeymooning in Cuba, according to one side of a correspondence that came into Jack's possession, a spurious J. L. was carrying on an affair with a mother of several children in Sacramento, California.

On April 18, 1906, there came, in a sense, the "shock of our lives." One need hardly mention that it was the Great Earthquake, which, most notable of consequences, destroyed the "modern imperial city" of San Francisco as no other modern imperial city has been destroyed. If it had not been for this stunning disaster to the larger place, the ruin of our county seat, Santa Rosa, in which many lives were crushed out, would have commanded the attention and sympathy of the world. As it was, refugees from the Bay metropolis began presently to straggle up-country, only to find the pretty town prone in a scarcely laid dust of brick and mortar and ashes.

Jack's nocturnal habits of reading, writing, smoking, and coughing, or sudden shifts of posture (he could not move his smallest finger without springing alive from head to foot), not being exactly a remedy for my insomnia, we ordinarily occupied beds as far apart as possible. A few minutes before five, on the morning of the 18th, upstairs at Wake Robin, my eyes flew open inexplicably, and I wondered what had stirred me so

early. I curled down for a morning nap, when suddenly the earth began to heave, with a sickening onrush of motion for an eternity of seconds. An abrupt pause, and then it seemed as if some great force laid hold of the globe and shook it like a Gargantuan rat. It was the longest half-minute I ever lived through.

Now, I am free to confess, I do not like earthquakes. Never, child and woman, had I liked earthquakes. But my mind had been made up long since that while I wasted time being afraid of them, less terrified or at any rate more observant persons were able to take in phenomena which I had missed. And, so help me, when the April 18 quake got under way, and though very lonely in the conviction that my end was approaching in leaps and bounds, I lay quite still, watching the tree-tops thrash crazily, as if all the winds of all quarters were at loggerheads. The sharp undulation stopping, Jack and I met our guests, Mr. and Mrs. Reimers, in the living-room, and we all had the same tale to relate — of watching, from our pillows, the possessed antics of the trees; only, all but myself had had a view of the trunks rather than the tops.

When Jack and I ran over to the barn still rented at the Fish Ranch, we found our saddle animals had broken their halters and were still quivering and skittish. Willie, the chore-boy, said the huge madrono tree near by had lain down on the ground and got up again — which was less lurid than many impressions to which we listened that weird day.

In half an hour after the shock, we were in our saddles, riding to the Ranch, from which height could be distinguished a mighty column of smoke in the direction of San Francisco, and another northward where lies Santa Rosa. In the immediate foreground at our feet a prodigious dust obscured the buildings of the State Home for the Feeble minded.

"Why, Mate Woman, " Jack cried, his eyes big with surmise, "I shouldn't wonder if San Francisco had sunk. That was some earthquake. We don't know but the Atlantic may be washing up at the feet of the Rocky Mountains!"

Our beautiful barn — the shake had disrupted its nearly finished two-foot-thick stone walls, and to our horror revealed that the rascally Italian contractor from Sonoma, despite reasonable overseeing, had succeeded in rearing mere shells of rock, filling in between with debris of the flimsiest. Jack's face was a study.

"Jerry-built," he murmured, hurt in his voice, "and I told him the solid, honest thing I wanted — and did not question his price. What have I done to him, or anybody, that he should do this thing?"

He turned his back upon the swindle, for there were other things to see; and I could almost vouch that his wrecked property did not enter his head for the next several days any more than he would bother about a worrisome letter or problem until the moment came to dispose of it.

"And anyway," he dismissed the subject as we turned down-mountain, "it's lucky the heavy tile roof wasn't already placed, and some poor devil sleeping under it!"

One day, weeks afterward, the Italian had the ill-considered "nerve" to call at "Jack's House." I remember that we were showing the work-room to the Winships. At the

knock, Jack turned and recognized the contractor. Facing back to me, he said in a low, vibrating tone: Mate, will you attend to him? — send him away, as quickly as possible!" Never fear that I did not do that same. Once outside, I said to the man: "You must get out of here quick!" And when he started to whine a remonstrance, I repeated, with glance over-shoulder: "Quick! Get out! And don't ever come back!"

Back to breakfast, after reconnoitering the neighborhood as far as the State Home, where, through the perfect discipline, no lives had been sacrificed, we prepared to board the first train to Santa Rosa, hoping to find another to San Francisco in the afternoon. And the trains ran, though not on time, what of twisted rails and litter of fallen water-tanks along the roadway. Reports of the Great Fire and broken water-mains in San Francisco made us long to be in at the incredible disaster, so long as it had to be.

With no luggage except our smallest hand-bag, which we left with the restaurant cashier of the last ferry-boat permitted to land passengers that night, we started afoot up old Broadway, and all night roamed the city of hills, prey to feelings that cannot be described. That night proved our closest to realizing a dream that came now and again to Jack in sleep, that he and I were in at the finish of all things — standing or moving hand in hand through chaos to its brink, looking upon the rest of mankind in the process of dissolution.

Having located relatives I knew had been overtaken, and found them unharmed, Jack and I were free to follow our own will.

"And I'll never write about this for anybody," he declared, as we looked our last upon one or another familiar haunt, soon to be obliterated by the ravaging flames that drove us ever westward to safer points, on and on, in our ears the muffled detonations of dynamite, as one proud commercial palace after another sank on its steel knees, in the desperate attempt of the city fathers to stay the wholesale conflagration. And no water.

"No," Jack reiterated. "I'll never write a word about it. What use trying? One could only string big words together, and curse the futility of them."

One impinging picture of those fearful hours was where two mounted officers, alone of all the population, sat their high-crested horses at Kearney and Market Streets, equestrian statues facing the oncoming flames along Kearney. Hours earlier, we had walked here, two of many; but now the district was abandoned to destruction that could not be retarded.

In my eyes there abides the face of a stricken man, perhaps a fireman, whom we saw carried into a lofty doorway in Union Square. His back had been broken, and as the stretcher bore him past, out of a handsome, ashen young face, the dreadful darkening eyes looked right into mine. All the world was crashing about him and he, a broken thing, with death awaiting him inside the granite portals, gazed upon the last woman of his race that he was ever to see. Jack, with tender hand, drew me away.

Oh, the supreme ruth of desolation and pain, that night of fire and devastation! Yet the miracle persists, that one saw nothing but cheerful courtesy of one human to another. And I was to learn more of my mate s cool judgment in crises. Now and again

it seemed as if we would surely be trapped in some square, where the fourth side had started to burn. But he had always, and accurately, sensed and chosen the moment and the way out, when we should have seen all we could risk.

Toward morning, finding ourselves in the entryway of a corner house on "Nob Hill" very near the partially-erected and already-ignited Hotel Fairmont, Jack fell into a doze; but I was unable to still the tingling of heart and nerves long enough to drop off even from exhaustion. Presently a man mounted the steps and inserted a key in the lock. Seeing Jack and myself on the top tread — he had had to pick his way through a cluster of Italians and Chinamen on the lower ones — something impelled him to invite us in. It was a luxurious interior, containing the treasures of years. His name was Ferine, the man said, and he did not learn ours. Suddenly, midway of showing us about, he asked me to try the piano, and laid bare the keys. I hesitated — it seemed almost a cruel thing to do, with annihilation of his home so very near. But Jack's whispered "Do it for him — it's the last time he'll ever hear it," sent me to the instrument. The first few touches were enough and too much for Mr. Ferine, however, and he made a restraining gesture. If he ever reads this book, I want him to know that none in poor racked San Francisco that week was more sorry for him than we.

We must have tramped forty miles that night. Jack's feet blistered, my ankles were become almost useless, when next day we sat on a convenient garbage can at Seventh and Broadway, Oakland, waiting for a street car out Telegraph Avenue. A pretty young woman accosted the dilapidated pair we made, with information that food and shelter would be supplied us refugees at such-and-such address, and laughed pleasedly when we thanked her and said we had an uninjured place of our own. Oakland had suffered comparatively little from the quake, and there were few fires. Jack of course had ascertained, before we went to San Francisco, that his mother and his children were safe and sound, with roofs over their heads.

In Glen Ellen once more, we were met with frantic telegrams from Collier's Weekly, asking for twenty-five hundred words, by wire, descriptive of San Francisco. Jack, still averse to undertake the compressing of his impressions, or, as he had said, writing at all on the subject, yet considered his now aggravated money-need, with the yacht and barn-rebuilding in view. And Collier's had offered him twenty-five cents a word by far the best figure he had yet received. It was, I may as well note here, the highest he ever obtained.

Shaking his bonny shoulders free of all else, that very day he jumped into the twenty-five hundred word article. Hot from his hand I snatched the scribbled sheets, and swiftly typed them. Our team-work soon delivered the story over the wires, and "just for luck" Jack mailed the manuscript simultaneously. Followed wild daily messages from Collier's for a week to come: "Why doesn't your story arrive?" "Must have your story immediately," and, latest, "Holding presses at enormous expense. What is the matter? Must have story for May Fifth number."

It seems that the telegraph companies were able to get service through to the Pacific Coast, but not the reverse. The posted manuscript was received in the nick of time,

while the wired one straggled along subsequently to the other's appearance in the May 5th issue.

Jack, it is only fair to record, entertained the poorest opinion of his description. It's the best stagger I can make at an impossible thing," is the way he put it. And here is an excerpt from a letter to George Sterling, dated May 31:

"Hopper's article in Everybody's is great. Best story of the Quake I've seen. My congratulations to him."

Fifteen days after the Earthquake, we treated ourselves to a two-weeks' holiday. Jack bestrode Ban. Belle, occupied with maternal prospects, I passed by in favor of the rabbity Fleet. Hatless, with toilet accessories and reading matter stowed in saddle-bags behind our Australian saddles, we set out northerly to see what the quake had wreaked upon rural California. At this and that resort, we would feel one or another of the many lighter temblors that followed the big shake, marking the subsidence of the "Fault" that is supposed to enter from the sea-bed at Fort Bragg, and zigzag southeasterly across the State.

Jack, his rumpled poll sun-burned yellow, was a brave and lovesome sight on his merry steed, whose burnished chestnut coat threw out lilac gleams as the satiny muscles moved in the sunlight. The rider threw himself with vim into our little adventure. He was never tired exploring with me the nooks of Sonoma County, where Belle and I had been familiar figures before he came to dwell with us. And we always found so many common topics to discuss, and parallels in our lives. Why, old man Tarwater, immortalized in one of the very last stories Jack ever wrote ("Like Argus of the Olden Times," published in 1919 in volume entitled "The Red One"), had been the subject of one of my Aunt's newspaper articles. I had accompanied her, years before Jack met Tarwater in Klondike, on a pilgrimage to his mountain cabin, and sketched that abode self for an illustration. And there were our teachers in Oakland, Mrs. Harriet J. Lee and her daughter Elsie we had both sat under these charming women, Jack in High School, and I in Sunday school at Plymouth Avenue Church on Thirty-fourth Street. It was deliciously preposterous, this lining up of our mutual experiences.

Not a tap of work did we perform on this real vacation. There is ample material in my brain for a readable book, in that idyllic journey through one of California's most attractive regions, unadvertised and undreamed to the casual tourist. Although I may not relate the details, still, for the guidance of any whose interest in Jack London's mazy trail might lead them into these western fastnesses of great beauty and geological interest, I present the route our nimble horses bore us:

From Glen Ellen, by Rincon Valley road, through Petrified Forest, to Calistoga, in Napa Valley. Calistoga to The Geysers. Thence to Lakeport, on Clear Lake — a little Geneva — by way of Highland Springs. We sailed on Clear Lake.

Lakeport to Ukiah, via Laurel Dell, Blue Lakes. Ukiah to Willitts. Through grandeurs of mountain and redwood forest, to logging camp "Alpine." Thence to Fort Bragg, on the Coast.

From Fort Bragg, down the coast, sleeping at lumber villages. Navarro, Albion, Greenwood. Thence to Boonville, with luncheon at Philo. Philo to Cloverdale; thence to Burke's Sanitarium. Thence to Santa Rosa, and on down to Glen Ellen.

Jack, consciously or unconsciously, had studied the brain-processes of animals since the days of his little dog Rollo in Oakland. On this long ride, the difference, which is all the difference in the world, which he noticed between Fleet and Ban on our return, was that one was tired and it, and the other, Thoroughbred, keyed to the utter most step, was tired and did not know it. But when Jack, after unsaddling, had placed an extra large measure of oats before the splendid creature, the velvet nozzle went down with a great, blowing sigh. Brown Wolf, wriggling prodigiously, came to bury dumb, eloquent head between his idolized master's knees, after which, with a shake of rolling fur hide, he went to poke his nose into Ban's fodder, taking a generous mouthful, to our astonishment and the horse's snorting disapproval. Then, our fingers interlaced, we two dusty wayfarers trudged across to Wake Robin, happier and richer by another united experience.

Near the end of the month, during our absence of two days in Oakland to attend a rousing Euskin Club dinner in Jack's honor, Willie one night left Ban out in the Fish Ranch pasture, where he became entangled in a loose strand of that accursed invention, barbed wire, which had eluded our vigilance. Hour upon hour, the poor, helpless thing sawed one of his beautiful, fleet hind legs to the bone. It was a sad homecoming to us, and in consultation beside our drooping, ruined pet we decided he must die. Jack said, his eyes dark with sorrow:

"Wiget, I'll do it if I have to; but I don't want to. If you don't mind too much . . ." And Wiget had to avert his face as he replied: "I'll do it for you folks."

In a hammock at the Lodge we sat knowing we could not fail to hear the shot that would be the ending of our willing and beloved friend. Jack had carefully instructed his man to deposit the charge in the middle of the forehead, where cross-lines drawn from ears to eyes would intersect. When the sound of the shot rang across the waiting stillness, we wept unrestrained and unabashed in each other's arms. All I could think of to solace Jack was to offer him the gift of my own new filly, Sonoma Maid, granddaughter of the great Morella, which Belle, in the fullness of her time and in our absence, had presented to me. I remember, once, on a steamer voyage, that a fine horse injured during a rough night had to be killed. A lamentable botch was made of the execution, and I never saw Jack London worse upset than he was over the reports of the animal's inexcusably hard death. "If they'd only learn how to do a thing like that in the right way!" he exclaimed, thrashing about in his chair in a manner he had when suffering mentally.

A preverted order of humaneness, often displayed by unthinking persons, always came in for harsh language from Jack. "Men who brag of being too tender-hearted to kill an aged and suffering animal, or a hopelessly-wounded or sick one," he would rave," — I don't know anything too bad for them. Why don't people think!" And again: "The only way to kill a cat is to chop off its head," he preached. "Death is instantaneous,

when the spinal cord is severed. Drowning, and suffocation by chloroform, are two of the cruelest methods you can use on a cat. The other way means instantaneous death, with no terrors of strangulation. Some people think I'm brutal to advise this, but the thing is self-evident oh, — what's the use!" he would surrender in disgust. In illustration of indirect brutality, he told me of something he had done during a short camping expedition, in 1904, with "The Crowd," on the deserted Kendall Ranch in Grizzly Canyon, near Moraga Valley.

The last tenants had left some time previously, and were too sensitive and kind-hearted to lay away the family dog, a large collie, I think Jack said, who was tottering, from starvation, too old to hunt for himself. "Nobody else wanted the job of shooting him," Jack went on, "and it was up to me. You know how I love to kill things," he interpolated with a wry mouth. "I got the shotgun ready, and went toward that poor dog, and he crouched when he saw me coming. God! no one will ever know how I shrank from that self-imposed task. That dog knew — his poor old eyes looked straight into mine and did not waver but wledge of death was in them. He'd been out with a gun too much in his life not to know what it meant when one was aimed at a living creature. . . . Oh, yes, I got it done — first charge . . . He never moved after he dropped."

Jack was capable of such adorable ways. One afternoon, that summer of 1906, he and I, with Manyoungi's help were sorting over old possessions, making ready long in advance for our voyage. The Korean came upon my old French doll, an adult-appearing, jointed model with six inches of "real" hair. Lifting it tenderly, reverence in his handsome olive face, the boy carried it to Jack, who was talking to himself amidst a tumbled mountain of dusty books he invariably talked and hummed when doing work of this kind or filing letters. And Jack, with a dewy look in his great eyes, held out both grimy hands for the relic, and kissed it! The act was devoid of affectation — just a spontaneous expression of all the complication of his love. "The little woman's doll!" was all he said, returning to his work with an odd smile deepening the pictured corners" of his mouth. . . . Once, "after long grief and pain, in rare abandon he had pressed those lips to the hem of my garment.

Even from so brief an absence as the riding jaunt, our duties had piled up, and we were rushing all hours except for the swimming, rides to the Ranch, the campfire gatherings, moonlight romps and games, with boxing, fencing, kiting, and what not, in the camps of the Connings, the Selbys, the Brecks, the Reynolds, and my own summering families.

Blowing soap-bubbles was popular for a time, and certain long-stemmed Korean pipes, among Jack's "loot" from the orient, came into novel requisition. There were debates of evenings in the Lodge, to which the older campers were invited, in which the materialist monist, Jack London, was somewhat unwillingly pitted against Mr. Edward B. Payne, a far older man whom Jack styled "metaphysician." I should have said attempted debate, for the same familiar stumbling-block was encountered that had disrupted earlier discussions whenever Jack and the metaphysicians locked horns: Jack could not and would not accept the premise offered; and after several futile efforts

of the instigators of the meetings, to ease him surreptitiously over the first stages of the argument, the debates were discontinued.

"Edward's got a beautiful mind, and he's the most logical rhetorician I ever met in my whole life," Jack would defend himself; "but when, in his reasoning, he comes to the enchanted bridge he has tried to build, on which I am supposed to reject my solid foundation and step across to his metaphysical one, I revolt." Martin Luther's "Here I stand. I can do no otherwise, so help me God! Amen!" was no less firm than Jack London's "I can't help it. I am so made. I can't see it any other way. I've got to keep my feet on the concrete."

I have seen him quite white with distress that he had to spoil a party by depriving guests of the spectacle of himself routed from his materialistic terra firma and driven upon the impalpable ground of the metaphysicians with their, to him, "colossal evasions of mundane interpretations," as our friend Mary Wilshire puts it. "Each of you," he said, "goes into his own consciousness to explain anything and everything." Again, "The metaphysician explains the universe by himself, the scientist explains himself by the universe." Jack believed that the keenest and most irresistible impulses toward self-preservation are shown by what he termed metaphysicians. "Take the earthquake, for instance," he would rail. "You and I, and an infidel artist, remained in our beds until well after the shock. And when we emerged, where did we find the metaphysicians of the household? — Out of doors, in unseemly attire, and unable to tell how they got there, but, from circumstantial evidence, having arrived on the unstable earth by way of a first-story window!"

There were swimming visits exchanged that year with our neighbors the Kudolf Spreckelses and a bevy of Mrs. Spreckels's sisters, the Misses Joliffe; and once we went to Napa to see the Winships. But Jack, as a rule, was not fond of visiting, and occasionally was heard to remark that the Winships and the Sterlings were practically the only friends to whose houses he went, and these at wide intervals. He preferred, in short, to entertain rather than to be entertained.

At times, but rarely, he would treat himself to a holiday, perhaps to read aloud a book that had claimed him for the moment, or to take some special jaunt. But the fingers of one hand could easily tally the days when he failed to deliver ten pages of hand-written manuscript to my typewriter desk. It was my custom to have his previous day's installment, typed and words counted, in readiness upon his table by nine. He loved to read me his morning's work — and even in the writing of it, if I happened to pass by, would interrupt himself to let me share what he had done. The first writing day, in all our days, that this did not happen, was the first day upon which he wrote no more.

Evidently this life of closely-wedged activities was quite to my taste, for at the end of one date s diary-items I see: "Happy as an angel!" This may, however, have been when I had won from Jack some praise or especial appreciation; but he was wont ruefully to utter that my finest heights of bliss were attained when I had beaten him at cards

(which was seldom enough to justify chortling), or won a bet upon the weather ranging anywhere from ten cents to ten dollars.

Another and sweeter source of happiness to me would be when I had played an hour for him while he sat or reclined, one hand over his eyes, dreaming upon a couch in Auntie's cool living-room. The music he then oftenest asked for was Arthur Footers Rubaiyat Suite, and much of Macdowell — "The Eagle" and "Sea Pieces" remaining favorites. His disposition those days was almost always equable, and I learned to circumvent the blues he had once forewarned he might be subject to upon the day of completing a long manuscript. On June 7, he laid down his ink-pencil for the last time on "Before Adam," first writing in my count of 40,863 words. But there was little or no depression to follow. I had seen to that, by planning a string of overlapping engagements for the day, which left him no moment for relaxing until sleep-time was at hand. Oh, no — never did I cheat myself into believing that he did not see through my machinations; rather, did he coöperate — but no word jarred the moment's harmony.

Have I mentioned that he was fond of ordering advertised articles? "And if one out often proves a real find, I am repaid for my time and money!" was his argument. Many were the packages, great and small, that enlivened our morning mail during preparation for the small-boat voyage; for whether emanating from "ad" or catalogue, Jack meant to leave nothing behind that would contribute to the venture's success. Fishing tackle of the most alluring; numberless strings of beads, and loose beads by the gross, of all sizes and hues to gladden savage hearts that beat under the Southern Cross; gay neckerchiefs and calicoes and ribbons — nothing was omitted. And the fun we, like veriest children, had opening our "Christmas packages" from day to day, can best be imagined.

Early in our comradeship I had noted Jack's habit of looking ahead, not back. "Leave retrospect to old men and women. The world is all before me now," was his pose toward the dead past. While this remained a characteristic, the general normal happiness of his new environment rendered him less averse to dwelling upon his yesterdays. As our united yesterdays lengthened in our shadow, he became as fondly addicted as I to reminiscence of them.

Before me, as I write with his own pen, lies a clipping referring to "The Iron Heel," which begins: "In one of Jack London's less important works, there was a description of a pitched battle in Chicago, in the near future, by way of quelling what would now be called a Bolshevist revolution." And the commentator adds: "Now the battle is going on in Berlin." Beside the clipping reposes a letter to me from a sociologist, from which I quote as refutation of the other's phrase, "less important works":

"The earlier portion of the book is the most impressive, the most unanswerable impeachment of the capitalist system to be found in all the voluminous sociological literature of our times."

And I feel free to quote Mr. George P. Brett, President of The Macmillan Company, who published the book:

"I consider 'The Iron Heel' the greatest compendium of Socialism ever written."

From week to week, in these stirring days of reconstruction following the World War, there come to me, alone upon Jack London's mountainside, appreciations from all classes concerning "The Iron Heel," once hated and derided and feared by the factions most opposed to one another. Jack had gone to work upon it that midsummer of 1906, placing some of its scenes round-about "the sweet land" in which he had elected to dwell. When the manuscript later failed to find place in any paying magazine, and saw book-covers, in 1907 during the "panic," mainly because the publishers held a blanket contract bearing Jack London's sprawling signature, the poor author said regretfully one day in Hawaii:

"I thought it would be timely, that book; but they're all afraid of it, Mate Woman." He pointed to letters just received from the States: "See: the socialists, even my own crowd, have thrown me down — they decry it as a lugubrious prophecy; and the other camp, of course, revile it as they revile everything socialistic they possibly can of mine.

"But," he broke in heatedly upon his reverie, "I didn't write the thing as a prophecy at all. I really don't think these things are going to happen in the United States. I believe the increasing socialist vote will prevent — hope for it, anyhow. But I will say that I sent out, in 'The Iron Heel,' a warning of what I think might happen if they don't look to their votes. That's all."

In the copy he gave me is written: "We that have been what we've been. . . . We that have seen what we've seen — we may not see these particular things come to pass, but certain it is that we shall see big things of some sort come to pass."

In the light of present events, the story would seem to have been more than roughly prophetic; and the end, mayhap, is not yet.

The phrase "well-balanced radicals" came to be a pet aversion of Jack's for the rest of his life. For, outside of the capitalist class, it was the self-named "well-balanced radicals," who would have none of his "Iron Heel."

Yet it was one of these, after Jack London's death, who wrote me: "The earlier portion of the book is the most impressive, the most unanswerable impeachment of the capitalist system to be found in all the voluminous socio logical literature of our times. I have read many severe criticisms of capitalist procedure, but this cuts deeper and cleaner than they all."

"The Iron Heel," once finished and started on its round of the magazines, Jack's next contemplated book was a group of tramping episodes, brought out serially as "My Life in the Underworld," and, in book-form, "The Road."

Two paragraphs from Jack's letters to George Sterling, of dates February 17, 1908, and March 3, 1909, throw illumination upon his open attitude toward his past:

"I can't get a line on why you wish I hadn't written 'The Road,'" he challenges. "It is all true. It is what I am, what I have done, and it is part of the process by which I have become. Is it a lingering taint of the bourgeois in you that makes you object? Is it because of my shamelessness! For having done things in which I saw or see no shame! Do tell me."

And this:

“Your point about “The Road,” namely that it ‘gave the mob a mop to bang’ me with. What of it? I don’t care for the mob. It can’t hurt me. One word of censure or disapproval from you would hurt me a few million myriads of billions times more than all the sum total the mob would inflict on me in one hundred and forty-seven lifetimes. I thank the Lord I don’t live for the mob.”

This seems the place to point Jack’s intolerance of restricted or anachronistic vision, by quoting further from letters to Sterling. The latter sat between the horns of a dilemma with regard to his two closest friends — Jack London and Ambrose Bierce, who were as far apart as the poles in their philosophies. Because Jack had experienced certain phases of living which were untenable to the satirist’s niceties, the latter seemed entirely to discount the younger author as one entitled to consideration in the brotherhood of polite society. In short, after he had read “The Road,” Mr. Bierce was emphatic in his opinion concerning what summary disposal should be made of Jack. But Jack, with a generosity and lack of bitterness which would have well become the elder man, wrote Sterling:

“For heaven’s sake don’t you quarrel with Ambrose about me. He’s too splendid a man to be diminished because he has lacked access to a later generation of science. He crystallized before you and I were born, and it is too magnificent a crystallization to quarrel with.” Earlier letters to Sterling amplify Jack’s contention, and his own up-to-the-mark step with the marching world:

“If Hillquit and Hunter didn’t put it all over Bierce — I’ll quit thinking at all. Bierce’s clever pessimism was nowhere against their science. He proved himself rudderless, compassless, and chartless. Bierce doesn’t shine in a face to face battle with socialists. He’s beat at long range slinging ink. He was groggy at the drop of the hat, and before they got done with him was looking anxiously around and wondering why the gong didn’t ring. All he did was to back and fill and potter around, dogmatize and contradict himself. When they cornered him, he went off on another tack, wherefore they’d overtake him and lambaste him again. Bierce, with biological and sociological concepts that crystallized in the fervant heat of pessimism a generation ago, was — well, pathetic. And more pathetic still, he doesn’t know it.”

“I wouldn’t care to lock horns with Bierce,” is a later reference. “He stopped growing a generation ago. Of course, he keeps up with the newspapers, but his criteria crystallized 30 odd years ago. Had he been born a generation later he’d have been a socialist, and, more likely, an anarchist. He never reads books that aren’t something like a hundred years old, and he glories in the fact!”

The latest remarks I find, in the same correspondence, are these written from Hilo, Hawaii, in July of 1907:

The quotes from Ambrose were great. What a pen he wields. Too bad he hasn’t a better philosophic foundation.”

Snark Voyage

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXX End 1906; 1907-8-9

THE Great Earthquake proved very expensive to Jack London. Primarily because of it, the yacht-building, which he had calculated would cost seven thousand dollars, or at most ten, incredibly squandered some thirty thousand. The iron keel was to have been run on the very evening of the Earthquake, April 18. Following that event (which we of California are averse to term an "Act of God," much less one of a beneficent Providence), what Jack should have done, too late he came to see, was to look around for a ready-built hull. At almost any time before the World War, fine deep-water yachts could be picked up on the Atlantic sea board at a tithe of their original cost. In future years, after the abandonment of our voyage, Jack pored over many a blue-print received from agents in the east, of well-appointed vessels that could be had for mere songs.

No man born of woman could forecast the insurmountable anarchy that the post-quake and fire-havoc wrought in building conditions. I shall leave it to the reader to guess at the inwardness of our spirit-trial, so lightly sketched in the first article ("The Inconceivable and Monstrous") of the nineteen, including Foreward and Backword, that compose Jack London's "The Cruise of the Snark." This collection relates, in more or less disconnected fashion, a few of the main happenings and observations incident to the cruise. My own book, I wish to mention here, "The Log of the Snark," also published by The Macmillan Company, gives, as its name implies, the consecutive journal from the day before we sailed from San Francisco until we returned to California. There is one exception to the foregoing statement. My two-years' diary being too protracted for one volume, the five-months experiences ashore in the Hawaiian Islands, together with the general details of our 1915 and 1916 visits, form a bulky book by themselves, which also appears under the Macmillan imprint. This volume I have revised and brought up to date for a new edition in 1921. Jack, aside from his incomplete Snark record, as above, devoted himself to fiction, which I name below, inspired by the Pacific and its enchanting isles, irrespective of other books in which incidents from his South Sea lore appear, such as "Michael Brother of Jerry," "Martin Eden," "The Red One," and others. Here are the strictly tropical ones:

"Adventure," novel, 1911.

"South Sea Tales," 1911.

"The House of Pride," 1912.

"A Son of the Sun," 1912.

"Jerry of the Islands," 1918.

The opening adjuration in "The Inconceivable and Monstrous" sounds the note adhered to by Jack throughout the construction and manning of the little ship that was, we fondly believed, to be our home for indefinite years of adventure. "Spare no expense" was the slogan he impressed upon his lieutenant, Roscoe. And no matter what exasperation followed, "gipsy heart to gipsy heart," undaunted Jack and I traced our route upon a sizable world-globe bought for our future library.

In the end, allowing for all the heartbreaking wastage and plain graft that sent the yacht, half a year late, an unfinished, internal wreck upon the high seas to Honolulu, still was she, with her sturdy sticks and her ribs of oak, pronounced by that master-small-boat-sailor, Jack London, the strongest vessel of her proportions ever launched — “Stronger, even, I tell you,” he held, “than the Goya, that made the Northwest Passage.”

Be it known, once and for all, this point having been airily misrepresented for years, that every human being of the Snark’s complement of seven, except Jack London and myself, who worked to pay them — every soul, I say, was drawing a salary for work performed or unperformed during that crazy traverse of 2200 miles to Honolulu. From every class of society over the wide world we thought to circumnavigate — doctors, lawyers, beggarmen, chiefs, thieves, multimillionaires, sailors single and in crews, poets, historians, geologists, painters, doctors of divinity — in short, men, women and children of every color and occupation, wrote or telegraphed or paid us calls, imploring to sail on any terms, or none. They even appealed for the privilege of paying lavishly for the privilege. One there was who wrote: “I can assure you that I am eminently respectable, but find other respectable people tiresome.” Since he expressed an overwhelming desire to be of our party, we could not but wonder exactly what he meant!

But Jack was no fool. Whosoever joined the Snark should do so upon a stated salary, and there could be no recriminations. Inconceivably and monstrously, there were recriminations, despite the precautionary measures. When all but one of our first company returned to San Francisco before we had left Hawaii for the equator, the mendacious papers flashed reports that there had been violence following disagreements during the first lap of the cruise. Jack London his own Sea Wolf, was the implication, of course; and what could Jack do but grind his teeth, and then laugh: “They can all go to blazes! You and I know better; and what really counts is you and me!”

Disagreements there had been — but I employ the wrong word; for it was an agreement, quietly arrived at between Jack and his sailing master before Honolulu was sighted, that the latter should go home at his leisure from that port. A younger member of the party decided to return to college; while our Japanese cabin boy, Tochigi, failed to conquer an incorrigible seasickness. So these two, also, went back to California.

It all boils down to the fact, well-established in Jack’s mind and my own from our incredulous observations of lack of discipline and neglect of property — ”appalled and bewildered” my diary states our emotions that those who deserted the Snark merely discovered they had been mistaken in thinking sea-adventure was what their natures craved. The details of certain unfairness to Jack that were so blindly practised, I omit. However inclined to garrulousness I may be on Jack’s behalf, I do want to be fair enough to all of them in their blindness, largely to lay the blame, as already hinted, to the chaotic circumstances under which the boat was built. This, in the last analysis, had worn out the patience, the grit, and the indubitably feeble adventure-lust that had been the reason for their engaging in the enterprise.

I think the difference between them and ourselves was that Jack and I knew what we wanted, and in unison over took it in spite of colossal odds from all sides; while

the others simply had mistaken their desires. The secret of finding our rainbows ends always, I am sure, lay first and last in our knowledge of what we wanted. The longest search never palled, because the search was an end in itself. Of one of our men, who had failed to fill even the berth of a preceding failure, Jack said: "He caught a glimpse, in some metallic, cog-like way, of the spirit of Adventure, and he thought to woo her — Adventure, who must be served whole-souled and single-hearted and with the long patience that is so terrible that very few are capable of it."

But I am ahead of my narrative:

Early in the year, with the framework of the yacht just begun, Jack had written to a magazine the letter given be-low, outlining the purposed voyage and offering a chance at the story of the cruise.

Here let me remark that a leading reason for the inclusion of this correspondence is to emphasize the exact proposition which Jack London made. This, in turn, because, following his death, one journalist, in an otherwise gracious and well-meaning article, created, unintentionally I wish to believe, a misapprehension in the minds of his many readers as to happenings in connection with the arrangement for the boat-articles. During a call with which this writer honored the Jack London Ranch after Jack's passing, I threatened that I should, in all friendliness, go after him in the open when I should write this book; and he, with entire good-nature, gave me his blessing to "go to it and do the worst."

Here is the opening letter. The italics are mine, guided by marginal markings of Jack's:

"Feb. 18/06.

"Dear — — :

The keel is laid. The boat is to be 45 feet long. It would have been a little bit shorter had I not found it impossible to squeeze in a bathroom otherwise. I sail in October. Hawaii is the first port of call; and from there we shall wander through the South Seas, Samoa, Tasmania, New Zealand, Australia, New Guinea, and up through the Philippines to Japan. Then Korea and China, and on down to India, Red Sea, Mediterranean, Black Sea and Baltic, and on across the Atlantic to New York, and then around the Horn to San Francisco. . . . I shall certainly put in a winter in St. Petersburg, and the chances are that I shall go up the Danube from the Black Sea to Vienna, and there isn't a European country in which I shall not spend from one to several months. This leisurely fashion will obtain throughout the whole trip. I shall not be in a rush; in fact, I calculate seven (7) years at least will be taken up by the trip.

"This boat is to be sailed by one friend and myself. There are no sailors. My wife accompanies me. Of course, I'll take a cook along, and a cabin boy; but these will be Asiatics, and will have no part in the sailorizing. [The ultimate personnel of the crew was rearranged.] The rig of the boat will be a compromise between a yawl and a schooner. It will be what is called the ketch-rig the same rig that is used by the English fishing-boats on the Dogger Bank.

Shall, however, have a small engine on board to be used only in case of emergency, such as in bad water among reefs and shoals, where a sudden calm in a fast current leaves a sailing-boat helpless. Also, this engine is to be used for another purpose. When I strike a country, say Egypt or France, I'll go up the Nile or the Seine by having the mast taken out, and under power of the engine. I shall do this a great deal in the different countries, travel inland and live on board the boat at the same time. There is no reason at all why I shouldn't in this fashion come up to Paris, and moor alongside the Latin Quarter, with a bow-line out to Notre Dame and a stern-line fast to the Morgue.

Now to business. I shall be gone a long time on this trip. No magazine can print all I have to write about it. On the other hand, it cannot be imagined that I shall write 50,000 words on the whole seven years, and then quit. As it is, the subject matter of the trip divides itself up so that there will be no clash whatever between any several publications that may be handling my stuff. For instance, here are three big natural, unconflicting divisions: news, industrial, and political articles on the various countries for newspapers; fiction; and finally, the trip itself.

"Now the question arises, if you take the trip itself (which will be the cream), how much space will The — — be able to give me? In this connection I may state that McClure's and Outing are after me; and, as I am throwing my life, seven years of my time, my earning-power as a writer of fiction, and a lot of money, into the enterprise, it behooves me to keep a sharp lookout on how expenses, etc., are to be met. And one important factor in this connection that I must consider, is that of space.

"And while I am on this matter of space, I may as well say that it is granted, always, that I deliver the goods. Of course, if my articles turn out to be mushy and inane, why I should not expect any magazine to continue publishing them. I believe too much in fair play to be a good business man, and if my work be rotten, I'd be the last fellow in the world to bind any editor to publish it. On the other hand, I have a tremendous confidence, based upon all kinds of work I have already done, that I can deliver the goods. Anybody doubting this has but to read "The People of the Abyss" to find the graphic, reportorial way I have of handling things. . . .

"While on this matter of space, I may also state that it is not so much the point of how large the space is in a given number of magazine, but how long a time the story of the trip can run in the magazine.

Here he inserts a paragraph concerning his abilities to furnish good photographic illustrations. And he goes on:

". . . We expect lots of action, and my strong point as a writer is that I am a writer of action — see all my short stories, for instance. Another point is, that while I am a writer, I am also a sailor . . . ; and a still further point is, that I am an acknowledged and successful writer of sea-matter; see 'The Sea Wolf,' 'The Cruise of the Dazzler,' and 'Stories of the Fish Patrol. . . .'

". . . Now comes the item of pay. In the first place, here is a traveler-correspondent, and traveler-correspondents are usually expensive, because their traveling expenses are

paid by their employers. But in my case I'd pay my own traveling expenses. I build my boat, I outfit my boat, and I run my boat. . . . So, in whatever conclusion we arrive at, it must be stipulated that I receive in advance, in the course of the building of the boat, say $3000.00."

The editor stated his willingness to make the advance; and Jack shot back, "All right. We sail October 1," ending the letter, "I'm going to turn out some cracker jack stuff on this trip!"

April 3, 1906, is the date of Jack's agreement to "furnish The — — Magazine a series of exclusive articles descriptive of my voyage in my sailboat, which voyage is to extend, if possible, around the world." The number of contributions, he stipulated, was not to exceed ten unless more were ordered. Jack agreed to supply photographs.

Meanwhile, he had got under way a proposal to furnish land-articles, say upon domestic customs of native peoples, for a woman's magazine in the east — this in line with remarks which I have underscored in letter above quoted.

Came the Earthquake, and on May 16, he wrote: "You ask for my picture alongside the hull. There ain't no hull. The iron keel, wooden keel, and stem and a few ribs, are standing, and so they have been standing for some time. I have not been near the boat yet, and do not expect to go until it is practically finished. I am too busy." When the building had been resumed, Jack put my uncle, who had been for himself an enthusiastic boat-builder in his time, and was to be sailing-master, upon a salary to superintend the construction.

In July I find this from Jack to the first magazine:

"You will have to defer my opening article until the November number. I have finally succumbed to the California earthquake. I find it impossible to get a decent engine this side of New York, and the consequent delay throws me back a full month. I shall sail November 1, instead of October 1." Later he wrote: "This damned earthquake is just beginning to show up the delays it caused. There is scarcely a thing we want that we can buy in the local market." Then, "We are going to call her the Snark," he announced his final choice of a name for the "beautiful elliptical stern." His reason was that he could think of no other name that suited, and his friends, with bright sug-gestions of "The Call of the Wild," "The Sea Wolf" and eke "The Game," had worn him out. He even put it as a threat to one and all, that if nothing less silly were forthcoming, Snark she should be — this snappy title being chosen from Lewis Carroll's "The Hunting of the Snark."

"I never thought about naming the boat after your magazine," he replied to the editor s suggestion. "The only objection to that name is, that boats, like horses and dogs, should have names of one syllable. Good, sharp, strong names, that can never be misheard. There's only one thing that would make me change the name Snark to that of your magazine, namely, the presentation of the Snark to me as an out-and-out present. She is costing me $10,000, and by golly, it would be worth $10,000 worth of advertising to the magazine. In return for such a present," (and I can hear Jack's titter as he dictated the outrage to me), "not only would I put up with the five-syllable name,

but 'Magazine' to be appended. That would make eight syllables. Why, I'd even take subscriptions and advertisements for the magazine as I went along!"

In September the editor was succeeded by another, and I find an amusing item in his first letter to Jack: "The correction you ask to be made has been attended to and you may rest easy in the assurance that 'Roscoe' will not be misrepresented but will be placed in his true light as a 'follower of the science, though not the religion, of one Cyrus R. Teed.'" For our sailing-master, be it known, firmly believed in the Teed cellular cosmogany, and that he was to experience the Snark voyage on the inner skin of the planet.

Glancing over these letters, I discover that Jack had raised his fiction rate to fifteen cents a word to the magazines, and his story, "Just Meat," (book published in "When God Laughs"), was being discussed on this basis.

There fell more trouble. The editors of the two magazines each tried to "grab the whole show" in their advance advertising of their totally different Snark material, and Jack, indignant with both for accusing him of bad faith, entirely clear in his own head and in his two unconflicting contracts, was made the sufferer. His retaliation is in plain and uncompromising terms. After treating the first editor to a few of his opinions of magazine offices, he quotes verbatim from his contract with the woman's magazine: "These articles are to be upon home life and social conditions in a broad sense of the term, etc., etc."

"Speaking now in connection with contents of foregoing paragraph," he enlarges, "I want to know what in hell you think 35,000 words will cover! Do you think 35,000 words will cover a tithe of the boat-trip itself, much less all the things I expect to do and see in the course of seven years! . . . Don't you think I've got a kick coming for the way you have advertised me as going around the world for The — — ? . . . hell, everybody thinks you are building my boat for me, and paying all my expenses, and giving me a princely salary on top of it . . . 35,000 words at 10 cents a word means $3500.00 and the initial cost of my boat is running past the $12,000.00 mark, to say nothing of expenses of running said boat. . . . Those are the figures up to date, and they're still going up. San Francisco is mad. Prices have climbed out of sight. I pay $200 for a bit of iron work on the boat, that should cost $40.00. Everything is in this order. The outlook is now, that I shall not sail before January. Weeks go by without a tap of work being done on the boat. Can't get the men. All my stuff is coming from the east because the earthquake destroyed the local market; and freight is congested."

On November 1, 1906, Jack wrote again: "Yes, Mr. — — [the new editor's predecessor] did write me upon the matter of distributing my cabbages in several baskets, and I must confess that he got me rather hot in the collar, what of the sized-basket he had furnished me and thought would hold all my cabbages — the crop of seven years in a 35,000-word basket! I am inclosing you a copy of the letter I sent him. . . . Since writing this, I wrote him another calling the turn on him for doing just what Mr. [the editor of the woman's magazine] had done, namely, claiming everything in sight so far as my seven-years voyage is concerned. Your periodical said that practically my total output

would go to it, concerning lands, people, etc., that I would see. The mental processes of editors are beyond me. I fought with Mr. — — for 35,000 words, and couldn't get it out of him."

When the Christmas number of the magazine that was to have the story of the voyage came out, containing the first of his boat-articles, Jack let loose his "long wolf-howl" upon the liberties that had been taken with his copy. "Any tyro can cut a manuscript," he storms, "and feel that he is a co-creator with the author. But it's hell on the author. Not one man in a million, including office-boys, is to be found in the magazine office who is able properly to revise by elimination the work of a professional author. And the men in your office have certainly played ducks and drakes with the exposition in the first half of my first boat-article. . . . For instance, I have just finished the proofs of 'Just Meat.' In one place I have my burglar say, 'I put the kibosh on his time.' Some man in your office changed this to, 'I put a crimp in his time.' In the first place, 'crimp' is incorrect in such usage. In the second place, there is nothing whatever in the connotation of kibosh that would prevent its appearing in the pages of your magazine. 'Kibosh' is not vulgar, it is not obscene. Such action is wholly unwarranted and gratitously officious. Did this co-creator of mine, in your office, think that he knew what he was doing when he made such a ridiculous substitution? And if he does think so, why in the dickens doesn't he get in and do the whole thing himself?

"In our contract," he grows hot and hotter, "I take your right of revision to consist in rejecting an article as a whole or in eliminating objectionable phrases. Now I have no objection to that. I have no objection to your truckling to Mrs. Grundy, when, for instance, you cut out swear-words or change 'go to hell' to 'go to blazes.' That's the mere shell. In that sort of revision you can have full swing; but that is different matter from cutting the heart out of my work, such as you did in my first boat-article. You made my exposition look like thirty cents.

"I WEAVE my stuff; you can cut out a whole piece of it, but you can't cut out parts of it, and leave mutilated parts behind. Just think of it. Wading into my exposition and cutting out premises or proofs or anything else just to suit your length of an article, or the space, rather, that you see fit to give such article. [The editors were succeeding each other rapidly about this time, and Jack was quite in the dark as to whom, personally, he was addressing.] . . . "Don't you see my point?" he urges. "If the whole woven thing — event, narrative, description — is not suitable for your magazine, why cut it out — cut out the whole thing. I don't care. But I refuse to contemplate for one moment that there is any man in your office, or in the office of any magazine, capable of bettering my art, or the art of any other first-class professional writer.

"Now, I want to give warning right here: I won't stand for it. Before I stand for it, I'll throw over the whole proposition. If you dare to do this with my succeeding articles. . . . I'll not send you another line. By golly, you've got to give me a square deal in this matter. Do you think for one moment that I'll write my heart (my skilled, professional heart, if you please) into my work to have you fellows slaughtering it to suit your journalistic tastes? Either I'm going to write this set of articles, or you're

going to write it, for know right here that I refuse definitely and flatly, to collaborate with you or with any one in your office.

"In order that this letter may not go astray," he winds up, "I am sending copies to each of the three men who, in my present hypothesis, I think may possibly be editor . . . And I want, at your earliest convenience, an assurance that the sort of mutilation I am complaining about, will not occur again."

After an unsatisfactory reply, Jack wrote: "Frankly, I'd like to call the whole thing off," following this with a still warmer letter than his former one, impressing upon the editor, "This is the first squabble I ever had in my life with a magazine. I hope it will be my last, but I'll make it hum while it lasts.

The upshot of the "squabble" was that the boat articles were actually called off, another serial, already under way, to be submitted at a still better rate. Jack was well pleased, and I was relieved for his sake, as the unsettled state of matters both with regard to his work and the exasperating Snark progress was very grilling to his nerves.

Another disappointment we had sustained was the loss of Manyoungi. For weeks, with true oriental indirection, he had set about making himself dispensable. The only motive, Jack convinced himself, was that the boy harbored a disinclination to visit the Seven Seas in an inconsequential shallop such as to him appeared the small Snark on her rickety ways at the shipyard. The heart of the sailor was not in his breast. His misbehavior, which had extended into every department of his service, culminated one evening in a very ludicrous manner. He had all day blatantly omitted his habitual address of "Master," substituting "Mr. London," or "Boss," with labored variations. His bold black eyes and studiedly nonchalant tongue advertised bid upon bid for discharge. And still new titles fell from his foolish lips, and still "Master" looked up when they became especially if unintentionally funny, and grinned at the silly boy, though one could note a peculiar absence of expression in Jack's gray eyes. For he was sad to lose Manyoungi, and in such undignified fashion — the perfect servant in so many capacities, of whom we were both personally fond into the bargain.

It was the custom each night, when we played our nightcap game of cards, for Manyoungi to ask what we would have to drink — grape-juice, or ginger-ale, lemonade, or beer. On this evening I was bending apprehensively over the cribbage-board, watching my opponent peg a shocking advantage, when an ominously quiet but impudent voice behind me asked:

"Will God have some beer?"

The only muscles I moved were in raising my eyes to Jack's face. I was braced for anything; words and tone were an invitation to wipe up the floor with Manyoungi's offending countenance. Jack went pale with surprise; but his sense of humor prevented him from thrashing the Korean, as man to man. He was not even angry, properly speaking, and I relaxed when, controlling the desire to laugh, he said composedly:

"I do not want anything at all from you, Manyoungi," and dealt another hand.

It meant the breaking of a new man to all the details of our complicated requirements, not only in relation to our present life, but to the prospective one upon the

water. Tochigi, a poet-browed Japanese, later to become an ordained minister in the Episcopal clergy, came to fill the vacancy; and each day's lunch-table was a thing of artistic anticipation, for never did the same exquisite floral decoration appear twice.

Jack forever maintained that there never could be equaled Manyoungi's perfect "spirit of service" that animated his manifold accomplishments. Why, that boy could make both Charmian and me ready in half an hour for Timbuctoo!" he would praise. And it was not far from the fact.

In a letter to Cloudesley Johns, written in September, is a lovely attestation of Jack London's inner contentment as regarded the voyage: "Nay, I'll not come back in 18 months. Barring boat and financial shipwreck, shall be gone for at least seven years. Also, shall not 'come back young again.' I am long since young again. You ought to see me, and you ought to have seen me all this year at Glen Ellen."

Curiously enough, eighteen months was practically the extent of our actual residence on the Snark, although we were absent twenty-seven months altogether.

In early November, hoping soon to weigh anchor, we moved to Oakland, with Mammy Jennie and Tochigi to keep house. That month, Jack wrote Cloudesley:

"Sorrier than the devil; but can't make Los Angeles before I sail. And when I sail, I'm going to hit the high places for midocean in order to learn navigation and learn the boat where I've plenty of room. No rockbound coast for me as a starter. A thousand miles of offing isn't any too good for me as a starter. . . . Dec. 15th is sailing date."

The first week in December saw the completion of "The Iron Heel," begun in August, and Jack bent his efforts upon the tramp series. That done, too restless to concentrate upon another long stretch, he wrote the stories: "Goliah" (in "Revolution"), "The Passing of Marcus O'Brien (in "Lost Face"), "The Unparalleled Invasion" (published in "The Strength of the Strong," and interesting in view of the alleged methods during the Great War), "The Enemy of All the World" and "The Dream of Debs" (both in "The Strength of the Strong"), and "A Curious Fragment" (in "When God Laughs").

For recreation, the living-room echoed to exciting contests in poker or hearts, among the players and onlookers being George Sterling, Henry Lafler, Carlton Bierce, Richard Partington, Rob Royce, Porter Garnett, Nora May French, and the Lily Maid, with a host of others. Upon one of these occasions, the first part of December, while we wives of "the boys" were entertaining ourselves at my newly acquired Steinway "B" grand, there arrived, from Kan-sas, in a drenching southeaster, Martin Johnson, who was destined to be the only unshaken unit in the Snark's crew. After partially drying himself, he sat in at the game of hearts.

There were Sunday foregatherings with what was left of the old "Crowd" in Piedmont; Kugby at the University of California, and concerts in its Greek Theater; plays and concerts at the Macdonough Theater or the Bishop Playhouse; gay dinner-parties at the Oakland Restaurants — The Forum, The Saddle Rock, and Pabst Café. Jack consumed many ten-minute " wild ducks, canvasback, mallard, teal, washed down with his favorite wine, imported Lieb-fraumilch, in the tall opaline glasses he loved. For he, who "bothered" so little what he put in his stomach, was devoted to this type of game,

excessively rare and accompanied by potatoes au gratin; and the fact that he had not missed the open season was somewhat of a solace for the almost in supportable delay in Snark affairs.

We made up frequent swimming parties for the Piedmont indoor tank; and once or twice, roved the town on rented saddlers, taking photographs of all that were left standing of Jack's many homes that had been. We boxed regularly at the house on Twenty-seventh Street, rather to the disapproval of Jack's mother, who remained silent until one day I drove my retreating opponent, beaten by his own mirth at my ferocity, into the dining-room door, cracking the redwood panel. Prizefights took Jack to the West Oakland Athletic Club, as before mentioned; and, when the Snark, after once breaking the inadequate ways, had been finally launched in San Francisco and brought to East Oakland for completion, there were steamed-mussel dinners aboard in the unfinished cabin.

I learned to ride a wheel, good horses being unobtainable, and also that I might participate with Jack in another of his old hobbies; so he bought me a "bike," and was loud in his boast that with three hours practice I was able, without mishap, to ride clear to East Oakland to inspect progress on the yacht.

We took our work to Carmel-by-the-sea, and visited the Sterlings for a fortnight; and a journey in mid-winter was made into Nevada, to Tonopah and Goldfield — in which latter mining-town we were guests of Mr. and Mrs. January Jones, who showed us everything our time permitted, above the ground, and many hundreds of feet beneath the surface, by means of the precarious rim of an iron bucket. We returned to California by way of Rhyolite and Bullfrog, booming gold-centers, and had a never-to-be-forgotten glimpse into Death Valley; then Los Angeles, and home again. This trip was succeeded by one to Stanford University, where Jack lectured upon Socialism. We were met by three "clean, noble, and alive" students, Ferguson, Tuttle and Wentz. Jack was entertained by the Delta Upsilon Fraternity; and I by the Alpha Phi Sorority.

There was a Ruskin Club dinner on February 1, which Jack addressed upon the subject of "Incentive." Like a red scarf to a bull was to Jack the stock argument so often advanced, that without material gain there would be no incentive to good deeds. His speech, which I have in manuscript, is too long to quote entire; but the opening challenges are enough to indicate what follows:

"Does a child compete in a spelling match for material gain?

"Do the boys wrestling or racing in the schoolyard compete for material gain?

Do sailors at sea volunteer to launch a boat in a mountainous sea to rescue shipwrecked strangers for material gain?

"Did Lincoln toil with his statecraft for material gain?

"Are you here to-night for material gain?

"Do the professors in all the universities toil for material gain? — you know their average salary is less than that of skilled laborers. "Do the scientists in their laboratories work for material gain?

* Did men like Spencer, Darwin, Newton, work for material gain?

"Did the half million soldiers in the Civil War endure hardships, mangling, and violent death for the material gain of thirteen dollars per month?

"And is there any incentive of material gain in the love of mothers for their children in all the world? — and remember that the mothers constitute half of all the world.

"In short, have I not mentioned incentives, that are not alone higher than the incentive of material gain, but that dominate the incentive of material gain — and that also compel to action multitudes of people, in fact, all the people of the world?

"Can you not conceive that mere material gain, a once useful device for the development of the human, has not fulfilled its function and is ready to be cast aside into the scrap-heap of rudimentary organs and ideas, such as gills in the throat and belief in the divine right of kings?"

These latter months of waiting, Jack was up and down in his temperament, and more or less continually depressed. So much so, at intervals, that for once it was I who said to myself: "Thank heaven I don't have to live in a city always!" Even Oakland, suburb of the greater town across the Bay, had a bad effect upon him. But at last the trial-trip of the Snark was heralded for February 10, and upon the breathing swell, ten miles out to sea, the saucy, if grimy, little hull bore under sail and gasolene. Our spirits soared; and Jack, where we sat together in the bows for an hour, said to me:

"And we're going around the world together in her, you and I, Mate Woman. . . ."

He presented me with "The Cruise of the Dazzler," and in it wrote: "And soon we sail on our own cruise. 'The Cruise of the Snark' — and we shall be mates around the whole round world."

So loved we our adventure, that of mornings we often exchanged overnight dreams of boat and voyage. Then, unable, on account of further "inconceivable and monstrous" excuses, to get away until April, once we went home to Glen Ellen. Snow was on the mountain, and we rode to the top, Selim and Belle, pasture-fat, sniffing suspiciously at the white earth. And we heard, to our lasting sorrow, how Brown Wolf, whose prophetic eyes and ways had wrung our hearts while preparations were afoot for the Long Separation, had died, alone and in the snow of his birthing, a week after we had left in November. No one had plucked up the courage to tell us. "After that first snow had all melted," Wiget said, "one day I saw something up the hill among the trees above my house; and when I went up, there was your dog, dead among the leaves, with snow still on his fur."

Dear Brown Wolf! It seemed hard indeed that he should have had his bleak heart wrenched so cruelly twice in his old age. Reminiscences were often upon Jack's lips: "Do you remember, Mate," he would say, "the day we started out for the afternoon on Belle and poor Ban, and Brown Wolf picked up a big juicy porterhouse some one had dropped, and nearly died because he couldn't decide between the beef steak and the run with us? The red meat won out — he knew we would come back. But nothing could change his foreboding when we got ready for the Snark. . . . Funny about dogs: sometimes, as in his case, even before the traveling-gear is brought out they seem to sense what is coming to them."

The dismantled Jack's House and Annex did not affect us cheerfully; and after a last ride to the Ranch, to see the completed stone and tile barn by moonlight, we bade final farewell to Wake Robin.

On the last night of the year, after wild funning with a chance party of acquaintances in the uproarious cafés and confetti-showered streets of Oakland, which had gained enormously in population after the great fire across the water, I closed my 1906 diary with these words:

"And so ends the happiest year of my life, with before us a great adventure"

Ecuador; Panama; Home

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OUR friends cannot understand why we make this voyage," Jack elucidates his and my "I like," which, he always contended, is the ultimate, obvious reason for all human decision. "They shudder, and moan, and raise their hands," somewhat, he might have added, as did the Lily Maid's mother upon his departure for Alaska. "No amount of explanation can make them comprehend that we are moving along the line of least resistance; that it is easier for us to go down to the sea in a small ship than to remain on dry land, just as it is easier for them to remain on dry land than to go down to the sea in the small ship. . . . They cannot come out of themselves long enough to see that their line of least resistance is not necessarily everybody else s line of least resistance. . . . They think I am crazy. In return, I am sympathetic. . . . The things I like constitute my set of values. The thing I like most of all is personal achievement — not achievement for the world's applause, but achievement for my own delight. It is the old 'I did it! I did it! With my own hands I did it!' But personal achievement, with me, must be concrete. I d rather win a water-fight in the swimming-pool, or remain astride a horse that is trying to get out from under me, than write the great American novel . . . Some other fellow would prefer writing the great American novel . . . That is why I am building the Snark . . . I am so made. I like it, that is all. The trip around the world means big moments of living . . . Here is the sea, the wind, and the wave. Here are the seas, the winds, and the waves of all the world . . . Here is difficult adjustment, the achievement of which is delight to the small quivering vanity that is I . . . It is my own particular form of vanity, that it all."

"The ultimate word," he says elsewhere, "is I LIKE. It lies beneath philosophy and is twined about the heart of life. When philosophy has maundered ponderously for a month, telling the individual what he must do, the individual says in an instant I LIKE — and does something else and philosophy goes glimmering. Philosophy is very often a man's way of explaining his own I LIKE."

To resume: "There is also another side to the voyage of the Snark. Being alive, I want to see, and all the world is a bigger thing to see than one small town or valley."

At the end of the voyage, he wrote:

"The voyage was our idea of a good time. I built the Snark and paid for it, and for all expenses. I contracted to write 35,000 words descriptive of the trip for a magazine which was to pay me the same rate I received for stories written at home. Promptly the magazine advertised that it was sending me especially around the world for itself. It was a wealthy magazine. And every man who had business dealings with the Snark charged three prices because forsooth the magazine could afford it. Down in the utter most South Sea isle this myth obtained, and I paid accordingly. To this day everybody believes that the magazine paid for everything and that I made a fortune out of the voyage. It is hard, after such advertising, to hammer it into the human understanding that the whole voyage was done for the fun of it."

The Snark exploit, so far as it lasted, was all and more to Jack London and to me than we had anticipated. Some feminine journalist, after reading my "Log," described the cruise as "a disappointment — nothing but a disappointment." It would have been to her, who did not care to go down to the sea in ships, or having gone down to the sea in ships, dwelt only upon the little annoyances that enter sea-living as well as land-living. But I, with a firm philosophy that it is the Big Things which count, and with the memory of my Strong Traveler beside me, ask that no one shall entertain the opinion that it was not the most wonderful, victorious thing which ever happened to the right man and woman. What we set out to attain — the "purple passages," the glamor of Romance, the sheer emancipation from any possible boredom or commonplaceness of memory forever and forever, and, before everything, increased love and camaraderie between us two — became ours in unstinted measure.

One reporter, previously to our sailing, said: "When Jack London talks of his purposed voyage, he is all boy, all enthusiasm." So he appeared. But I, accustomed to look beneath the surface phenomena of him, realized throughout my life at his side that no matter how sincere his enthusiasms, the keen edge had been rubbed from adventure by pre-adventure, if I may coin a word — the super-adventure of a too-early manhood. So, in his successful maturity, when he came to undertake, with all the zest in him, the conquest of dreams he had failed to capture in youth like say exploring Typee Valley, or letting go anchor in uncharted bights of cannibal isles — it was with a difference which a less experienced, less thoughtful man would not have known.

Yet his ardors were many, once we were under way on the "Long Trail." Hawaii, that in later years he came to call his Love-Land, warmed his veins to the very deliciousness of our venture — the keenest zest of which was that we were seeing the world together. In the midst of his morning's thousand words, he would break off to remind me of the beauty and adventure we should find below the equator; and then, realizing that a half-hour had been lost from his busy time, he would pick up his charmed ink-pencil:

There — don't talk to me any more, woman! How am I going to get my thousand words done, to pay for those pearls we're going to buy in the Paumotus and Torres Straits, and all that turtle shell from Melanesia, if you keep me from work now!" — Poor me, speechless, with clasped hands of transport in his own rapturous imaginings. But, since the youngling philosopher, who always dreamed with his two feet upon solid

earth, seldom failed to bring his intentions to pass, safely enough I thought to count upon the gleaming sea-seeds and polished turtle-scales, the adventuring for which was to be seven-eighths of the prize. Again, looking up with visions in his deep eyes:

"Think, think where we are bound — the very names stir all the younger red corpuscles in one! — Bankok, Celebes, Madagascar, Java, Sumatra, Natal — oh, I'll take you to them all; and your lap shall be filled with pearls, my dear, and we shall have them set in fretted gold by the smiths of the Orient."

As a sailor, I could not but feel that he was a consummate artist. As that matchless sea-writer, Joseph Conrad, reminds us, "an artist is a man of action, whether he creates a personality, invents an expedient, or finds the issue of a complicated situation. And Jack London's was a facility of adjustment, a quickness of conception and execution, "upon the basis," again to quote Conrad, "of just appreciation of means and ends which is the highest quality of the man of action."

All a piece of wonder it was, on and round about the narrow precipitous deck of the Snark, herself a mere scudding fleck of matter advancing upon the vast undulating plane of the Pacific. How could a true sailor be bored, the longest day under the arching blue sky — the excellent trades hunting his ship to its purple havens? For Jack found me sailor, too, albeit a lamentably untechnical mariner — ever he stood aghast at the hopelessness of getting me to present, "so that the Man from Mars could understand," certain ordinary, primary principles of seamanship. But my love and true feel for the very shape of a boat, and for her perform-ance, and for the whole world of water, easily he saw were not to be questioned; while always, in entering and leaving the most dangerous passages, he sent me to the wheel to coöperate with his piloting. "It's this way:" he had it. "There are many boats, but only one woman; boats will come and go, and captains will come and go, but Charmian will be with me always, at the helm."

Here I am tempted to digress, in order to word a still but not small worry that was mine during our married life. Jack's correlations between brain and body were exceptionally balanced. But there showed in him one inexactitude that led me to nurse a dread that my own hand, under his command, might some most inopportune time wreck a boat. I do not know when I first began to notice that at intervals he would say "right" for "left," but sometimes I would promptly call his attention to the mistake while his voice was still in the air. My principal fear was that, some irretrievable consequence having occurred, the responsibility might not be easy to place; and I prided myself upon unquestioning obedience aboard ship. Jack liked that, and only once did we personally come to grief. It was upon a midnight in the Solomon Islands, dark as a hat, and Jack, sick and apprehensive, was trying to make out a certain plantation anchorage on Guadalcanal. Suddenly, though the shore signal lights were identical, he discovered that we were almost on the rocks. It eventuated that another plantation than the one we sought had irresponsibly copied the other's lights. I started to put the wheel hard down at Jack's swift, tense command. "Hard down! Hard down! quick!" he repeated. Then I, like an idiot, "Oh, I am! I am!" It was too much for the disciplined sailorman.

Not of babbling courtesies nor babies nor women was he thinking, but of saving the vessel that insured the safety of all the souls on board. And I let my own silly, mawkish, fever-warped nerves go up against this intellectually-cool, efficient manipulating of a real issue. Since Jack never apologized for his sharp reproof, “Obey orders and don’t talk back!” I truly believe that no realization of his harshness entered the mind so bent upon a life-and-death problem.

No, we did not know the meaning of boredom. And “Aren’t you glad I’m your husband?” Jack would laugh over my enthusiasms. Or, tenderly, “You would marry a sailor!” when I floundered into the head-splitting fever attacks. But dearest of all was his assurance, reiterated in illness and discouragement: “You do not know what you mean to me. It is like being lost in the Dangerous Archipelago, and coming into safe harbor at last.”

It is all a piece of wonder, the sea, to such as we: still magic of calms, where one s boat lies with motionless grace upon a shadow-flecked expanse of mirror; or when one laughs in the pelt of warm sea-rain from a ragged gray sky of clouds; or peers for blue-black squalls darkling upon the silver moonlit waves; or lifts prideful, fond eyes to the small ship’s goodly spars standing fast in a white gale; or gazes in marvel at those same spars lighted to flame by the red-gilt morning sunrays from over some green and purple savage isle feared of God and man; or braces to the Pacific rollers bowling upon the surface of the eternal unagitated depths; or scans the configuration of coasts from inadequate charts; or steers, tense, breathless, through the gateways of but half-known reefs, into enchanted coral-rings below “the lap of the Line”; or looks with misleading candor into the eyes of man-eating human beings; or being received ashore on scented Polynesian fragments of Paradise” aplume with waving palms, with brown embraces, into the “high seat of abundance.” It is all wonder and deep delight, this “smoke of life”; and often and often we sur prised ourselves thinking or voicing our pity for the “vain people of landsmen” who have no care for such joys as ours. Jack, embodiment of fearlessness, so vivid in thought, and action, and body, was a ringing challenge to any who were not half-dead.

On November 24, 1907, in 126° 20’ W.Lon., 60° 47 N.Lat., Jack wrote George Sterling:

“Oh, You Greek: —

“I haven’t received a letter for two months, and two months more will probably elapse before I pick up a mountain of mail in Papeete. You know what my mail is — think of four months of it coming in one swat!

“49 days next Monday since last saw Hilo and land, and we’re in the Doldrums now, the Marquesas many hundreds of miles away.

Did anybody ever tell you that it’s a hard voyage from Hawaii to the Marquesas? . . . The South Sea Directory says that the whaleship captains doubted if it could be accomplished from Hawaii to Tahiti — which is much easier than the Marquesas. We’ve had to fight every inch of easting, in order to be able to make the islands when we fall in with the S. E. traders. . . . The first two weeks out of Hilo we met the N.

E. trades well around to the east and even at times a bit north of east. Result was we sagged south (across a westerly current) and made practically no easting till we struck the Variables.

"But I'm working every day!

"Say, you've seen dolphin. Think of catching them on rod and reel! That's what I'm doing. Gee! You ought to see them take the line out (I have 600 yards on the reel, and need it all). The first one fought me about twenty minutes, when I hauled him to gaff — four feet six inches of blazing beauty.

"When they strike, they run away like mad, leaping into the air again and again, prodigiously, and in each mid-leap, shaking their heads like young stallions.

"I find it hard to go to sleep after catching one of them. The leaping, blazing beauty of it gets on my brain.

"I never saw dolphins really until this trip. Pale-blue, after being struck, they turn golden. On deck, of course, afterward, they run the gamut of color. But in the water, after the first wild run, they are pure gold.

"I am going to write up the voyage of the Snark and entitle it: 'Around the World with Three Gasoline Engines and a Wife.'"

And a postscript: "Talk about luck! I have played poker and I have now lost the ninth successive time, eight out of the nine times being the only loser. You can't beat that, you ever-blessed Greek!

"Wolf."

In Jack's ten-weeks mail at Tahiti was a letter from his children's mother, announcing her approaching nuptials. His natural paternal interest in the prospective stepfather of his two daughters, combined with news of the current panic in Wall Street, determined a break in the Snark voyage. We took a thirty-days round-trip to San Francisco, on the old S.S. Mariposa, whose roomy portholes were model for the means of "Martin Eden's" suicide. Once more in Tahiti, Jack wrote Cloudesley Johns under date of February 17, 1908:

"Oh, you can't lose the Snark. By the time Charmian and I had arrived in Frisco, we were both saying: 'Me for the Snark' We were honestly homesick for her. We're a whole lot safer on the Snark than on the streets of San Francisco. Wish, often, that you could be with us on some of our jamborees and adventures. We sail from here in several days for Samoa, the Fijiis, New Caledonia, and the Solomons. Have just finished a 145,000 word novel that is an attack upon the bourgeoisie and all that the bourgeoisie stands for. It will not make me any friends. [This was "Martin Eden".]

"'The Iron Heel' ought to be out by now. I wonder what you will think of it.

Have just finished Austin Lewis' 'American Proletariat.' It's good stuff.

Somewhere along our gorgeous sea highway, the mail brought Jack word of the public's reception of "The Iron Heel," which cast him into temporary gloom.

"Just the same," he burst into his sunny chuckle, "I told the bourgeoisie a thing or two they didn't know about the way their blessed laws are made!" He referred especially to the Dick Militia Bill, passed by the Senate in 1903. For some reason best known

to the Solons, very few Americans knew of this bill. Practically none but the Socialist papers gave it notice. Chapter VIII of "The Iron Heel" started considerable publicity for both himself and Representative Dick of Ohio. I have in my hand a clipping as late as February 1917, headed: "State Guards in a Dilemma: Dick Bill and National Defense Act Conflict With Some of the Units."

Jack, pressed to relate our wildest experiences in cannibaldom, would sometimes tell the following:

"We had excitement enough, as Charmian will testify; but there were no such hair-breadth escapes as that of a missionary we heard of. This good fellow was preaching in one of the islands where man-eating is practised, and was captured by a skeptical chief. To his surprise, he was immediately released, but on the condition that he carry a small sealed packet to a neighboring mountain chief. The missionary was so grateful that, meeting a detachment of English sailors from a battle cruiser, he declined to accompany them to a safer territory. The sealed packet should be delivered as he had promised. But an officer in the midst of the discussion opened it. Therein, tucked among some small onions, was a message to the chief:

"'The bearer will be delicious with these.'"

During the space in time taken up by the Snark episode, namely between April 1907 and July 1909, Jack London, in addition to the administration of ship's affairs, recreation, wide reading, sightseeing, and weeks idle from illnesses, wrote the equivalent of more than eight full volumes, as follows:

"The Cruise of the Snark," published serially in The Cosmopolitan and Harper's Weekly.

"Martin Eden," begun in Honolulu in summer of 1907, finished at Papeete, Tahiti, February 1908, and serial pub-lication commenced in The Pacific Monthly, of Portland, Oregon, in September of same year.

"Adventure," a novel depicting the manner of life we lived ashore in the Solomons. Begun while cruising among that Group, and often interrupted for the writing of timely short work.

"South Sea Tales." These splendid stories, unlike the later ones in "A Son of the Sun," were written during the voyage.

"The House of Pride" collection of Hawaii romances. "Burning Daylight." This novel was started in Quito, Ecuador.

And short stories, later dispersed throughout five different volumes:

"The Chinago" ("When God Laughs")

"A Piece of Steak" ("When God Laughs")

"Make Westing" ("When God Laughs")

"South of the Slot" ("The Night-Born")

"The Other Animals" (Article replying to Theodore Roosevelt's attack upon the "nature fakers," and collected in "Revolution.")

"Nothing that Ever Came to Anything" ("The Human Drift.")

In Australia, Jack, on condition that I should accompany him, reported the Burns-Johnson prizefight for The Star, Sydney, and the New York Herald. He also wrote a series of articles upon his general local impressions, as well as the labor situation in the Commonwealth from his socialist viewpoint. All of this work I shall collect at a future date for book publication.

Jack had much fun over the charge of "nature-faking," inasmuch as it arose over a misreading on the part of the President, of the incident, in "White Fang," of the wolfdog killing the lynx; whereas Mr. Roosevelt erroneously attacked the author for having the lynx do away with the dog. It must not be forgotten that throughout the traverse of the Pacific, Jack failed not in sounding his trumpet for the brotherhood of man. Wherever opportunity presented, he either debated, as in Honolulu, or lectured, as in Tahiti and Samoa, or used his pen when too ill to speak, as in Australia.

I might mention, if I have not previously done so, that Jack was accustomed, in the course of his literary career, to seek perspective upon his plots and motifs before developing them on paper; but during the Snark voyage he often went at the actual weaving of a story rather than merely filing notes upon it.

For the benefit of editors and readers who have scoffed at Jack London's novel "Adventure" as an inaccurate, over-drawn picture of savagery in the Twentieth Century, I select passages from his letter to George Sterling, from the Solomon Islands, October 31, 1908:

"For the last three or four months the Snark has been cruising about the Solomons. This is about the rawest edge of the world. Head-hunting, cannibalism and murder are rampant. Among the worst islands of the group, day and night we are never unarmed, and night watches are necessary. Charmian and I went on a cruise on another boat around the island of Malaita. We had a black crew. The natives we encountered, men and women, go stark naked, and are armed with bows, arrows, spears, tomahawks, warclubs and rifles. (Have Fiji and Solomon war-clubs for you.) When ashore we always had armed sailors with us, while the men in the whale-boat laid by their oars with the bow of the boat pointed seaward. We went swimming once in the mouth of a fresh-water river, and all about us in the bush our sailors were on guard, while we, when we undressed, left our clothes conspicuously in one place, and our weapons hidden in another, so that in case of surprise we would not do the obvious thing.

"And to cap it all, we got wrecked on a reef. The minute before we struck not a canoe was in sight. But they began to arrive like vultures out of the blue. Half of our sailors held them off with rifles, while the other half worked to save the vessel. And down on the beach a thousand bushmen gathered for the loot. But they didn't get it, nor us.

"Am leaving here in two days to go to Sydney, where I go into hospital for an operation. And I have other afflictions, from a medical standpoint vastly more serious than the operation."

The one and only reason that our splendid adventure terminated in two years instead of seven, or ten, or unnumbered years, was that Jack London's supersensitive organism

prevented. I remember him arguing, in Hawaii, with Dr. E. S. Goodhue, the point of his working-pace in the tropics. Neither Jack nor I was willing to forego any jot of our activity, mental or physical. In the end, the ultra-violet rays exacted their toll of his nervous system, as the Doctor had forewarned. In his own words:

"I went to Australia to go into hospital, where I spent five weeks. [The operation was for a double-fistula, caused we never knew how.] I spent five months miserably sick in hotels. The mysterious malady that affected my hands was too much for the Australian specialists. . . . It extended from my hands to my feet so that at times I was helpless as a child. On occasion my hands were twice their natural size, with seven dead and dying skins peeling off at the same time. There were times when my toe-nails, in twenty-four hours, grew as thick as they were long. After filing them off, inside another twenty-four hours they were as thick as before.

"The Australian specialists agreed that the malady was nonparasitic, and that, therefore, it must be nervous. It did not mend, and it was impossible for me to continue the voyage . . . I reasoned that in my own climate of California I had always maintained a stable nervous equilibrium.

"Since my return I have completely recovered. And I have found out what was the matter with me. I encountered a book by Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. Woodruff of the United States Army, entitled 'Effects of Tropical Light on White Men.' Then I knew . . . In brief, I had a strong predisposition toward the tissue-destructiveness of tropical light. I was being torn to pieces by the ultra-violet rays just as many experimenters with the X-Ray have been torn to pieces.

"In passing, I may mention that among other afflictions that jointly compelled the abandonment of the voyage, was one that is variously called the healthy man s disease, European leprosy, and Biblical leprosy. Unlike True leprosy, nothing is known of this mysterious malady . . . The only hope the doctors had held out to me was a spontaneous cure, and such a cure was mine." [This was simply psoriasis, as known in the United States, for which many cures are advertised, but none known that is efficacious.]

Finally, as a tribute to my own whole-hearted devotion to the voyage and all that it meant, Jack offers:

"A last word: the test of the voyage. It is easy enough for me or any man to say that it was enjoyable. But there is a better witness, the one woman who made it from beginning to end. In hospital when I broke the news to Charmian that I must go back to California, the tears welled into her eyes. For two days she was wrecked and broken by the knowledge that the happy, happy voyage was abandoned."

The venture definitely thrown over, Jack dispersed his crew, laid up the Snark in one of beautiful Sydney Harbor's green crannies, and shipped home our effects. The yacht eventually netted less than one-tenth of her original inflated price, and went to trade and recruit in the New Hebrides. Jack and I, loath to retrace our way across the ocean in conventional mode, watched for chance to ship on anything but a passenger liner. Our luck it was to catch, upon extremely short notice, a rusty leviathan of a Scotch collier, the Tymeric, Captain Robert McIlwaine, from Newcastle, N.S.W., to Guayaquil,

Ecuador. With us sailed Yoshimatsu Nakata, the eighteen-year-old, fatherly Japanese soul who had joined the Snark as cabin boy when we left Hawaii. Nakata remained our loving and beloved shadow for nine responsible years; and I feel free to assert, for Jack London as well as myself, that when the faithful brown boy came to marry and resign from our service at the end of 1915, life never seemed quite the same again. Nakata is since a graduate of the San Francisco College of Physicians and Surgeons, and success fully wields his fashionable forceps in his own offices in Honolulu, with two assistants.

"No man is a hero to his valet" was not applicable in Jack London's household. Servants worshiped him, for he never tired helping them with his knowledge of all kinds.

For nearly three weeks after she stood out at sea, the Tymeric, resembling a log awash, fought a violent gale. I was time and again laid low with the terrible Solomon Island malaria. Jack and Nakata, suffering only occasional light attacks, nursed me like gentlest women. Jack was especially sympathetic in that I was missing the magnificent sight, from the bridge, of the plunging, submerging hull of the steamer, which he, "who lived with storms and spaces like a kinsman," as some one has aptly said, so reveled in. Here is his reference to the gale:

"We were a tramp collier, rusty and battered, with six thousand tons of coal in our hold. Life lines were stretched fore and aft; and on our weather side, attached to smokestack guys and rigging, were huge rope-nettings, hung there for the purpose of breaking the force of the seas and so saving our mess-room doors. But the doors were smashed and the mess-room washed out just the same."

Yet Jack compared all this as monotonous alongside sailing a small boat on San Francisco Bay.

We were forty-three days on this passage, seeing land but twice, and upon two successive days first, fair Pitcairn Island of Bounty fame, on the southernmost edge of the farflung Paumotus whose northernmost edge we had skirted when westward-bound; and next, the low isle of Ducie, its tropic scents of blossom and cocoanut borne out across the water on the warm breeze.

Captain McIlwaine proved a mine of interest to Jack, who wrote a brace of his most thoughtful stories, "Samuel" and "The Sea Farmer" (in "The Strength of the Strong") from notes made from the canny skipper's yarns. I worked up a County McGee, North of Ireland, vocabulary for Jack, often reporting the quaint speech under the table at meals. The Skipper caught me at it, I know; but he continued generously unabated in reminiscence.

Here is part of a letter Jack wrote off Pitcairn Island on May 2, to George Sterling:

"Never you mind N — and all the other little bats, but go on hammering out beauty. If the urge comes from within to write propaganda, all right; otherwise you violate yourself. There are plenty who can do propaganda, but darned few that can create beauty. Some day you may see your way to fuse both, but meanwhile do what you heart listeth.

"'Memory' is great! I've read it aloud a dozen times. (You should see us, George, when you send us a new poem! We sit and read it with tears in our eyes!)"

One could draw a sheaf of sketches upon that month in Ecuador. We climbed great Chimborazo, twelve thousand feet of its twenty-two thousand, on the wonderful American railway; thence descended two thousand feet to Quito, where, at the Hotel Royal, over a fortnight was spent; and before sailing upon the Erica for Panama, friends took us alligator-hunting up the River Guayas, where Jack, who never did anything by halves, laid in a large supply of salted skins.

As to this marvelous country, he ever afterward raved of its possibilities of agricultural development, and advised more than one ambitious young man that Ecuador would give him "the chance of his life."

There are many incidents that throw added light upon Jack London's individuality. Such as his indignation toward the unfair methods of the bull-ring, as against the "white-man's game" of prizefighting — his passion leading him to write "The Madness of John Harned" (in "The Night-Born"); and his interest, for once, in American horse-racing as practised in Quito; and the Latin-American character as displayed about him, in public, and in the clubs where he took a look-in at the gambling of Ecuadorian gentlemen and their psychology as regarded payment of losses. He was in the best of humor for most of the sojourn, little troubled with fever, and spilled some of his whimsical disgust at the undependableness of Quito's inhabitants in a humorous skit, "Nothing that Ever Came to Anything" (in "The Human Drift"), which is the narration of an actual occurrence.

One sweet manifestation of himself shone out one day when I was strolling alone. A spic-and-span victoria was sent all over the shopping district to find me, because, for sooth, a peddler with her basket of laces had come to our rooms, and Jack did not want me to miss her. He hovered about the pair of us seated on the floor in a sea of needlework, inciting me to satisfy my craving to the uttermost. A day he spent taking me to convents, in search for embroideries, and joined in a blanket-haggling revel in an old plaza — brilliant native dyes of hand-loom weaves from llama wool. He did balk, however, at adding a tiny, shivering green monkey to the menage.

In Panama, a rousing American military Fourth of July was followed by a ten days' stay at the Hotel Tivoli, whence we explored some of the surrounding country, saw the work of the great canal, and shopped in the Chinese stores. And I must take space for something that happened on the evening of the Fourth. The hotel was jammed, and we were obliged to share our small table with an American couple. The man appeared to be much the worse for the climate, and his wife evidently spent her life soothing him into a semblance of fitness for association with his kind. We extended the ordinary courtesies to them both, but it was no use. After the man had sourly declined several things passed him, suddenly, to Jack, he burst:

"I don't want anything from you!"

Jack gulped. I went chill, as when Manyoungi had invited destruction, but again misjudged my man. Instead of blowing up as the terrified woman expected, Jack turned

to her, and quietly, without interruption, at length and sans haste, told her exactly what he thought of her husband and how sorry he was for her. The poor lady, already blanched and wilted, never raised her eyes nor opened her lips. Nor did her companion. They presently rose and left the table.

"I couldn't help it," Jack apologized to me. "I was sorry for her, and I did her a service, I do believe — just in telling her, before him, what a skunk he is!"

I never saw Jack smite anybody except with a tongue-lashing; and, so far as I know, during our years together he never but once struck a man.

We sailed from Colon on the Turrialba for New Orleans. My temperature on the day of arrival, if memory serves, was 104, and I continued for a year to suffer intermittent attacks of malaria. But Jack, again in his home-land, soon had cast all trace of fever, as well as of psoriaris, forever into the discard.

From New Orleans to Oakland his return was hailed by the newspapers, and reporters boarded the train at a number of towns. We stopped over but once, at the Grand Canon of the Colorado, where we found ourselves hospitably entertained by the Manager of the Hotel El Tovar and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Brandt, as guests of the proprietor, Mr. Fred Harvey. On July 24, 1909, we were once more at home in Wake Robin Lodge.

A Daughter is Born

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HOMECOMING, after twenty-seven months of absence, was not the least of our enviable experiences. There was so much to see and do. The great stone barn was completed, roofed with red Spanish tile, and sheltered, besides horses and vehicles, all of our magnificent collection of South Sea curios. Concerning this small museum, much mirth had escaped from the Custom House into the press as to its value in dollars and cents. Jack's "declaration" had perforce been couched entirely in terms of stick-tobacco, which had been the sole medium of exchange with the savages of Melanesia.

Then Ranch improvements were to be inspected, together with the modest increase in stock — colts and calves, chickens, ducks, and pigeons. Most exciting of all, my Aunt, as Jack's agent, had added to our possessions the tiny "Fish Ranch" and the La Motte hundred and thirty acres adjoining Wake Robin, as well as a broad strip connecting the same with the Hill property — Jack's "Beauty Ranch." There was but one fly in the ointment as regarded the new acquisition. Certain men had so conducted negotiations as to leave Jack's agent in ignorance of a serious drawback to ownership of the land: upon it rested a thirteen-year lease of a valuable pit which furnished clay for the Glen Ellen brickyard. This was not so bad in itself, but the lease also covered standing timber, which might be cut at any time by the lessees for use in the brick-kiln furnaces. Jack, in the face of unalterable circumstances, naturally made the most of the fact that he was entitled to "ten cents a yard" for all clay hauled down hill, and in course of time

netted a tidy sum which, I must insert, did not compensate him for the annoyance of a dusty, rutted right-of-way over his land, to say nothing of the constant reminder, whenever plodding teams and creaking loads in clouds of dust crossed his vision, of the dishonest dealings of his fellow men. The nuisance was before long abated, and finally ceased altogether, for the brickyard went out of business previous to its requirement of any firewood from the La Motte land. It may interest travelers to know that the hollow brick used in the beautiful Hotel Oakland, in Jack's home town, was made at Glen Ellen from material mined on the Jack London Ranch.

Meanwhile, nothing daunted, Jack, with fabulous forests in his far-seeing eye, had hesitated not to set out 15,000 baby eucalyptus trees, bought from Stratton's in Petaluma, trying out their vitality on the most impoverished section of the La Motte holding.

My perspective of the latter months of 1909, from our return in mid-July on into the winter, is not one of unalloyed pleasure. For exuberance in our general happy estate was sorely tempered by anemia and sporadic attacks of the vicious malaria that so impaired my usefulness, as well as any fair qualities I may have possessed as hostess. And from the first week, Jack and I were not for a day without guests. Hospitality is a beautiful thing in itself; but I leave to the reader my frame of mind, when time and again I was obliged to lie up for days, my work going behind, and, not the least of my troubles, the pitiable effect this helplessness worked in Jack. Whenever anything interfered with "the Cheery One's" cheeriness, Jack, under no matter what merry dissembling, was lamentably at outs with existence.

Despair seemed to reach its height when during the duck season, I had to remain home from a long-contem-plated yachting trip up-river which was to include a house-guest, Louis Augustin, from Canada, and the Sterlings. Only at the last moment did I give in, and keep to my bed. This cruise was made in a rented sloop, Phyllis, and lasted for several weeks. Jack was not well, and returned quite ill, but was soon himself. In the interim, I had patronized Burke's Sanitarium for a week — a lovely Mecca in our own county, administered by a noble man, Mr. J. P. Burke — and felt greatly improved. Burke's, by the way, had formerly been Altruria, a coöperative colony of charming idealists, where I had spent more than one vacation, going about the country on horseback for a month at a time.

But far be it from me to draw a veil of gloom over that summer and autumn. There was ample joie du vivre sprinkled throughout. Jack's work was as always the sustaining anchor for us both. "Burning Daylight," the novel commenced in Quito, Ecuador, was duly "signed, sealed, and delivered" unto the New York Herald, where it appeared serially, and was published by Macmillans in the fall of 1910. And Jack wrote one short manuscript beside, on a request to describe the most dramatic moment of his life. This is entitled "That Dead Men Rise Up Never" (in "The Human Drift"), a ghost-story founded upon his experience aboard the Sophie Sutherland, from which I have made quotation in an early chapter.

A short-story collection, "Lost Face," and the novel "Martin Eden," which has helped shape the purposes of so many, were the two volumes brought out in 1909. There was almost universal protest from readers of this novel as to its author's wisdom in killing off the hero. Jack held that Martin, robbed both of love and of pleasure in his too-hard-won fame, and finding no faith in his fellow man to sustain him in his loneliness, had nothing left to do, logically and artistically, but terminate a life that had become a burden. "Which is where Martin Eden and I differed," Jack smiled contentedly. "To be sure, when my own battle was won, I had little use for the spoils, so far as fame went; but I did not become self-centered. I solaced myself with warm interest in my kind, and I did find love — which is better than all." Whereupon, he presented his wife with the first copy in hand, in which he had generously written:

"You see, Martin Eden did not have you!"

Here is a letter, dated April 26, 1910, to one Lillian Collins who, neglecting to leave a forwarding address, never came into possession of Jack's argument in answer to her protest:

"In reply to your good letter of April 22. I don't know whether to take it as an unconscious compliment to me, or as a subtle compliment to me. I quote from your letter: 'He was not physically able to defend himself. He was heartsick; the nerves of action paralyzed by enormous strain, the power to weigh and analyze, compare and select, submerged under an overwhelming sense of loss.'

"From the foregoing, and much more that you have said in your letter, you point out to me that I did succeed in showing the inevitableness of his death. I was no more treacherous to Martin Eden than life is treacherous to many, many men and women. You continually point out to me where I took unfair advantages of Martin Eden, 'cramming his newly awakened mind with abstraction which his crude mental processes were not able to assimilate.' Granted; but do not forget that this was MY Martin Eden, and that I manufactured him in this very particular, precise and peculiar fashion. Having done so, his untimely end is accounted for. Remember that he was MY Martin Eden, and was made by me in this fashion. He certainly was not the Martin Eden that you would have made. I think the disagreement between you and me lies in that you confuse my Martin Eden with your Martin Eden.

"You say: 'I look upon Martin Eden's selfish individualism as a crudity adhering from the boy's early habits of life — a lack of perspective which time and a wider horizon would correct.' And you complain because he died. Your point is that if I had let him live, he would have got out of all this slough of despond. Again, to make a simile which I know will be distasteful to you, let me point out that the case is exactly parallel with that of a beauti-ful young man, with the body of an Adonis, who cannot swim, who is thrown into deep water, and who drowns. You cry out, Give the young man time to learn to swim while he is drowning, and he will not drown, but will win safely to shore. And the queer thing, reverting to the original proposition, is, that you yourself, in sharp, definite terms, point out the very reasons why Martin Eden couldn't swim, and had to drown.

"You tell me that I asserted that love had tricked and failed Martin Eden, and that you know better and that I know better. On the contrary, from what I know of love, I believe that Martin Eden had his first big genuine love when he fell in love with Ruth, and that not he alone, but that countless millions of men and women, have been tricked in one way or another in similar fashion. However, you are unfair in taking such an assertion and making the sweeping generalization that I deny all love and the greatness of all love.

"Then, it is an endless question. I don't think you and I have so much of a quarrel over Martin Eden as we have on account of our different interpretations of life. Your temperament and your training lead you one way — mine lead me another way. I think that right there is the explanation of our difference.

"Thanking you for your good letter,

"Sincerely yours,"

To one who had interpreted Martin Eden as a Socialist, Jack wrote:

"Contrary to your misinterpretation, Martin Eden was not a Socialist. On the contrary, I drew him a temperamental, and, later on, an intellectual Individualist. So much was he an Individualist, that he characterized your kind of Individualism as half-baked Socialism. Martin Eden was a proper Individualist of the extreme Nietzschean type."

As for public appearances in 1909, Jack read "The Amateur M. D.," (from "The Cruise of the Snark") in Oakland, before the Rice Institute in Old Reliance Hall; and he spoke a number of times, here and there, on other phases of the Snark voyage. Once he lectured in San Francisco for the Socialists in Dreamland Rink. "Among those present" at Wake Robin Lodge that fall were the Sterlings; Jack's old friend Frank Atherton; Cloudesley Johns and his bride; "Lem" Parton, author and editor; Mrs. Lucy Parsons, a plucky widow of the Hay-market tragedy in Chicago; "A No. 1," the engaging gentleman-tramp who left his picturesque "monaker" carved on the Lodge veranda as well as along the railroad route to Glen Ellen, on which he "beat" his passage; and Emma Goldman and Dr. Ben Reitman, who, with friendly naivete, tried to divert Jack from his socialism, which they derided, toward their unconstructive anarchism, at which he jeered, while not depreciating their martyr-sincerity and courageous, if (to him) misguided sacrifices. Of these and some others he later said: "The anarchists whom I know are dear, big souls whom I like and admire immensely. But they are dreamers, idealists. I believe in law . . . you can see it in my books — all down in black and white." I have more to say about this when presently drawing together the threads of Jack's life near its close.

And in his two or three days' entertainment of this woman and man, one of whom during the Great War fell into such evil fortune, he argued seriously as little as possible, devoting himself to laughing at and with them, and playing juvenile pranks. One of these was the placing at Dr. Reitman's plate of an attractive little red book, bearing the title "Four Weeks, a Loud Book." The guest, somewhat of a joker himself, met his Waterloo at Jack's hands. For when, the book opened, it exploded with loud report,

"Never," Jack would laugh in retrospect, "did any one jump so high as that red anarchist! He must have thought it was a bomb, for he went positively green. He has the soul of a child — they're such soft people, anarchists, when it comes to actual violence — and when they do try it, they usually make a mess of it because they're dreamers and haven't learned practical brass-tack ways of doing the very things they so vehemently preach." The ordinary camp recreations prevailed; and Jack, upon which tenderfoot, during the establishing of himself as a farmer, certain unreliable or unsound horseflesh was palmed off by traders for substantial returns, spent much time, that year and the next, subduing the creatures to his will. I was often worried when he failed to report for the evening meal and for hours afterward. After I had satisfied myself, from repeated successes, of his prudence and wisdom in forestalling the scant and often addled gray-matter of our equine friends, I said, perhaps carelessly:

"I don't worry about you any more when you are out with your incorrigible horses!"

For once our mental lines were crossed. Jack looked as puzzled and grieved as an abandoned child. I hastened to explain the reason for my lightened emotions — confidence in his methods; whereupon he was as proud as he had been taken aback and hurt. It was not wholly true — my flat statement that I had ceased to worry. There could not fail to be an undercurrent of apprehension, while an occasional minor accident, that left its scar upon my man, or further disqualified delicate ankle or wrist, prevented my nerves from becoming unresponsive.

How he gloried in it all — how he beamed and fairly quivered with achievement when, say, he had, with months of patient "staying with it," beguiled spidery little Fleet from her custom of bolting downhill with nose high in air to the detriment of all control; or his excusable bragging when, for fifteen hundred miles, he drove the notorious outlaw, Gert, as wheeler in our four-in-hand — she who had broken the spirit of every owner who had tried to hang harness upon her rebellious frame.

When, by Christmas of 1909, there was no doubt that, barring mishap, June should crown our enduring love with parenthood, our happiness was boundless. Jack was a new man — all himself and something ineffably more. It showed in his every look, the touch of his hands, the vibration of his voice. When the latest volume, "Revolution," came in the spring, this is what he wrote in the fly-leaf:

"My Mate-Woman:

"Not that I shall be able to tell you anything about revolution — you, who in a few short weeks from now, will be prime mover in turning our Wake Robin household upside down with the most delicious and lovable revolution that we can ever hope to experience.

"Mate Man.

"Wake Robin Lodge,

"April 24, 1910."

Always I shall cherish, I think above all others, the memories of those months. Never had I been so joyful, nor so strong. It seems as if all nature with lavish hands contributed to the making of the perfect child I desired and bore. "How the birds

do sing and shout!" raves my diary. " — meadow-larks, blue-jays, orioles, linnets and wild canaries bickering at bath and play; gentle mourning-doves at twilight; chattering, whirring quail in the warm woods, and quaint little owls calling by night." And "Such flowered fields I never saw!" Not the least of our blisses was wandering in the eucalyptus "forest," not yet knee-high, dreaming of when they should some day be over our heads on horse-back. "They'll only be a few months older than our boy!" Jack would say.

We did not stay strictly at home, but harnessed young Maid and Ben in our light, yellow-wheeled run-about, packed writing materials and toilet articles, and drove for a week at a time about the country, stopping over wherever it looked good to us. "We three," Jack, at this sweetest height of living, would breathe leaning to my willing ear as the bays forged up mountainsides or dropped into the exquisite valleys. I have set down these words of his on an April morning: "Wife, little mother, sweetheart — I cannot express the love I feel for you these days!" One night we spent in Petaluma, and attended a performance by an all but stranded company of itinerant players. "Tell you what, Mate Woman — if you're game for it," Jack whispered, "let me send word behind for them all to join us at supper."

It was done. The affair came off. The troupe looked hungry, but partook sparingly of a very good repast, as if hesitating to divulge their chronic emptiness. Jack was all keyed up to order cocktails, wine, champagne, anything to put them at their ease; but one spoke for light beer, and the rest, every soul of them, insisted upon milk.

Another journey was to Carmel-by-the-Sea, where we were guests of the George Sterlings.

There is a remark in the diary concerning lack of excitement in passing through the tail of Halley's Comet.

Ernest Untermann, socialist, author, painter, and perhaps best known as translator of Karl Marx, spent sometime at Wake Robin, while other friends came and went. Eliza, Shepard, with her boy Irving, had come to live in the little Fish Ranch house, under what, we always maintained, was the biggest madroño in California; and Eliza shortly began to assist Jack in the business of the ranch, attending to accounts and "overhead." For in May we had swelled our estate by the seven hundred acres of the Kohler property, and Jack needed such aid in carrying out his headful of ambitions. "He's burgeoning with all sorts of happiness," my journal recalls, "with love of the land, with his new mare, Gert the Outlaw — why, his eyes glisten when he speaks of her; and with life and its promises." In my copy of "Theft," a play he wrote for Olga Nethersole that spring, but which was never acted, he inscribed:

"Dear My-Woman:

"How our days continue to grow fuller and sweeter!

"Your Lover-Man." Speaking of "Theft," this time Jack considered he had written a fairly good play; but it went the rounds of the dramatic agencies in New York without being placed — this after Miss Nethersole had decided against it. Besides "Theft," in the first half of 1910, Jack commenced a fantastic piece of long fiction, "The Assassination Bureau." This, interrupted by the death of the baby, he never finished. Only death

itself, it would seem, could compel that man to stay his hand. It is noteworthy that his only uncompleted work is this "The Assassination Bureau," and the novel left less than half finished when he himself went "into the dark."

A short Klondike story, "The Night-Born," was also written that spring, and "The Human Drift," a synthesis of years of research into the great developing forces in human history.

How much one can live through — physically, mentally — and splendidly recover from! The baby was born upon high noon of Sunday, June 19, in an Oakland hospital. In my little old record I read: "Then came on the terrible hours, when Jack helped me, breathed with me, loved me and praised me — " "We named her Joy, Mate and I." She was a beautiful baby, they told me, all who saw her. I was so near to fading out that I feared my strength would fail through sheer emotion if I looked at the little soul until I had had time to gather my forces; so they carried her away. When Eliza had come from Glen Ellen at Jack's bidding, she found him so radiant with relief after his own sharp strain, so excited telling her of the small one's fair skin and gray eyes, "Just like Mate's and mine. Anglo-Saxon through and through!" that she had difficulty in learning whether he was father to a son or a daughter. The fact that he had prayed for a boy was forgotten in the larger matter of a living, breathing child of whichever sex. What he said was: "Boy or girl, it doesn't matter — so long as it's Charmian's!"

Poor little Joy! The severity of her birth, coupled with certain unwisdom, or ignorance, in the handling of the same, within thirty-eight hours had cost her life. "A perfect child," they said, after those perfect months that went into the creation of her. I go on from some notes headed "First Thoughts": "He came to me, and Eliza, and, one on either side my bed, Mate told me with a brave, bright face. And I did not make it harder for him than I could help. But oh! the pity of it! Our own baby, our little daughter, ours, our Joy-Baby, only thirty-eight hours old — gone in the twilight of the morning."

The New York Herald had long ahead engaged Jack to write up the Jeffries-Johnson prizefight, wherever it should be staged, together with ten days' observation, previous to the big event, of the contestants camps. Jack was no more loath to break his pledge than I to have him; and it was with great satisfaction to me, for one, that I was pronounced out of danger from a slight operation, and that Jack could go away without apprehension. The prospective scene of the fight had been moved over California several times, and finally settled upon Reno, Nevada, so I could not see my husband for the best part of two weks. He departed June 22, and sent me daily "Lettergrams." On the morning of the fight, he wired: "I wish you were by my side to-day."

It was reported, I am reminded by news clippings of that month, that "Jack London lost heavily on the Reno fight. But this could not be, since he laid but a few dollars at most, and a hat, a dinner, and so forth.

And now, an episode, further to make clear Jack London's reactions to the corrupt injustices that may surround such a man:

Having fortified myself against shock by determining not to be shocked by anything, if I would live, on the third morning after the baby came I received in quiet the spectacle of my handsome husband with one large optic neatly closed and plastered with what appeared to be pink paint.

To my studiedly calm and interested inquiry, he frankly told me "all about it." I give the facts as he related them:

Leaving me the day before, after breaking the baby's death, he had gone into Oakland's business center to attend to final arrangements for his Reno journey. Winding up at the barber's, he then strolled, miserable and grieving, down Broadway.

"You know how I hate walking," he broke in. "And I usually seem to get into trouble when I do walk! I swear I'll never walk again. Listen to what happened:"

Noticing, in the windows of the Oakland Tribune office, a display of an "Autobiography of Jeffries," he bought several copies, thinking to pass them along to other correspondents at Reno. Continuing, absorbed in the morning's disaster to our hopes, he became aware that he had strayed into old haunts, down around Webster and Eighth and Ninth streets — in his boyhood a respectable residential neighborhood, but now infested with Chinese gambling houses.

As he went along, pondering the great change, he saw an American saloon, and near its main entrance a smaller door that suggested ingress to its lavatory. Entering, he found himself in a narrow passage-way, terminating in a large room behind the barroom proper, and evidently a night resort, judging from the tables and chairs. What appeared to be two lavatory doors were at the farther end, opening out of a short hall that led into still another apart ment, where a lowering figure sat eating alone.

Jack, with a salutation to which the other growled something he did not hear, opened a door and passed through. Before he had time to shut it behind him, the man had thrust his foot inside, threateningly ordering him out. "I believe he thought I was there to post on his walls some of the gaudy literature I had under my arm," Jack told me. At any rate, I was not in the mood for trouble, especially in such cramped space, and spoke in a conciliatory way while I got into the big room and made for the passage out, intending to escape as quick as God would let me. I knew his kind, and wanted none of him. And I thought of you, and of my promise to the New York Herald."

What next took place — the man's unprovoked attack, Jack's scientific stalling, never striking a blow, the appearance from the barroom of an audience of pasty-faced night-birds who came to look on, and his difficulty, once he had worked his way to the street, of getting an officer to consent to arrest the dive-keeper — all this he has graphically described in a short story, "The Benefit of the Doubt" (in volume "The Night Born").

What he did not include in the story was that it turned out that the Hebrew police judge who dared to sit on the case, was in truth owner of the resort. Jack learned of this through a letter from a well-wishing stranger, who suggested he look up the records. When Eliza went to do this, every obstacle was put in her way; but she prevailed,

and her homecoming with the notes she had made was an occasion for triumphant celebration in the London household.

The reporters, as always paid to "give Jack London the worst of it wherever possible," hinted at the vilest construction upon his presence in the low resort. The San Francisco Bulletin account was the most decent — because, according to Joseph Noel, in charge of the Oakland office, he offered to throw up his position rather than distort his friend's account of the one-sided scrimmage.

Jack was keen for the trial, but got it postponed until after the Reno prizefight. Never have I seen him so cut up as when the Judge dismissed the case, giving both complainants "the benefit of the doubt," as faithfully told in the story of that name. And the exasperating newspaper lie as to his shaking hands with the dive-proprietor and their "departing for the nearest saloon," is as accurately recorded.

Jack worked off, in the fiction, a fantastic revenge. The eastern weekly's editor, before accepting the yarn, made sure through the author that he would not be liable for libel. Quite different from his usual eventual tolerance, Jack never forgave the Hebrew Judge. "Some day, some where, I am going to 'get' him," he would say at long intervals. "I shall watch him all years, and some time, when he least looks for it, I shall get him. I don't know just how — perhaps it will be in thwarting his dearest ambition; but mark my words, I intend to get him." Jack's countenance, no matter how one sympathized with his viewpoint, was not good to look upon at such a time. But his cards were played squarely, as always, face up on the table. He sent the following open letter (I typed it for him during convalescence) to the newspapers of San Francisco and Oakland, the same post carrying a copy to the magistrate that he might be prepared for the writer's deadly interest in him:

"Some day, somewhere, somehow, I am going to get you legally, never fear. I shall not lay myself open to the law. I know nothing about your past. Only now do I begin to interest myself in your past, and to keep an eye on your future. But get you I will, some day, somehow, and I shall get you to the full hilt of the law and the legal procedure that obtains among allegedly civilized men."

One day, long afterward, out of a sudden whimsey, Jack had his sister telephone to arrange an interview for him in the office of that grafting judicator. "Oh, I intend no violence, he allayed my start; "I just want to tell him a few." But the other had hastily pleaded an imminent and important engagement elsewhere. Jack died unavenged, unless the Judge's conscience, or fear of his enemy, were punishment enough.

It was mainly grit that carried Jack through the Reno period. He was miserably ill, probably from the effects of the Muldowney struggle, and coughed exhaustingly.

The fiasco of the fight did not improve his spirits — "It wasn't a fight," he wrote me, "It was awful."

Once back in Oakland, and the afternoons with me in hospital resumed, he told me he was having his sputum examined for traces of tuberculosis, for he was thoroughly alarmed at the obstinacy of the racking cough and soreness in his chest. With our customary rebound from carking care, the battered pair of us lost no time making ten-

tative arrangements for a lengthy sojourn in high, dry Arizona, and presently were all alive with the details of equipment, saddles, clothing, books — and work! The analysis of the sputum brought to light no evidence of active "T.B.," although a scar that was located in Jack's bronchial tissue proved his own diagnosis not without foundation.

"Well, that settles our Arizona vacation," he smiled over a momentary regret.

Another hospital memory is the day Jack said to me:

"I went last night to the Macdonough to see the De Mille-Belasco production of 'The Woman.' And take it from me, my dear — that play never would have been written if I had not written 'Theft.'

I made him return to his Ranch and his writing, while I devoted every atom of energy to recuperating. In a letter of July 24, he begs me to "Come home right away; I'll cut out the Jinks this year if you will . . . I read your 'First Thoughts' and two of your later letters, to Eliza last night; and both she and I were in tears."

But it was more than six weeks from June 19, before I was fit to travel. It was a deep obligation I put upon myself, then as ever, to take the best care of my health, that I might be "on deck" as much as possible. Jack's content depended so vitally upon the brightness of his household.

The first day that I was able to mount a docile horse, Jack, bestriding his cheerful outlaw, led me from the idyllic site on the Beauty Banch where we had decided to build, into the forested ravine of Asbury Creek. To my astonished exclamation at sight of a new bridle trail engineered upon its precipitous sides, he answered:

"It's the 'Charmian Trail,' Sweetheart, and I saved it for a surprise."

From that time on, similar trail-making was continually in progress, until there came to be miles of these green zig zags within the boundaries of the Jack London Ranch, opening up breath-taking views of the surrounding valleys and mountains.

In addition to "The Benefit of the Doubt," the author, not yet in humor, from his aggregation of past troubles, to settle down to sustained effort, turned out some light stuff — an airplane story, "Winged Blackmail"; "Bunches of Knuckles," containing a conversation, with a skipper, just as I had heard it aboard the Snark; "When the World Was Young," with a double-personality motif. Then he penned what he called a picture, or, rather, two successive pictures, entitled "War," which he deemed one of his gems; and the story "To Kill a Man," which he also greatly liked. All the foregoing are bound in "The Night Born."

"Told in the Drooling Ward," a delightful study of the amiable egotism of a high-class idiot's psychology, but which Jack had difficulty in selling, was another 1910 production; also "The Hobo and the Fairy," a dainty and wholesome tale, both of which will be found in "The Turtles of Tasman."

While in Oakland, Jack had been called upon by "Bob" Fitzsimmons and his wife, Julia, and for their use in vaudeville he wrote a rather inconsequential skit, "The Birth Mark," which appears in "The Human Drift." The Fitzsimmonses visited us the first week in September, and "Bob," to the joy of Glen Ellen, forged a mighty horseshoe in the village smithy, which adorns a door frame of our cottage. Next was begun "The

Abysmal Brute," hardly more than a long-short story, but subsequently published as a novelette — a cleanly conceived bit of propaganda for the purifying of the prize-ring. Before the year was out, Jack had made a start on a series of a dozen Alaskan yarns, which are built around the central figure of "Smoke Bellew."

Very little public speaking was heard from him that year — a Memorial Day address in Sonoma, a lecture in Oakland, and another, in December, in the Auditorium Annex at Page and Fillmore Streets, San Francisco, in protest at the current murders of educators and reformers in Russia, in Japan, and, in particular, Spain's inexcusable execution of Francisco Ferrer.

Yacht "Roamer"

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXXIII The End of 1910

AT last, at last, Jack's search for a suitable inland yacht ended in mid-October, when a friend discovered for sale the thirty-foot yawl, Roamer, once the fast sloop Iris. A personal try-out convinced us of her eminent qualifications, despite her ripe years which were rumored to be at least forty. We schemed a better galley for'ard, installed a little coal-stove for winter warmth and cooking, and had the hull and rigging overhauled.

For it was meant that I, from my salt heredity, and practice both before and after marriage, should be Jack's true shipmate. None so keenly as I, perhaps, can appreciate his own words, written on board the Roamer in Sonoma Creek, the next spring:

"Once a sailor, always a sailor. The savour of the salt never stales. The sailor never grows so old that he does not care to go back for one more wrestling bout with wind and wave. I live beyond sight of the sea. Yet I can stay away from it only so long. After several months have passed, I begin to grow restless. I find myself day-dreaming over incidents of the last cruise, or wondering if the striped bass are running on Wingo Slough, or eagerly reading the newspapers for reports of the first northern flight of ducks. And then, suddenly, there is a hurried packing of suitcases and overhauling of gear, and we are off for Vallejo where the little Roamer lies, waiting, always waiting, for the skiff to come alongside, for the lighting of the fire in the galley-stove, for the pulling off of gaskets, the swinging up of the mainsail, and the rat-tat-tat of the reef-points, for the heaving short and the break-ing out, and for the twirling of the wheel as she fills away and heads up Bay or down."

With Nakata and the cook, Yamamoto (an intellectual socialist later abstracted back to his native islands by the long arm of the Mikado), we set sail on October 17, from Oakland, across the Bay of San Francisco, "than which," to quote my captain, "no lustier, tougher sheet of water can be found for small boat sailing," for an up-river cruise.

Two days earlier I had found upon my desk a fresh, skyblue volume entitled "Burning Daylight," into which. Jack had woven so much of our daily blessedness. This is the inscription:

"A sweet land, Mate Woman, an almighty sweet land you and I have chosen — our Valley of the Moon,

"Your Own Man,

"Jack London."

My old, old dream come true — to see with Jack this stage of his youthful performances! He looked much like his piratical early self, I fancy, in blue dungaree and the time-honored "tam" pulled down, with a handful of curls, over his sailor-blue eyes that roved incessantly for changes and found comparatively few. I had the privilege, at Vallejo near the yacht club, of seeing the meeting between Jack and an old crony or two — as Charley Le Grant, so often mentioned in "Tales of the Fish Patrol"; and another time, threading Sonoma Creek's delta of sloughs to the tuneful sound of blackbirds' throats, into our own valley within eye-reach of our own mountain fastnesses, to Jack's unbounded delight we came upon a venerable, rickety little French Frank of Idler memory, keeper of a duck-hunting club shack. Debonair and gallant Frank still was, though all his jealous fires and furies had long since been drawn. And ludicrously tactful was he, before "Jack's lady," in references to the wild '90s he and the lady's husband had shared in common. Having convinced him I was no ogress his tongue loosened in spicy reminiscence, abetted by a bottle of red wine.

What a blissful passage it was, this first Roamer voyage, only to be surpassed by the second and the third, and so on. "Snarking once more," Jack named it; honeymooning upon the face of the winding waters; fanning into Benicia to the sunset melody of birds in the rushes; running across that "large, draughty, variegated piece of water," Suisun Bay, where the great scows we had both learned to respect came charging down, grain-laden; picking our way in the "Middle Ground" channels, and gliding close-hauled into Black Diamond "in the fires of sunset, where the Sacramento and the San Joaquin tumble their muddy floods together" — to port the hazy, Aztec unreality of the tawny-rose Montezuma Hills palpitating in the westering sunlight; to starboard the low brown banks with green upstanding fringes of rustling tules; all about red-sailed fishing boats homing for the night; and old Black Diamond's lazy water-front and lazier streets sloping upward toward the Contra Costa Hills; and, in the morning, Diablo crumpled against an azure dome.

Once, off a tree-plumed island in the pictureful delta, a gay "red-light" barge, with its painted ladies, anchored within hailing distance of the Roamer. " I'll take you aboard to-morrow evening early, if you'd like," Jack volunteered; and I was glad enough for a new experience with him. But the next day he was invited by the principal, Professor Vickers, to speak to the school children of the town across river, which he consented to do, in a brief talk on "The Call of the Wild"; and when we were once more aboard, he said soberly:

"I guess we won't go adventuring next-door to-night, Mate — it might offend the good people ashore if they found it out. They wouldn't understand how you and I go about together. Also, there might possibly be folks on the barge whom you've seen

about and who wouldn't want you to see them there. So we'll just give it up and wait for a better chance.

I think it was about this time Jack illustrated his belief in the innate goodness of even very low unfortunates, by telling me how, when he was a mere stripling, his pockets had been rifled by one of the women companions of his associates up-river. "But do you know — she only took exactly half of what I had," he said. "I never forgot that. It was bad, of course, but it was only half-bad at worst, and showed she had some heart of softness left in her toward a mere boy like me."

It was while we lay off the town of Antioch, in this region, that Jack recounted to me the laughable story of how he and his mates netted a score of illicit fishermen; but that is for all to read — "Charley's Coup," in "The Fish Patrol" group.

Together we came to know the rivers and serpentine sloughs, with their foreign inhabitants, as Jack had known them aforetime; only, now, the dwellers upon and behind the willowed dykes had become increasingly foreign. This gave rise to many "human drift" speculations upon my skipper's part, later used in "The Valley of the Moon." I am reminded in passing, the young hero and his comrade wife run across a pseudo Roamer and its master and mate.

Among other features new to Jack, was the growth of the Japanese-Chinese village of Walnut Grove. Here we poked about among tortuous roofed streets lined with gambling dens, stores, geisha houses and tea-shops, entertained in these latter by the pretty toy-like women, with saki, and raw bonita soaked in soyu sauce, to the debatable harmony of samisens.

Jack, snugly at anchor, his work punctually disposed of, read intensively upon agriculture, devoured a plunder of countless old books he had been collecting upon western Plains migration, and laid deep and deeper foundation for Ranch development and stock-raising. "I devoted two solid years," he has written, "to the study of the migrations toward the West of America, being moved to it perhaps by the fact that my people came from the Middle West."

Everywhere he used his eyes, bent upon seeing what the other fellow was doing in the vast fields of California, making me the willing repository of his plans as he worked them out. Often, while I shopped or walked or rowed in the skiff for exercise, he drifted about the towns, meeting men, going to their farms, inspecting cattle and horses. He bought a draft-mare, June, a striking creature, black and proud, who came to live on the Ranch and become the mother of several colts.

Jack was living so fully — a life balanced with essential interests and endeavor and simplest of amusements. The test, I am sure, he undertook deliberately. To him relaxation consisted not in cessation but in change of thought and occupation. The vessel all in order, laid against a river-bank for the night, he would sit, placidly smoking in the blue dungarees and old tam, humped comfortably on deck, his soft-shod feet hanging over the rail, line overboard for cat-fish or black bass. Meanwhile he would argue for long with Nakata or the cook, in all the ardent simplicity of a sailor in the fo'c's'le, some trifling point — say relative sizes of fish each had hooked the day before;

or there would be a jokingly heated disagreement as to the payment of a penny wager a week old; or the three, stopping to catch laughing breath, feverishly laid new bets against the evening's basket. Jack was always ready to chuckle over it all, should I remind him of his reversion to fo'c's'le methods.

To a Sacramento reporter at this time, Jack said: "I am a Westerner, despite my English name. I realise that much of California's romance is passing away, and I intend to see to it that I, at least, shall preserve as much of that romance as is possible for me. I am making of 'The Valley of the Moon' a purely Californian novel it starts with Oakland and ends in Sonoma."

He was an unfailing wonder to me, my Jack London — my mentor — his continuous cerebration to every impact, mental, physical, awake, and asleep; always young, always old, always wise, with "a bigness of heart that kept conscience with itself"; efficient dreamer, harnessed to his work for the sake of Heart's Desire, which included the discharge of so many responsibilities — penalties of patriarchy. How vivid he rises, standing on his handsome legs at the wheel, those robust, muscle-rounded shoulders leaning back upon a howling norther before which we fled, tense, caution on hair-trigger, uncapturable thoughts behind his deep, wide eyes, lips parted, and that great chest expanding to breeze and effort. One man has written me: "I remember Jack London above all by his beautiful chest. It was the most beautiful thing I have ever seen."

December saw us home at Wake Robin, trying to come abreast with work that had piled up during the cruise. "Poor little woman! She has to pay for her fun!" Jack turned from his desk to where I was filing letters and notes. "But it's worth it!" Again, suddenly wheeling around, "How good it is to have a satisfying love. Mate, I love you more than I ever did in my first days of madness. It's different but I love you more." And he had a way of blowing involuntary kisses in the air when I spoke to him. How good it all was! I am reminded of Browning's:

"There's your smile!

Your hand's touch! and the long day that brings

Half-uttered nothings of delight."

While we spent hours poring over the Wolf House drawings, twenty men were setting out twenty thousand addi-tional eucalyptus. And Jack's funds, despite our boundless plans, were sinking low.

"Well, I've got five hundred dollars in bank, and an eight-hundred-dollar life-insurance premium due," he announced. "Doesn't balance up very well, does it? But never fear — 'Smoke Bellew' will pull us even with the bills. Guess we'll accept that invitation from Felix Peano to move into his Los Angeles house for a month. It'll be a nice winter change, and I can forget my creditors easier at a distance, while I'm slaving to pay them!"

He always referred to "Smoke Bellew" as "hack-work," strictly excluding the last story, "Love of Woman," which he strove to make one of his best. The "hack" turned out to be a great favorite with the male readers of his average public. It would seem that Jack London's work, third-best, or worse, could never be bad. Light it might sometimes

be, comparatively unimportant; but it was impossible — reservoir of learning, and imagination, and emotion that he was — that he should ever turn out trash.

The Cosmopolitan later asked for a continuation of "Smoke Bellew," and the while Jack considered its popularity in light of means to keep up the enormous expense of house-building, I suggested sailing Smoke and Shorty into the South Seas for a series of adventurings, for he had been longing again to dip his pen into tropic colors. This he considered; but all at once he threw up the whole thing:

"I'm tired writing pot-boilers! I won't do another one unless I have to!" And in March, the twelve off his hands, he went at the David Grief series, these romances, cracker jacks," Jack referred to them, being issued as "A Son of the Sun."

So January, 1911, was spent in the Westlake District of Los Angeles, while "Smoke Bellew" went forward, and chance visitors were regaled with readings from the manuscript. We took along our two Japanese, and had my Aunt, now Mrs. Edward B. Payne, and her husband, as house-guests. It was a very jolly arrangement — we, accepting our sculptor-friend's roomy house, he, our hospitality of table and service. Jack's thirty-fifth birthday was celebrated in this pleasant cottage. Besides entertaining, our amusements numbered much attendance at the theaters, swimming in the city's salt tanks, a captive balloon ascension, canoeing on Westlake hard by, feeding the swans and reading aloud, and a run to Santa Catalina Island. On this last excursion Jack said my Aunt and her husband must go with us she having visited the big island with my own mother long before I was born.

One of my commissions while south was to look up a suitable four-in-hand of light horses for a summer trip to northern California and Oregon. I succeeded in obtaining a trio, more or less ill-assorted, which was shipped home. Upon our own return, Jack had up from Glen Ellen his old friend "Bill" Ping — mentioned in more than one of his — books to consult about reinforcing the Winship two-seated "cut-under," for the heavy going, and the proper harness. Mr. Ping, one of the splendid passing type of old-time stage-drivers, who in his day had tooled his six on the Overland Trail, was sent to San Francisco to order harness; also a whip with an eleven-foot lash which Jack, after a surprisingly short trial, learned to crack with a brave report, but seldom used.

Mr. Ping being busy with his own affairs, another stage driver, of a younger generation, was hired to put the team in shape and instruct us in the gentle art of guiding its four mouths and sixteen wayward feet. Jack, as always, mastered the thing perfectly, knowing, move by move, precisely how he did it; while I, to his laughing, almost mocking admiration, "got the hang of it" by way of emulation and my "horse instinct," doing it well one day and not so well the next. The Lily Maid was one of our guests in March, and Jack never appeared to better advantage than in his kindness to her, still pleasuring in her mantle of yellow English hair. For her health was but poorly, and when she could not come to table, with Jack's own hands Nakata's nicely appointed trays were carried to one of the little woodsy guest-cabins we had built.

We had formulated a printed slip that frequently went into Jack's correspondence along with socialist and agricultural folders, reading as follows:

"We live in a beautiful part of the country, about two hours from San Francisco by two routes, the Southern Pacific and the Northwestern Pacific.

"Both trains (or boats connecting with trains) leave San Francisco about 8 a. m.

"The p. m. Southern Pacific train (boat) leaves San Francisco about 4 o'clock.

"The p. m. Southern Pacific train can be connected with at 16th Street Station, Oakland, also.

"If you come in the afternoon, it is more convenient for us if you take the Southern Pacific route, as it arrives here in time for our supper. We usually ask our guests to dine on the boat, if they come by the Northwestern Pacific.

"Write (or telephone) in advance of your coming, because we are frequently away from home. Also, if we are at home, word from you will make it so we can have a rig at the station to meet you.

"Be sure to state by what route, and by what train, you will arrive.

"Our life here is something as follows:

"We rise early, and work in the forenoon. Therefore, we do not see our guests until afternoons and evenings. You may breakfast from 7 till 9, and then we all get together for dinner at 12:30. You will find this a good place to work, if you have work to do. Or if you prefer to play, there are horses, saddles, and rigs. In the summer we have a swimming pool.

"We have not yet built a house of our own, and are living in a small house adoining our ranch. So our friends are put up in little cabins near by, to sleep."

I have come across a verse by Foss, which so expresses Jack's deep heart of hospitality that I steal space to quote:

"Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men goes by — —
The men who are good and the men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I. I would not sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban — —
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man."

He was always buying blankets; never so happy as when all the beds were full. His heart was soft, and all were treated alike — friend, stranger, of whatsoever estate. I remember the pleased look that crossed his face when I related how, while I was buying a riding suit in a San Francisco shop, the fitter said to me:

"Mrs. Jack London? — Oh, I heard something so lovely about your place — that no one, even when you people are not home, is ever allowed to go away without being entertained!"

It was in October Jack placed in my hands the story of his wayward flight across the continent, "The Road." The inscription is one of his most generous:

"Dearest My Woman: —

"Whose efficient hands I love — the hands that have worked for me long hours and many, swiftly and deftly, and beautifully in the making of music, the hands that have

steered the Snark through wild passages and rough seas, that do not tremble on a trigger, that are sure and strong on the reins of a Thoroughbred or of an untamed Marquesan stallion; the hands that are sweet with love as they pass through my hair, firm with comradeship as they grip mine, and that soothe as only they of all hands in the world can soothe.

"Your Man and Lover," Of course many calls were made upon Jack's time and purse. And "purse" reminds me that he never carried other than the slender chamois gold-dust sack that he had learned to use in the Klondike. He was obliged to work out circular letters to cover such exigencies as he was unable to comply with. Here is an example in a copy of a letter written to a young writer:

"In reply to yours of recent date undated and returning here with your Manuscript. First of all let me tell you that, as a psychologist and as one who has been through the mill, I enjoyed your story for its psychology and point of view. Honestly and frankly, I did not enjoy it for its literary charm or value. In the first place, it has little literary value and practically no literary charm. Merely because you have got something to say that may be of interest to others does not free you from making all due effort to express that something in the best possible medium and form. Medium and form you have utterly neglected.

"Anent the foregoing paragraph; what is to be expected of any lad of twenty, without practice, in knowledge of medium and form? Heavens on earth, boy, it would take you five years to serve your apprenticeship and become a skilled blacksmith. Will you dare to say that you have spent, not five years, but as much as five months of unimpeachable, unremitting toil in trying to learn the artisan's tools of a professional writer who can sell his stuff to the magazines and receive hard cash for same? Of course you cannot; you have not done it. And yet you should be able to reason on the face of it that the only explanation for the fact that successful writers receive such large fortunes is because very few who desire to write become successful writers. If it takes five years work to become a skilled blacksmith how many years of work intensified into nineteen hours a day, so that one year counts for five, — how many years of such work, studying medium and form, art and artisanship, do you think a man, with native talent and something to say, requires in order to reach a place in the world of letters where he receives a thousand dollars cash iron money per week?

"I think you get the drift of the point I am trying to make. If a fellow harnesses himself to a star of $1000 a week he has to work proportionately harder than if he harnesses himself to a little glowworm of $20 a week. The only reason there are more successful blacksmiths in the world than successful writers is that it is much easier, and requires far less hard work, to become a successful blacksmith than does it to become a successful writer.

"It cannot be possible that you, at twenty, should have done the work at writing that would merit you success in writing. You have not begun your apprenticeship yet. The proof of it is the fact that you dared to write this manuscript, 'A Journal of One Who is to Die.' Had you made any sort of study of what is published in the magazines

you would have found that your short story was of the sort that never was published in the magazines. If you are going to write for success and money you must deliver to the market marketable goods. Your short story is not marketable goods, and had you taken half a dozen evenings off and gone into a free reading room and read all the stories published in the current magazines you would have learned in advance that your short story was not marketable goods.

"There's only one way to make a beginning, and that is to begin; and begin with hard work, patience, prepared for all the disappointments that were Martin Eden's before he succeeded — which were mine before I succeeded — because I merely appended to my fictional character, Martin Eden, my own experiences in the writing game.

"Jack London."

The next letter here appended, he used to send out before he came to decide to read every manuscript that came his way, and encourage the sending to him. He found that in refusing to avail of such opportunities, he was depriving himself of just so many chances to study the wayward seed of man:

"Every time a writer tells the truth about a manuscript (or book), to a friend-author, he loses that friend, or sees that friendship dim and fade away to a ghost of what it was formerly.

"Every time a writer tells the truth about a manuscript (or book), to a stranger-author, he makes an enemy. "If the writer loves his friend and fears to lose him, he lies to his friend.

"But what's the good of straining himself to lie to strangers?

"And, with like insistence, what s the good of making enemies anyway?

Furthermore, a known writer is overwhelmed by requests from strangers to read work and pass judgment upon it. This is properly the work of a literary bureau. A writer is not a literary bureau. If he is foolish enough to become a literary bureau, he will cease to be a writer. He won't have any time to write.

"Also, as a charitable literary bureau, he will receive no pay. Wherefore he will soon be bankrupt, and himself live upon the charity of his friends (if he has not already made them all enemies by telling them the truth), while he will behold his wife and children wend their melancholy way to the poorhouse.

"Sympathy for the struggling unknown is all very well. It is beautiful — but there are so many struggling unknowns, something like several millions of them. And sympathy can be worked too hard. Sympathy begins at home. The writer would far rather allow the multitudinous unknowns to remain unknown, than allow his near and dear ones to occupy pauper pallets and potter's fields.

"Sincerely yours,

"Jack London."

In extreme cases, I have known him to send out copies of Richard Le Gallienne's "Letter to an Unsuccessful Literary Man," a document that leaves little to be said.

Requests for money usually found his responsive. He used some discernment, however, declining to be " touched " too often by certain men who took him more freely for

granted than he liked; with some others, he blithely kissed hand to his dollars when telling me of his gifts and "loans." And —

"Oh, well, Mate — money's only good for what it can buy. It buys me happiness to buy happiness for others. Don't hoard money. You can't take it with you when you go into the dark" — that was a concept he had inculcated for all time into the rapidly simplifying philosophy that had followed his "opening of the books." The disadvantageous, soul-belittling influence of poverty had been practically banished for the span of his existence on this competitive planet. I smile as I handle the cancelled checks of many dates, to hear that husky, half-apologetic: "They've all dreamed their dream. Who am I not to help, now that I can. And these have realized their dream only a little less, after all, than the rest of mankind. . . . But it does give me joy," with a smile into my eyes, "when what my money does for others receives some little appreciation of the pleasure or comfort it buys!"

In mid-April the Roamer all "ship-shape and Bristol fashion" from Nakata's deft brown hands, sailed on a month's cruise, while Eliza superintended architect and house construction, and colts and calves increased, and orchard and house-vineyard took root in the gentle terraced amphitheater behind the rising red-stone pile that was to be our castle.

During this absence, Eliza saw her chance to buy, at a price her brother had been waiting for, a section of some twelve acres right in the heart of the big Kohler ranch already ours, on which stood the buildings large and small of the old Kohler and Frohling winery of other days, all in sad but picturesque disrepair from neglect topped with the Great Earthquake.

This out-door life was the best thing that could happen to Jack, who had been suffering from one severe cold after another, coupled with repeated sties on his eyelids, and much nerve-rack from his teeth — this last, of course, being nothing unusual. I marvel to think of his eternal patience with pain; probably he was never, for years at a time, free from pain or at least discomfort. And there was his ever present joy in my own good teeth — "Woman!" he would cry, "you don't know how lucky you are!"

Before launching out for the coast on our northern trek, Jack asked me, what I had been anticipating for some time:

"Do you think we could fix up that old cottage on the Kohler, to live in until the Wolf House is done?"

It was a six-room, one-story frame house once occupied by the heads of the winery, and now in a shocking state. Subsequent Italian lessees of the vineyard had made a veritable dump of it and its old garden of foreign trees and shrubbery. I was dubious enough to reply:

"Honestly, I don't think we can."

But my partner had, for once, evidently made up his mind before consulting me, and presently I entered into the spirit of making the place as attractive as possible. Besides, it was, at worst, a consummation of our mutual desire to live in the very center of the Ranch activities now afoot.

The cottage came to be our sleeping and working quarters, including two guest-rooms, while in one side of the enormous winery were built others; workmen's family quarters being created on the other, and a new roof shingled over all.

Quite a ceremonial it was with the Japanese, getting ready Jack's bedside table for the night. Sharp pencils there must be plenty, scratch pads, big and little; many packages of "Imperiales," and fine Korean brass ashtray; his ubiquitous little red-velvet pin-cushion with pins driven in to their heads; files of papers and magazines neatly arranged on a lower section of the table, according to dates, the latest on top; a dish of fruit, or, lacking fruit, of some favorite dried fish or other "dainty." And finally, there were no less than three bottles of liquid of one sort or another. For Jack always maintained that it was a mercy, with his almost uninterrupted smoking, the alcohol he consumed, and certain sedentary spells when he took little exercise, that he "breathed through the skin" — by which he meant free perspiring. Therefore, he drank almost excessive quantities of this and that favorite beverage — grapejuice, buttermilk, and endless draughts of water. These, according to the whim, in cool thermos bottles, stood in an inviting row on the bedside table, and were always empty in the morning.

Papers and magazines, ravished of whatever in the way of information he wished to file as notes, were flung upon the floor; letters, envelopes, all small matter that was finished with, he carefully crumpled lest Nakata or the house-boy should put them back where he would have to handle them again. Sometimes, dropping off to sleep, cigarette between his lips, he singed his curls, exploded a celluloid eyeshade, or burned small round holes in sheet or pillow. As for pillows, he liked them large, three of them, with a very small one for that left elbow which supported him so many, many hours.

This dwelling was the only one of his very own in which Jack London ever lived — and in which he continued to live until he died within its old book-lined walls. It was into this house we moved upon our return from the four-horse adventure, which began in early June and ended in early September, 1911.

Four-horse Driving-trip

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXXIV 1911

FROM Glen Ellen to the Coast, and north to Bandon, Oregon, was our route; thence inland to Medford and Ashland, and southward through the interior — fifteen hundred miles altogether. Jack wrote forenoons before starting out, and our average drive was thirty miles. "Four Horses and a Sailor," written primarily for a Northern Counties promotion object, published in Sunset Magazine (collected in "The Human Drift"), is based upon this summer's journeying, as is also the wagon-travel episode in "The Valley of the Moon."

We did not camp. Before ever Jack London and I came to "hunt in pairs" he had had enough "roughing" to last out his life, and our migrations were invariably attended by one or more helpers. Nakata packed, put up lunches, on hottest afternoons hoisted

the big brown sunshade that clamped to the back of the driver's seat, kept our "gear" in order and sometimes assisted in harnessing the antic four-footed quartet, I typed Jack's manuscript on a small machine, and he steadily ground out the wherewithal for our subsistence as well as the big things left doing at home. Watching him in this phase, exhilarated with the youth and beauty of the summer world of out-doors, I caught myself thinking of him as driving a team of stars; for he harnessed the very stars to do his work — his lines reaching to the stuff of which the stars are made.

But sometimes, as more often on days when I was not so bright as usual (I drove little, finding my strength was not quite equal to the weight of those long leathers in my hands for hours on end) furtively I watched Jack's face; and there was that in it I had never seen before the death of our child. It made more difference to him than any one, even I, then realized. On the evenings of such days, our goal reached, horses properly housed, and hotel or farm accommodations made sure, he was most likely to drift off alone down-street, looking for "inhibitions" — a word he worked a great deal at the time of — man-talk, new association, and an extra glass or two. When he would return, there was a more than common glisten in his always lustrous eyes, a trifle of feverishness in the telling of what he had picked up in the way of local information or backwoods lore, a super-enthusiasm about the newest antlers of elk or deer for which he was bargaining, or the bearskin so-and-so had promised to bring for my inspection.

For a period of two or three years after the baby's loss, which included a second unlooked-for disappointment, my health was not of the best; but I was wary to avoid giving any possible impression to Jack that I linked my lack of freshness in any way with maternal misfortunes. I had early discovered that the slightest suggestion of such a thing irritated him instantly and beyond sympathy. He was as automatically touchy about this as he was concerning hysteria. Not much would he say, but his few words had showed me that he harbored a deep-rooted, resentful opinion that the majority of womenfolk held their men responsible for all the consequences of reproduction!

Beside a number of the David Grief episodes, Jack wrote among other stories "The Prodigal Father," and "By the Turtles of Tasman" (both in "The Turtles of Tasman"), "The End of the Story," and "The Mexican" (in "The Night Born").

Much he enjoyed the horses — their characters and ca-prices: Prince, his sugar-tongue hanging out on all occasions, Prince the "Love-Horse," Jack called him, with his laughing eye and friendly hoof-shake and the pocket-seeking of his mischievous muzzle; Sonoma Maid, the excellent and wise; Gert the irascible outlaw who yet did her work and came to bury all the other three when Jack himself had gone; and Hilda, variously dubbed the Rabbit, the Bat, the Manger-Glutton — Milda, who asked nothing of anybody but to let her do her work and win to her supper by the least circuitous route.

For the sake of any who would care to follow in our track, I briefly outline the same. But first, there was a trial-trip of one week from Glen Ellen to Petaluma; thence to Olima on Tamales Bay; Point Reyes, and the Light House, Willow Camp on the coast;

from there on the wonderful coast drive and across Mt. Tamalpais' feet to Mill Valley. The long uninterrupted trip was as follows:

Glen Ellen to Santa Rosa, and Sebastopol where one sees Luther Burbank's flowering and fruiting fields, to Bodega Corners; Duncan's Mills; Cazadero; Fort Ross, on the coast, of historic interest; Gualala — where one may fish and boat on the river; Greenwood; Fort Bragg; Hardy; Usal; Moody's; Garberville; thence along Eel River, where deer come down to drink, to Dyerville. From this section the tourist may cut inland to the Hoopah Indian Reservation. This we did, by automobile and saddle, coming out down the Trinity and Klamath Rivers in a dugout with Indian canoemen to Requa by the sea; next, to Fortuna, with fishing and hunting and old Indians along the way; Eureka; Trinidad; Kirkpatrick's. Crescent City, in the northwest corner of California, where one gathers jewels, agates of marvelous colorings, in the ocean sands; on to Smith River Corners, and into Oregon, to Colgrove's Mountain Ranch; Laurence's on Pistol River; Gold Beach, on Rogue River; Port Orford; Langlois; then to Bandon, Coos County, whence we struck inland to Coquille; Rock Creek; Murray's, Roseburg; Can-yonville; Wolf Creek; Grant's Pass; Medford, with a motor trip to that marvel, Crater Lake; Ashland; down into California again, — Montague; Weed; driving within sight of grand Mt. Shasta; Dunsmuir; Le Moyne; Kennett; Redding; Red Bluff; Orland; Willows; Maxwell; Leesville; Lower Lake; Middleton; Calistoga — and home to Glen Ellen by way of the Petrified Forest.

One sparkling afternoon on the Bay of Eureka, I had an opportunity to observe my husband in a crucial moment of judgment and fearlessness. What a ringing challenge that man was to the courage of all (except the spiritually deaf, dumb, and blind), who were privileged to know him! How seldom he ever reached into his own vocabulary for the word fear! Burned into my memory is something he said early in our comradeship:

"I think I am really afraid of but thing — being hit over the head from behind. — Oh, not from fear of death — never! But to live with my brain addled — it's unthinkable!

It was our pastime, while visiting in a luxurious houseboat, to go fishing or to sail down the harbor and, if not too rough, cross the bar and cruise a little way toward the blue Pacific horizon that was forever a receding Paradise. On this day, tacking up-bay on the satin swell, a big rakish power-launch, full speed ahead, came bearing down upon us. There was plenty of room, and Jack, knowing the sailboat's traditional right of way, naturally kept on his course, expecting to pass the other to port. But her pilot kept right on for us, and to avoid being sliced squarely amidship, Jack in a flash spun his wheel to starboard, to bring her up into the wind, while the other, who must have been dreaming, suddenly with terrified face swerved to his left and took with him the starboard corner of our stern rail.

It all happened in the space of three seconds, but there remains, snap, snap, one of the sharpest moving-pictures in my experience. At the last least instant, with the high knife-edge bow right upon us, I, the first law of existence automatically superseding any sentimental desire to be cloven in twain even in company with the spouse of my bosom, had jumped just forward of where the crash would occur. Turning as instantly

as I landed, ready to dive if necessary, I took in Jack's incredibly quick action with the wheel, his cool, calm, fighting face, and heard, saw, and felt the splintering of the rail.

"You did exactly the right thing," he reassured my tentative inquiry. "I had my hands full, and did not have to worry about you. I had to stay at the wheel and do the only thing that could be done to save the sloop. . . . Some day, though," and he more than once warned me of this, "my curiosity in seeing the thing through is going to be my finish!" But I always banked on his mental and steel-springed physical alertness to save himself just short of annihilation.

So I rested fairly comfortably upon his opinion that I had done "the right thing," until one day in his Bad Year, 1913, when he, in a dreadful depth, brought up the action. It followed upon something I had just done. We had been driving behind a wicked roan gelding, of irreproachable breeding, who bore an evil reputation for running away and smashing things — several on the Ranch, including Eliza, had at various times been thrown out and injured. The horse, this afternoon, had balked, and plunged sidewise, cramping the buggy until the wheels cracked. Unless I could have the reins in my own hands, I preferred being in Jack's care to any driver I knew — so expert had he become. But we were in a tight pinch, and without warning I sprang to the ground and to the animal's head to straighten him out. It was wrong, I admit, and mortifying to the driver. I should have stayed beside him and "seen it through," as I had before and many times afterward. It was the capstone to a series of vexations to Jack, ending in one of his superb "disgusts" with the universe of which I was an important part; and he brought up the Eureka incident.

"But I know I am not a coward, I remonstrated to an accusation he had not voiced but which smoldered in his purple eyes. "And you know it, too, you! I've nerves, but never cowardice!"

Jack's retractions and apologies, generous if rare, were among the sweetest of the silken ties that bound us forever. And, looking back over it all, the two utterances of his that now mean the most to me are his early "You are more kin to me than any one I have ever known," and this next, apropos of I know not what, in the last conversation we were ever to hold — suddenly, as if from a full heart: "Thank God, you are not afraid of anything!"

Once more, on September 6, we took up the round at home — replete with all that love, keen interest in life, work, and friends could bring. Jack began the day with a few moments in the garden:

"Gorgeous, tropic flowers!" he would murmur delightedly over the flaunting goldfish, their long tails waving like lazy veils in the sunny water of the pool, its fountain bowl an old Indian stone mortar. "And how I love the all-night drip and plash of your tiny fountain!"

He cared less for flowers in general than most men do, or are willing to own. His was joy in a single bloom. If he was caught momentarily by a mass of blossoms, it would be for a definite idea connected with it — perhaps that it was in my arms, and gave me pleasure; or that it enhanced me in some way. I can see him at his desk near a

doorway, writing, interrupted by the flame of my basketful of poppies or rosies crossing his vision, coloring the sunlight. And the glance would rest, and dwell, and soften — his deep-gray, wide eyes full of the love that was my wonder and glory and guerdon.

Everything was in full swing on the Ranch, and guests' voices were in the air. "This is what I like," Jack would pause in a dictation to me at the typewriter. While we are together, carrying on our work, they can do whatever they want. Look I — love the rail out there under the oak, with our horses tied, saddled and waiting. And there go two lovers on horse back for the trails; and a married pair for a hike. Others are playing cards in the living room, where I shall join them as soon as this letter is finished. . . And if you don't mind, Mate," his eyes begging the favor, "you take the crowd that's coming for dinner, over the Wolf House trail, because I have just got to get even with George for the walloping he gave me at pedro last night! — Listen to those girls chattering up in the fig-tree — and who's practising on the piano? Mate, do you really know how I love it all!" To this day, as a friend said, the house "still breathes of the sweetness of you two toward each other."

Some notes for future work, made about this time, illustrate how simple was his initial preparation:

"Series of Stories.

"Why not write a superb short story from each of a number of diverse places, and collect in book-form under some suitable title that conveys the idea 'from all the world.'? 'The Purple Sea' might make a good title."

"Novel.

"Why not a series of past and future novels? For No. 1, I could use 'Before Adam;' No. 2, 'Christ Novel;' No. 3, 'The Middle Ages;' No. 4, some great proletarian-bourgeoise conflict story of the present; No. 5, 1 could use The Iron Heel; No. 6, The Far Future, the perfected and perishing human race."

"Farthest Distant.

"Radium engines, etc., for energy — See Atoms and Evolution, in Saleeby's The Cycle of Life.

"Collision of dark body from out of space (not large), one-tenth size of sun. And earth learns of coming by perturbations of outer planet. Then rush the earth away from the sun. "When earth travels through space, all must be inclosed; and they must use stored heat of some sort. The oceans freeze, etc. A great preparation. See Direction of Motion chapter by Herbert Spencer. The initial momentum they have. The momentum in a straight line that is altered to a curve around the sun by the pole of the sun. Nullify the pole of the sun, select the right moment, and sail off into space to reach nearest neighbor sun. They make some mistakes the first time. Something goes wrong with the machinery, and they dash around the second sun like a comet and return to the old sun. They figure it out on the way, do not check at old sun, and like a comet return to new sun, where they succeed in checking."

The material for the Christ novel above referred to Jack had been compiling for years; but in the Christ episode of "The Star Rover" he concentrated his long-sought

data. When he read me, aboard the Roamer, that chapter of "The Star Rover," I asked him what of the Christ novel. "This will suffice," he said. "I shall not do the longer work."

Jesus Christ and Abraham Lincoln were names of praise upon his lips. Tolstoy said of Lincoln that be was a Christ in miniature. Jack London: "The two men I reverence most are Christ and Lincoln," and spoke of them with shining, worshipful eyes. And Stephen French sends me the following from a letter Jack wrote him: "I don't know whether Jesus Christ was a myth or not; but taking him just as I find him, just as I read him, I have two heroes — one is Jesus Christ, the other Abraham Lincoln."

Our main meal was at 12:30. This hour better suited our work and Ranch plans generally. At twelve the mailsack — a substantial leather one bought before we sailed on the Snark arrived at the back porch, and Nakata brought it to me to sort tbe contents. In the half-hour before dinner, Jack had glanced over the daily paper, read his letters, indicated replies on some of them for my guidance, and laid the more important ones in their wire tray, one of many such nested on a small table beside the Oregon myrtle rolltop desk where he transacted business. I always endeavored to have his ten pages of hand-written manuscript transcribed — an average of two and a half typewritten letter-size sheets — before the second gong (an ancient concave disk of Korean brass) belled the fifteen-minute call to table. Jack implored me to be on time to the minute's tick, and attend to seating the guests, so that he might work to the last moment.

In many minds, I am sure, still lives the vision of the hale, big-hearted man of God's out-of-doors, the beardless patriarch, his curls rumpled, like as not the green visor unremoved, pattering with that quick, light step along the narrow vine-shaded porch, through the screened doorway and the length of the tapa-brown room to his seat in the solid red koa chair at the head of the table. "Here comes a real man!" was the prevailing sentiment.

How he doted upon that board with its long double-row of friendly faces turned in greeting, ever ready with another plate and portion! It was his ideal — carried from old days with the Strunskys'. "In Jack's house," one writes me, "I met the most interesting people of my life and of the world." And perhaps, while we fell to our portions, before his own was tasted he would read aloud newspaper items or newly received letters; or he might launch out in a fine rage of his eternal enthusiasm, upon some theme that claimed him, or strike into argument, whipped hot out of his seething brain and heart. Always there was in him the potent urge to gather all about him into knowledge of whatever claimed his attention. Years only added to his capacity to function in every potentiality. There were no numb or inactive surfaces in his make-up, mentally, physically. He reached in all directions, to play, to work, to thought, to sensation. His face, smiling, cracked with thought-wrinkles, weather-wrinkles, laughter-wrinkles. At no time did he have more than a few gray hairs; and his hands, to his pride, were very firm, showing no dilated ar teries. "One is as young as one's arteries," he was fond of saying. How he would pluck at the air with those young hands, in unconscious

pantomime groping for illustration for the means that no man born of woman has ever been able to command by which to express a complete concept.

Many were more impressed by his eyes than any other feature or characteristic. "All steel and dew," one man wrote of them. "All sweetness and hidden ferocity . . . as though they masked profound and terrible secrets . . . eyes common enough, mayhap, when the world was young. . . . Alert, as though to him life were a constant battlefield."

They were eyes that look into one, and through and beyond — as if what they saw on the surface, in one s own, led his into the deeps behind, into the brain, conscious and unconscious and far behind again into the intelligence of the race down through all the drift of the human. Gray, or iris-blue, they were when mild, the large pupils giving them a splendid, brilliant darkness; but let him be angry, instantly they went cold, metallic, the enormous pupils narrowing to bitter points.

He had a way, sometimes, in common with his sister, of apparently not listening while his eyes looked through one, patently seeing beyond. "You haven t heard a word!" I would remonstrate. "Oh, yes, I have," he would return, and repeat a sentence or two. "That doesn't prove anything," I would challenge. "No, my dear, I will give you your whole argument," and he would disprove my assertion.

Another likeness of Jack's to Eliza was expressed by a woman who had heard her speak in public: "When others get up and talk, we listen to what they say; when you get up and talk, we do what you say!"

How his "living language" of colloquialisms and slang pierces time when we call up the arguments that flew about the table like missiles in a game! "Come on, now — let's tell sad stories of the deaths of kings! Go to it; the day is young, and we're a long time dead!" "Oh, it's only my shorthand, he would mourn, cutting short to a conclusion, speaking to blank faces, perhaps. Or, when he had perhaps let himself go on some subject near his heart: "You miss me you miss me totally," in distressed tone to a solemn egotist who had dared his logic; or, "There you go trying to pass the buck; now stick to the point." Or, "Ah ah but you've missed the factors. Connotations, man, factors!" Then, "Still well, but not so well." Parsimonious was a word he enjoyed for a time: "I'm parsimonious!" he would cry in a discussion, "You'll have to show me I don't believe anything till I'm shown. I'm parsimonious!" "But to get back: As I was saying when I was so rudely interrupted," with a twinkle; "I'm afraid I was always an extremist; so don't mind my violence." And suddenly, in the face of non-understanding: "I'm boring you?" "Piffle!" he would exclaim, full-tilt; and irascibly, Silly! You mean to say, then . . . ?" Showing up the muddlement of a wrathful and impotent opponent." No? Then what do you mean to say? We must agree upon a working vocabulary for a basis." "What do I think about so and so? Well, if anybody should drive up in a hack and ask me, I'd say . . . " When something was well said or done, he might praise, "Fine and dandy!" or "Booful, my dear!" But always he hewed to the core of the truth of things, and his meanings were clear to any who would clearly listen. Some poet has expressed my own sentiment:

". . . well I love to see

That gracious smile light up your face, and hear
Your wonderful words, that all mean verily
The thing they seem to mean."

Once Jack wrote me: "Remember, dear, not only in being true to myself am I true to you, but before I knew you I was true to myself. I have always been true to myself. This is my highest concept of right conduct. It is my measure of right conduct."

One prejudiced person, who rather against his will had been brought by a mutual acquaintance, had this to say:

"That friend of yours, Jack London, is all and more than you said. He made me love him even when I quarreled with him. Why, he is a marvel — I never saw his like."

Another remembered Jack, the comrade-man, arm around the shoulder of a friend:

"At times he was funnily boyish, then in a flash splendidly exalted, pouring forth in his glad way his knowledge of life, his love of life, his sympathy with life, his creative force, his open-minded embrace of the most vital in life; he, life itself, impregnated by ripeness of thought and feeling most unusual for his years. And still again: "What a warmth there was about this dear fellow! Sunshine followed him everywhere. . . . Even in his harshest moments, his fine, open smile would burst forth. Never have I seen such faith, resultant of research and understanding, coupled with such doubt of the purely dreamy optimistic or the unproven."

To the youngsters of his race, entranced with his genuineness and utter lack of swank, "He was a prince!" And one associate honored him with this: "Jack London was a great man; but his friends loved him just the same."

So much for his own countrymen; and how I wish the English, in greater numbers, could have known him personally. One, who had and appreciated that privilege, said: "I had to come to his own land to hear a word in his disfavor — though I will say it came not from any who knew him at first hand."

One illuminating little flare of Jack's burns up in memory. Some one at table used the contraction "Frisco," and a very young miss rushed headlong into trouble with her host: "Oh, don't say Frisco! Say San Francisco!"

Jack landed full wroth into the breach:

"Let Frisco alone, you! We love the western tang of it, we oldsters who knew her by that name before you were dry behind the ears! — Frisco, Frisco . . ." he rolled it sweetly on his tongue. And mingled in the fiber of his tone were scorn and pity for the greenness of her who jeered at what seemed to her the common crudity of a sobriquet the very glorious roughness of which symbolized what the old town had stood for of romance in the days Jack London had known, so dear to all who knew it then. He would seldom go far out of his way to pronounce correctly a foreign word: "You know what I mean, don't you? — that's the main thing!"

Despite that Jack London was an excellent subject, and was widely photographed, many have written to know of his appearance and proportions. Among some forgotten souvenirs I have come upon a typewritten record, made up at Jack's suggestion, of our comparative measurements. His are appended:

Near the end of the midday meal, Nakata would lay beside my plate a note-pad and pencil, upon which it was my daily task to figure the horses, saddles, bridles, and riding costumes of transient guests from two to a dozen — and, in season, as many swimming-suits beside. Or, the four-in-hand would be wanted, and in his wide stiff-rim Stetson, white soft shirt and khaki trousers, Jack, noisy, gay, swinging the jingling, fleeing leaders hither and thither in his blossoming valley, would be seen pointing out the beauties of it to a packed wagonful of rapt, if sometimes apprehensive, men and women and children, enlarging to them upon the character and idiosyncracies of each horse. A neighboring editor saw him — "Big, boyish, warm-hearted . . . Over our hills with the sunshine of his favorite vale shining upon his head he often rode or drove in carefree style the beautiful horses he loved. His manner cordial, his greeting cheery, it was little wonder he became the pal of all, and no matter how big his triumphs he was never the conceited genius but always the genial friend and natural neighbor."

As Jack himself put it: "I'm so afraid of slighting somebody I ought to recognize in the neighborhood, that I'm going to speak in good old country fashion to everybody I meet!" which became his habit; and many the prim provincial lady, loitering in her dusty old buggy under the hot midsummer sky, who sat up suddenly from daydreams to stare, first, at the abounding good cheer of the robust young driver avalanching by, and tipping a gray cowboy brim so respectfully; and, next, to melt into smiles under the warmth of the neighborly apparition.

That year the Sierra Club made its first pilgrimage to the Jack London Ranch. Also it marked the employment, of Jack's first paroled man from the State Penitentiary at San Quentin. Jack's principles in general, and in particular his own Buffalo experience, had for years made him eager to give a chance to those unfortunate enough to have come inside the forbidding gray battlements so often seen from the deck of the Roamer. For years, on our place, these men came and went. As for his opinion of ameliorating prison conditions, he wrote:

"I have little faith in prison reform. Prisons are merely a symptom. When you try to reform them, you try to reform symptoms. The disease remains."

One sojourner with us, as houseguest, was Ed. Morrell, whose astounding experience, growing out of his connection with the notorious outlaws, Sontag and Evans, was the motif for Jack's subsequent novel, "The Star Rover." I well recall Jack, fairly frothing over the straitjacket scars Morrell had been revealing, lurching in, spilling over with emotion, to tell me what he had seen.

While the foregoing busy season went forward, the Bay newspapers had Jack attending the birthday party, In Monterey County, of some one's lapdog — "Fluffy Ruffles!"

Sometimes guiding our friends on the steep trails, or riding hand in hand to look over progress at the Wolf House, we talked of the big schooner that some day we should rig out and start for another round-the-world voyage. There was never any hint of dullness in the present nor fear of future boredom.

Four books were issued in 1911: “When God Laughs,” “Adventure,” “The Cruise of the Snark,” and “South Sea Tales.” Of the inscriptions I choose two this, in the spring, from “When God Laughs”:

“My Own Dear Woman:

“The years come, and the years go, our friends come and go, some few of them stick — and you and I stick better than any or all.”

From “South Sea Tales,” in the fall:

“Dearest Mate-Woman:

“And can we say, after all these years, that we have ever been happier than we are happy right now!” There was much to do — every waking moment. The thing was, to find time to sleep; yet we regarded that as rather a leisurely year — perhaps because we did not go very far from home. My diary records: “Mate works in the evenings. He is so very busy. It makes my own head tired when I think of all his head must keep track of.”

It was in the late afternoon of October 10, 1911, that Jack returned on horseback from Glen Ellen, two miles from the house, and announced with solemnity that he had just cast his vote for “Woman Suffrage. “Woman Suffrage,” he expounded, “means Prohibition; and that is why I voted for it. The normal woman,” he went on, “has no liking for alcohol; through all the ages John Barleycorn has hurt her heart. All that will be changed when she wins political power.”

This scene stands forever in the Foreword of “John Barleycorn,” the book in which Jack London focused his sensations and viewpoints in regard to alcohol.

Some time after its publication, he received the letter below:

“Oakland, California, May 27th, 1916.

“Mr. Jack London,

“Glen Ellen, Calif.

“Dear Friend:

“I take this opportunity in forwarding these few lines reminding you of the coincidences which happened in Our Half Day along the Oakland estuary.

“I understand that my name Spider Healy, along with Soup Kennedy, Boche Pierrati, Joe Goose and M. J. Hynold has been heralded all over these United States and the rest of the world and that you have realized an abundance of wealth both in moving pictures and a book known as John Barleycorn. If you were to visit the old haunts of the oyster pirates of the present time you would find in a very decrepid condition. Financially and otherwise Soup Kennedy who you described in your book as a worthy opponent of Scratch Nelson has been following the sea as a means of livelyhood. But as time and tide wait for no man he has over-looked an opportunity of acquiring a vast wad. Many times we have sat upon the deck listening to the strains of the chanties, hoping that a time would arrive when we would again get together either to talk of the old times or to make arrangements to go salmon fishing to Alaska or sealing to the Bonin Islands.

“I was surprised on more than one occasion to have individuals acost me on the street asking if my name was the Spider Healy of John Barleycorn fame. On answering in the affirmative I was reminded that my part of your John Barleycorn was one of most importance.

There is not a day passes that tourists from the far east and all parts of the United States do not stand and gaze with astonishment at the old relics of the old St. Louis House and the first and last chance saloon where you have gained renown and fortune. A few nights ago at the foot of Franklin Street at which place you weighed anchor many a time I sat and listened to the strains of some of the Chanties of which you are quite familiar. Again it brought to mind the old day when you and I heard the same songs. (Lorenze was no sailor) (Blow the man down) (Whisky for my Johnies) (we'll pay Pattie Doyle for his boots) and (Bound for the Bio Grande and sailin Home to merry England town.)

In conclusion the main object of calling your attention to these facts is to let you know the conditions that now exist with the pirates whose names have made you fames, in that book & plan known as John Barleycorn. Johnie Hynold and Joe Yiergue are the only ones who accumulated a wad and I dare say buried it like a dog did his bone. To get a quarter from a turnip, is like extracting the same from these men.

“Johnie Hynold is estimated according to Bradstreet's to be worth about one hundred and sixty thousand dollars and Joe Viergue as you know as accumulating his fortune on our hard earned coin.

I belief that Soup Kennedy has seen his last days as a seaman. Strength gone, health gone and eyesight failing what was once a big rough rovish stalwart fellow has dwindled to a mere nothing.

I was talking to him a few days ago and in asking him what the matter was, he told me that a saw bones told him that his life was going to nicker out in a short time. He stated that it was not necessary for the old boy to put him on. On more than one occasion I felt my heart slip a cog or two. Now you know Jack when your heart slips a cog or two there is no possible way to replace it by good smooth running gear. Soup is very much enthused when I told him that I was about to ask you for a small bit of assistance. I do not know what you are estimated to be by Bradstreet or Wall Street but I certainly would be ever grateful if you generously would be aroused to such an extent that it would be possible for you to loosen up and forward at once a check with a substantial amount to pull Soup and myself out of a hole.

“Now if you want to be a good fellow and have your name heralded as such along the water front where your childhood days were spent with the rest of the pirates you will please grant this request at once.

“Your old pals,

“Soup Kennedy,

“P. S. — We are living at present 416-2nd St. Oakland, Cal., and will await your earliest convenience, a reply, also that substantial check, Joe Goose is on his last legs.

“Spider.”

As Jack did not invariably let his left hand know what his right hand did, I do not know what his reply, if any, was to the foregoing.

Jack's aversion to spending Christmas in the prescribed way caused many an outing to begin on the twenty-fourth of December. And so, that date in 1911 saw Mr. Kisich opening a bottle of champagne in his "Saddle Rock," to speed us on the way east. We slept aboard the Western Pacific Limited that night, headed for New York City. Enroute on the Denver and Rio Grande we stopped over at Salt Lake City to foregather with my friends the Harry Culmers; and among other trips, Jack and I went on a little pilgrimage to Fort Douglas, where in the '60's my father, Captain Willard Kittredge, had served under General Connor, his duties including those of Provost Marshal of the beautiful, romantic city. The New Year was celebrated in New York. And this time," Jack assured me, "we'll go home by way of Cape Horn."

Almost any passage in our companionship I contemplate with more pleasure than that 1912 winter in 'Gotham." The trip had been one of our happiest; but, once off the train, and his enthusiasm expressed over the new Pennsylvania Station, it was the old story. The city reached into him and plucked to light the least admirable of his qualities. Out of the wholesome blisses of his western life, he plunged into a condition that negated his accustomed personality. Nine-tenths of the two months time we made our headquarters in Morningside Park East, he was not his usual self. During the other tenth, cropping up in unexpected moments, the manifestation of his dearest self and his love were never warmer nor more illuminating.

Coincident with our arrival, he warned that he was going to invite one last, thoroughgoing bout with alcohol, and that when he should sail on the Cape Horn voyage, it was to be "Good-by, forever, to John Barleycorn." To me, the promised end was worth the threatened means; and my comprehension and acceptance of his intention were appreciated. But I could not fail to regret that new friends should know and base their judgment of Jack London upon this unfortunate phenomenon of him.

In that Jack London, drunken, was not as other drunken men, the majority of those who contacted with him during a period of what he termed his "white logic" deemed they knew the true, sober Jack London in all his panoply of normal brilliance. Never, in all my years with him, did I see him tipsy. An old acquaintance of Jack's, asked concerning this phase of the author of "John Barleycorn," laughed: "I have known him more or less intimately for ten years, and I have never seen him intoxicated." And Jack himself: "I was never interested enough in cocktails to know how they were made." Except in rare cases when a single drink acutely poisoned his stomach, upon him the effect of alcoholic stimulus was to render preternaturally active an already superactive mind. Keen, hair-splitting in controversy, reckless of mind and body, sweeping all before him, passionately intolerant of man or woman who challenged his way — all this and more was he in his "white logic" extreme. This unnatural state, combined with the depression New York invariably put upon him, was dangerous. And there was wanting — and how were others to know? — the splendid, healthy charm of the big man he was, the finer potency of his moral integrities, the square truth of his fundamental faiths

and their observance. Much, at the time, I sensed, watching the calendar day by day as the day of release from New York approached; more, beyond guesswork, afterward came to light. But I knew my man, and, content or not, waited, remembering that I had never yet waited in vain to welcome back the sane and lovable boy. More and more deeply am I convinced that it is not the irks of the wayside that should count in one s valuing of events or individuals. I knew my man. I could only wish that some others had had such vision for crises like these in Jack London's contact with his kind.

"New York is one wild maelstrom," he saw it that year. "Rome in its wildest days could not compare with this city. Here, making an impression is more important than making good. And I take an item from the N. Y. Evening World, which throws light upon another observation of Jack's:

"In this great city woman does not care for woman friends. She will boldly tell you so. She does not trust them. . . . The average so-called wise woman of New York City will not introduce her attractive men friends to her women friends.

There comes to me, across the years, something for many years forgotten. He had said to me, very early in our marriage: "Don't forget what I have been and been through. There may, mark, I only say may come times when the temptation to 'drift' — for an hour, or a day, will stick up its head; and I may follow. I have drifted all my life — curiosity, that burning desire to know. Yet, I have knocked the edge off my curiosity about a lot of things. Still — " in his honesty he anticipated the possibility.

Once, after the baby had been lost to him, I asked innocently, "Where been?" To which, with a teasing look, he replied, "Oh, pirooting, my dear — I'll tell you, maybe, when we're in our seventies!" But long afterward, when some association of ideas called for it, there would leak out, among other hinted adventurings, the story of a hard-fought game of cards in a water-front public house in San Francisco, or a weird experience of one sort or another with some nameless waif he had elected to trot around with for an afternoon or evening.

Referring to John Barleycorn and his mental condition in New York, I once asked him if it would not have been better for me to withdraw from him at such times — even to letting him go alone: "No," he reassured. "You did exactly as you should have done. If you had left me, I don't know what I should have done."

Another chance affair he divulged when in reminiscent mood. One afternoon, in the Forum Cigar store in Oakland, he ran across a man who knew an old Klondike acquaintance, whose address he gave. Some mistake was made, and Jack found himself in a curious little pocket. A door, answering his ring, let him into a hall at the foot of a narrow stairway. From the upper end a handsome, flashy woman called down:

"Hello, you Jack London!"

"How do you know I am Jack London?" he countered in his surprise at her expectant tone, and mounted several steps to have a look at her.

The woman peered down at him, then drew back, fear and puzzlement in every line and movement. To cut the tale short, it appeared that the lady had been keeping company for some time with a man who called himself Jack London, whom she had

quite believed was the simon-pure article enjoying a double life. She assured Jack that he bore a strong resemblance to her friend.

Once, that winter of 1912 in New York, he had said with smoldering eyes: “If you ve got the nerve, I’ll take you drifting! It would be great fun. One lark would be to board a subway, any subway, and run to the very end of the line; get off, start in any direction, and ring the bell of the first house that took our fancy. Say ‘Good evening,’ cordially, to whoever came to the door, and get inside, talking a blue streak, acting as if we were old friends. Of course, they’d think we were crazy, and the more familiar we got, the more excited they. The police would be summoned — ” he broke off in a giggle that was the only familiar thing in his manner, “ — but what’s the use?” he finished gloomily. “You wouldn’t be game for a mess like that! but think of the fun!” and he regarded me quizzically, as if calculating the experiment he was making upon the stuff of my character. I flatly declined to be lured by this or kindred prospects. He knew I would go with him anywhere and back again, but not when he was in this extreme, unnormal state. So ho resumed his “pirooting” — I really do not know how to spell the word, and the dictionary is no help.

A wonder it is that nothing happened to him. Settling in a barber s chair one day, he noticed the man was shaking as with violent ague:

What’s the idea?” he inquired kindly. Made a night of it?”

“Several,” the barber chattered under his breath, glancing warily around. “Don’t know how I’m g-g-going to shave you or anybody.” And Jack, with the razor making oblique stabs against his windpipe, sensing the wielder was in danger of losing his job, told him to “go through the motions, anyway,” and he would make no fuss.

“But, man,” I expostulated, “you might have had your throat cut!”

“Oh, well,” he said, “he was in an awful state, and I couldn’t get up and go out and give him away to the whole shop. I didn’t enjoy it a bit, I assure you!”

I have speculated if he ever thought to liken his act to that of Robert Louis Stevenson, who is reputed to have accepted and smoked a half-consumed cigarette from a leper, rather than cause affront. Jack had often brought up that story to illustrate his conception of gameness.

He would not take care of himself. Coughing badly, week in and week out, he declined to wear other than thin “low-cuts” with sheerest of silk socks. “Don’t bother I’ll be all right,” was all that I, or the small fatherly Nakata, could elicit.

The New York World, during the Equitable Life fire, sent him a badge that gave him the freedom of that precinct of ice and flame; but I, who should have liked to share this real adventure, was barred by my sex.

Dozens of plays we attended together; a dozen or so books Jack read aloud to me; and there was a trip to Schenectady, where Frank Hancock, whom we had met in New Orleans, introduced us to Professor Charles P. Steinmetz, genius of the General Electric, and took us through the leviathan plant; for Jack was always sharp-set to study the enormous achievements of the human in harnessing force. At Schenectady we were guests of Dr. and Mrs. Cyrus E. Baker. In their home Jack treated his soul to

an orgy of music, for Mrs. Baker had been on the grand opera stage, and her husband was a masterly accompanist. Another out-of-town week-end was spent at Short Beach, Connecticut, with Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wilcox — Ella Wheeler — of our Jamaica memories.

Attending a tea at the Liberal Club on January 27, 1912, given in his honor, Jack was asked by a socialist if he was a "Direct Actionist." Jack regarded his questioner cautiously for a moment, then asked him to define what he meant by the term. "One who favors strikes and the like," was the definition:

"Yes, I am a direct actionist, as you call it. Direct Action, as I understand it, is teaching us the true fighting spirit, which is going to be the greatest asset the people of the masses possess when the great struggle finally comes between them and their present masters. There is a hard time coming. We shall have a big fight, but the masses will conquer in the end, because they form the stronger and more stable body. The story of the struggle will be written in blood. The ruling classes will not let go until it is."

Some one asked him to give his ideas on the subject of universal peace. He replied that there would come a time when all human contention would be settled amicably with the aid of referees, but that we must use our fighting spirit to bring about this condition. We must fight to stop war.

"What will you do with the fighting spirit when this ideal state comes to pass?" some one asked.

"Dig potatoes with it!" Jack shouted vehemently. "Write books with it, govern with it. By turning this energy, now wasted in building up great armaments with which to kill, into civilized channels, civilization would mean twice what it does now."

Of writing on his novel, "The Valley of the Moon," he did almost none; but he transacted considerable business with publishers. He had left the Macmillans, and contracted with Doubleday, Page & Company for "A Son of the Sun." The Century Company brought out the next four volumes — "Smoke Bellew Tales," "The Night Born," "The Abysmal Brute," and "John Barleycorn." In the fall of 1913, with "The Valley of the Moon," Jack resumed relations with the Macmillans, and continued thenceforth with that house.

One writer whose company greatly illumined our sojourn in New York was Michael Monahan; and Jack and Richard Le Gallienne got together most pleasantly. Several afternoons were set aside for receiving callers. Alex ander Berkman came to see Jack, for the purpose of enlisting his aid in the matter of a Preface to his "Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist." The two "scrapped" amiably, and Jack wrote the Preface, but, in the nature of their radical differences, it was repudiated by Berkman and his associate anarchists. I shall include the Preface in some future collection, together with Jack's comments upon Berkman's refusal, written several years thereafter. "Alexander Berkman," I quote from the latter document, "could not see his way to using my introduction, and got some one else to write a more sympathetic one for him. Also, socially, comradely, he has forgotten my existence ever since."

Late that year, asked by an Oakland Tribune man if, with his interest in the economic aspect of the world, he did not find New York the best place for his observations, Jack cried:

"Great Scott, no, no! I must have the open, the big open. No big city for me, and above all not New York. I think it is the cocksure feeling of superiority which the people of the metropolis feel over the rest of the country that makes me rage — when it does not remind me of something near home. Next to my Ranch is an institution for the feebleminded. When some of the inmates who are not as feeble minded as the rest, are through with their chores, one or another of them will shake his or her head and say with great thankfulness: "Well, heaven he praised, I'm not feebleminded."

"And yet," he concluded benevolently, "I feel that way about New Yorkers only when I see or think of them collectively. When I meet them one by one it is another story."

This reminds one of what R. L. S. said, as remembered by Robert S. Lysaght, to a similar question:

"It is all the better for a man's work, if he wants it to be good and not merely popular. Human nature is always the same, and you see and understand it better when you are standing outside the crowd."

Cape Horn Voyage

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXXV 1912

FOUR of us sailed around Cape Horn, from Baltimore to Seattle Jack London, wife, Nakata, and an engaging fox terrier puppy, three months foolish, who was destined to play an important part in Jack's household till the end of life. "Possum" we named him, in memory of a rough-coated little Irish gentleman we had known in the South Seas — brother to dear Peggy of the Snark, immortal in our hearts. The fox Possum figures in "The Valley of the Moon," which was resumed and completed on the Cape Horn voyage, and also in "The Mutiny of the Elsinore," this book being an out-growth of that experience on a wind jammer. Besides "The Valley of the Moon," Jack made copious notes for "John Barleycorn," and wrote a short sea story, "The Tar Pot," published serially as "The Captain of the Susan Drew," and not yet collected in book form.

It was a very subdued, much-himself Jack London who stopped over with me in Philadelphia enroute to Baltimore to take ship. And Philadelphia unconsciously perpetrated a classic joke on itself: without knowing, it entertained for three days at the leading hotel "America's most advertised writer." It seemed so strange that I had no accustomed duties to perform in the way of answering telephone calls from reporters in the lobby! For not one ever discovered the sprawling signature in the hotel register. The silence of the brotherhood of scribes was certainly not due to any boycott on Jack London, for they had hitherto appeared unanimously kind to his work.

The morning of our sailing from Baltimore, on March 2, 1912, as I sat alone writing my farewell letters home, the door opened and I heard Jack in colloquy with Nakata.

I caught the words, in a giggly whisper, “Wait till Mrs. London sees me!” Something told me what I should behold, and I refrained from raising my eyes until obliged to do so. He had long threatened to do it, but until then had withheld the act because of my pleading. His head was as naked as a billiard ball. I looked him over with assumed poise, and resumed my writing. Jack tittered. I said “Yes, I see; but it isn’t funny. Jack tittered again. “But it isn’t funny,” I repeated, beginning to lose hold of myself. “Oh, now, don’t feel badly, Mate Woman,” he began, for my voice was becoming unsteady, I know. “It is such a good rest for my head — I often did it in the old days, at sea and around.”

It was the last straw in a hard winter, to mix a metaphor. I wept uncontrolledly for nearly three hours. There is a photograph of the pair of us, taken that day beside Edgar Allen Poe’s monument, in which a very heavily coated Jack London, hat pulled down most unbecomingly over a chill scalp, stands with a woman who tries to hide swollen eyes and forlorn mouth in a new set of very handsome red fox. Jack looked apprehensive when I remarked that my own head needed a rest, and started for the scissors. But I only sheared off eight inches. I did not again look directly at Jack until there was at least half an inch of hair on his head.

The Dirigo, 3000 tons net registered, seventeen years old, had been the first steel ship launched by the famous Sewalls of Bath, Maine. She was technically a four-masted barque. Jack chose the Dirigo over a much newer clipper for the reason that she carried skysails — fast becoming obso-lete. “And how I’d like to take you around the Horn on a ship with moonsails!” he lamented the impossibility.

Captain Omar Chapman, of Newcastle, Maine, was one of the fast disappearing type of lean New England aristocrat, who always presented himself on deck immaculately attired, his especial hobbies fine hats and cravats. His quiet Yankee humor extended to these little foibles and a frank contempt for the common clay of modern deep-water sailors. The calm kingliness of his character was in cool contrast to that of the Mate, Fred Mortimer, hot-hearted, determined, all-around efficient driver of a crew that was composed, with a few exceptions well along in years, of landlubbers and weaklings.

Imagine our surprise to learn that Captain Warren, of the Snark, had applied for the berth of second officer, although in ignorance of our presence in the ship. As surprising was the fact that the man who was accepted bore the same name!

We paid $1000.00 for our passage, and, since such vessels carry no passenger license, had to sign on the articles, Jack as third mate, myself as stewardess, and Nakata as cabin-boy. It must have been attributable to Yankee thrift that, when it became known we traveled with a man, no cabin boy was taken along. Therefore many duties aft fell to our private servant, over and above his service to Jack and me, and Nakata put up with the gratuitous injustice with good grace rather than create unpleasantness.

The Dirigo stood out to sea in an abating icy gale that had held her bound for exasperating weeks. Rough and bitter cold it was, but nothing mattered to me except the fact that land was left behind, in prospect long months of blissful sea life with its cleansing simplicities.

In all the one hundred and forty-eight days, our eyes rested on land but once — or in one brief period of two or three days — literally land's-end, the end of the earth, the island of Cape Horn itself, with the continuous mainland and islands. Even Diego Ramirez, sinister finger of stone to the south of the Continent, became visible in the war of water and cloud.

"Cape Horn on the starboard bow!" on May 10, was the most exciting tocsin, next to a savage war conch, I had ever awakened to.

"Gee — you folks are lucky!" Mr. Mortimer exclaimed, as, wrapped in heavy coats, we clung to the poop-rail and actually gazed upon the Cape. "I tell you, I've made this passage more times than I can remember, and I haven't laid eyes on that there island since 1882! The fog has never raised." And the day before, conditions being favorable for the risky feat, the Captain had been able to reduce time by passing through the Straits of Lemaire, instead of going around Staten Island. It was exciting business, made more breathless by sight of a great wreck, standing stark upright in her doom of shallow water off the mainland.

Our farthest south was Lat. 57° 32', Lon. 67° 28'. And though we had some little difficulty "making westing" and were driven back time and again, our traverse "from 50 to 50" was but fifteen days, which is almost better than a master mariner dare hope.

"How could you endure such a life!" women a-many have said to me. There was no single moment of wearisomeness to either Jack or me. Think of the industrious working hours — even I, suddenly inspired by one of the anecdotes from Captain or officers, wrote a sea yarn, "The Wheel," afterwards published at a round price by a newspaper syndicate. He had been much surprised and delighted when, without warning or comment, I laid my manuscript with his night-reading. And after I had benefited by suggestions from him: "It's quite good enough for you to go ahead and market!" he advised to my astonishment.

For at least three hours daily, on deck in fine weather, otherwise sitting below on his high bunk with a bright "angle-lamp" at either end, Jack read aloud while I embroidered a new supply of fine lingerie. We read everything from Chinese lore to Robert W. Chambers. "And for once, my companion grinned, "I've time to read Sue's 'Wandering Jew.' I never could 'see' the time for it before."

Oh, the vivifying salt air, and the sea-food — good old "salt horse" and beef tongue, and the cook's inspired concoctions of tinned dainties! Captain Chapman had brought along a well-stocked hencoop solely because there was to be a woman aboard; but after he had been taken mysteriously ill the day before sighting the Horn, the fresh eggs had been a boon. Indeed, he lived many weeks because of the whites of eggs I was able to serve him; but he died two days after arriving at Seattle — and alas, before his wife could come to him from Maine. Cancer of the stomach, the doctors diagnosed. I spent a whole night, in the hotel, sadly enough, but glad of my detailed notes, writing Mrs. Chapman a log of the voyage from the day her husband was stricken.

So placidly and promptly his old self was Jack at sea, that I, slowly recuperating from acute nerve-strain, contemplated him with the amazement women must ever feel

toward certain phases of their menfolk. My diary exclaims in wonder: “I do believe the man has utterly forgotten New York and its abominations!” But later, when I had hurt a finger, and developed a “runaround” that held me sleepless through nights of pain, his devotion seemed to carry a new note, and there were moments when I saw float up through the deeps of his eyes a knowledge of all that those weary eight weeks had meant to me.

The Master and Jack gathered fuel for everlasting fun at my expense. Two long connecting staterooms had been fitted up for us, that we might have separate bunks. It was to general systemic upset that I attributed an annoy-ing attack of hives that followed sailing. With tin upon tin of cream of tartar from the ship s galley my offended stomach was dosed; I tried sleeping all over the vessel aft — in the main cabin, and even in the chart-room, where I seemed to rest the best. And the consumption of cream of tartar and sympathy in the cabin went on apace. Then a suspicion began to dawn in the Captain, which precipitated an investigation of my freshly painted wooden bunk. The secret was out. All the scrubbing and painting and fumigation had failed to dislodge the last of a nest of the ubiquitous bed-bug that a ship is never able quite to eradicate. A broad grin was evident from stem to stern of the Dirigo the day a young sailor had finally eradicated the pest, and I never heard the last of my “hives.”

Would you pursue beauty indescribable, go to sea on a wind-jammer. I know no more exalted moments than when, a hundred miles off the coast of Brazil I have set my face to the four quarters of the heavens, upon which were painted as many astounding sunsets, with a heavy moon lifting to spill thick silver in a fading copper sea; or have clung in the eyes of her, the great steel body of the ship plunging enormously onward among the night-green rollers of her moonlit highway, her orderly forest of masts swaying, swerving, to the weight of full sails — gargantuan pearls, hard and bright, strung to the loftiest spars of the golden masts, white-gleaming in the very witchery of moonlight that transfigures all their majesty into the immateriality of a vision. Masefield knows it all:

“I have heard the song of the blossoms and the old chant of the sea,

And seen strange lands from under the arched white sails of ships.”

How could I live such a life? Woe is me — how can I live without it!

Night after night, fair weather or foul — and it was all of a magnificence, dead calm or great guns blowing — I took a note-book and pencil to the poop hatch, and painted, as well as I could in words, the sunsets and their mirrored reflections on the vast dome. Bits of these “sketches” are in “The Mutiny of the Elsinore.” On a day I may come upon the rest among Jack’s own notes, and drop an hour from a busy dozen to find my feet again treading the deck or the fore-and-aft bridge of the Dirigo, stately and beautiful moving house of ocean, now, along with our old friend the Tymeric, at one with the slime. For the Huns got them both. I would that mermen and mermaids could people them for ay!

For exercise we boxed lustily, trained and played with the puppy, and climbed into the “top” of the mainmast — the first foot-hold of the same above deck, reached by

precarious, lurching way of the shrouds from the rail. In Jack's pocket was a book, in mine my embroidery. Here, remote, ecstatic, above the "wrinkled sea" and the slender fabric of steel, we lived some of our finest hours, enthralled by the recurrent miracle of unbored days, love ever regenerate, and contemplation of our unwasted years.

Once around the Horn, Jack took to hooking albatross, catching quite a number. Some were liberated, but several he kept. I still have the skins — twelve feet from tip to tip, if I remember aright.

One of his activities was pulling teeth for the crew — to say nothing of assisting Possum to shed her puppy-molars which, in lack of normal food and bones, were troublesome in letting go. For Jack had not forgotten to bring along his Snark dentistry case.

The first news of an almost forgotten world in five months was of the Titanic disaster, and, next, that our old acquaintance, President Alfaro of Ecuador, and his son (a West Point man) had been murdered in Quito and their headless bodies dragged through the streets.

And would any one know what Jack London thought of "enduring such a life," half a year away from the land spaces of the world:

"Mate," he said in all earnestness, as the dear, gray, battered hull towed up Puget Sound, looking pensively at the sailors aloft making all snug, I wish it had been a year, or years! — You remember, don't you? how happy I was stocking up inexhaustible reading matter, in case we got driven back from the Horn and had to double the Cape of Good Hope, and on around the world that way!"

There had been one shadow upon me. One evening about three months out, at table, the Mate, Fred Mortimer, remarked:

"I never drink on duty. I drink very little anyway; just a glass now and again on shore with the fellows." Jack replied, to my dismay:

"That is what I am now working toward. I have, by putting myself, for the first time in my life, where I am absolutely free for months of alcohol, with alcohol entirely purged from my system — in a position, also for the first time in my life, to review the whole question of alcohol with reference to myself and that system, and my brain. I have learned, to my absolute satisfaction, that I am not an alcoholic in any sense of the word. Therefore, when I am on land again, I shall drink, as you drink, occasionally, deliberately, not because I have to have alcohol in the economy of my physical system, but because I want to, we'll say for social purposes. I never have been so happy in my life concerning alcohol with reference to myself, as I am right now this minute. It has never mastered me, I now know; it never shall. There is no danger of it mastering me."

Although I knew he was giving us the honest content of his best conclusions in the matter, I also felt that I knew he would fail of the perfection of such a plan. He did. But what counts in the end — is the end, and near that end he drank but little. Four days in Seattle were spent, if the newspapers were to be trusted, in a lavender satin-lined suite, Jack attired exquisitely in pink silk pajamas and reveling in perfumed ablutions.

It was the old Puebla that carried us down the coast. There were two reasons for this voyage: one, we were not wearied of the sea; the other, it was feasible for us to have Possum with us more than would have been allowed by rail. The evening of August second we sat in the front row at the Oakland Orpheum, our seats ordered by wireless from "outside" the previous day. And it was one of our happiest homecomings, as will be seen.

For, the long voyage ended, we looked for another child in March — a child love-beckoned, to fill a heart's desire once bereft. But owing solely to the ignorance in which we had been left of certain conditions that should have been corrected before another birth was to be thought of, a second blighting disappointment was suffered within a month of our return.

Jack was sadly cast down, though he said little. But his somber state cropped out indirectly in a letter to me. He was entertaining a houseful of guests who had been with us when I was obliged to go into hospital for a few days. Some criticisms had been made of his supporting a trio or more of his pet hobo philosophers so picturesquely and sympathetically delineated in "The Little Lady of the Big House" as "the seven sages of the Madroño Grove." The title was a reminiscence of his delving into Chinese Legend on the Dirigo. He wrote me in a strain that showed a cumulative discouragement with human things that had led him to take agriculture so seriously:

"As for — — , I get more sheer pleasure out of an hour's talk with him than all my inefficient Italian laborers have ever given me. He pays his way. My God, the laborers never have paid theirs. The Ranch has never lost much money on X — — , and Y — — , and Z — — , and R — — , and T — — , and all the rest of the fellows who've had a few meals and beds out of me. The Ranch has lost a hell of a lot on the weak sticks of cash-per-day laborers who've battened off of me and on me. Don't forget that the Ranch is my problem. This one and that one never helped me. It was I, when I was ripe, and when I saw a flicker of intelligence in this one and that one, who proceeded to shake things down. What all these various ones have lost for me in cash is a thousand times more than the price of the few meals and beds I've given to my bums. And I give these paltry things of paltry value out of my heart. I've not much heart throb-left for my fellow beings. Shall I cut this wee bit thing out too?"

Yet right near this time, returning from a week's absence, he brought home with him a false friend of his early writing days, an old beneficiary who, for some fancied slight, had kept away from Jack for years and talked bitterly against him. I, at sight of Jack with this man in tow, was inwardly as mad as a much dampened mother-hen, although it was incumbent upon me to be courteous in my own house. Jack had taken me aside at first opportunity:

"The poor devil," he said, " — Mate Woman, be good to him; I know you will. It gave me pleasure to bring him. After all, he's only hypersensitive — I don't know what about, in my case; but at any rate, I decided to forget his silly treatment of me — it was only silly, after all."

Home from the Bohemian Club's High Jinks, Jack settled into his stride on the new book, "John Barleycorn," by some reviewers jocosely dubbed his "alcoholic memoirs" and "a bibulous epic." But the work, containing so much autobiographical material of serious portent, was far from humorous. Despite the author's sense of artistry that made it read like fiction and placed certain exaggerations to best advantage, during my typing, as it unfolded day by day, I was conscious of shock upon shock at the content of Jack's mind. Not only with regard to his past, far and near, was I impressed; but also by a realization of the restlessness and deep-reaching melancholy he suffered from the frustration of his dearest ambition — victorious fatherhood of my children. But our days together were happy, and here is what he wrote in my copy of "Smoke Bellew":

"I am still filled with the joy of your voice that was mine last night when you sang. Sometimes, more than any clearly wrought concept of you, there are fiber-sounds in your throat that tell me all the lovableness of you, and that I love as madly as I have always loved all the rest of you."

"Oct. 2, 1912."

Four hundred acres known as the Freund Ranch, had been annexed to the upper reaches of the Kohler, though Jack had to mortgage. The "Wolf House" was slowly mounting, story by story, Jack's big draft horses laboring four and four, from a quarry three miles across the valley and up our mountain, with the great volcanic boulders that were the same red-amethystine hue of the redwood logs also to be used in construction. "We gloat over the growing red arches," my diary reads; and to me, in Oakland, Jack wrote:

The stone house grows. Two four-horse wagons hauling lumber to-day 20 loads of it. Bar accidents, we'll be in our own home next fall."

And he goes on in the same letter:

"Miss you? I've got to have you away from me for a couple of days truly to appreciate you. To myself, all the time, these days, I keep swearing: 'She's a wonder! She's a wonder!'

"For you are. You're the best thing that ever happened to me.

"When are you coming home? I miss you so dreadfully."

In early November, I went again into hospital for an overhauling that included a minor operation. We made it up that Jack should hold my hand during the taking of the ether, so that we might "keep up the lines" to the end of consciousness. I seemed to come to the Edge of Things, when another moment would yield me the Riddle of the Universe. Poised on the brink, I hung in an agony of desire to fix firmly what I should grasp, in order to pass the priceless gift to Jack — possessed by an overwhelming knowledge of what it would mean to his brain. Then something snapped, and I knew nothing until I heard:

"She's gone, Mr. London," and I felt him relax his clasp.

"Oh, no, I'm not, Mate!" protested I. But that was the last thought until I came out.

Jack's daily calls, with their tea-parties for two, were a source of joy to me; and one day, blowing into my room full of news of the day, laden with magazines and books, he burst forth:

"I simply cannot tell you what these afternoons mean to me — how I look forward to them from day to day!"

Then he went on to tell how he had signed a five-year serial contract with The Cosmopolitan, for all his fiction. This, so long as he delivered the pledged amount of fiction, was not to interfere with any non-fiction he might write and sell to other periodicals. Hence, when the semi-autobiographical "John Barleycorn" appeared serially, it was in the Saturday Evemng Post. This work, while it created a sensation, had no phenomenal book-sale. Jack laid the fact to the Post's enormous circulation, and vowed that the next time he sold anything to that weekly it must pay him a larger rate to offset the diminished book-royalties. As to the Post itself, he said:

"I hate the sight of it — because, forsooth, when I open a number I can't lay it down, and it takes too much time from my other reading!"

Once, at a dance in a Honolulu hotel, Cyrus Curtis, standing alone, was pointed out to Jack. "I'm going to have some fun — watch me!" he whispered. Stepping over to the great publisher, he said: "Mr. Curtis, I believe? — I've done some work for you now and again."

The older man, little dreaming that this was the author of two of his most successful serials, "The Call of the Wild" and "John Barleycorn," looked politely inquiring, probably thinking the modest-voiced, soft-collared man might be a typesetter.

"Jack London is my name."

"Jack London! — Man, do get me out of this!" And the two, arms linked, disappeared into a veranda and were seen no more until time to go home.

Recalling those afternoon teas in my hospital room, a very sweet thing happened one day. Somewhere I have referred to Jack's regret that he had never learned the soft, pretty ways of social intercourse. "I never bought flowers for a woman in my life," I had heard him say. One afternoon, lying and gazing into the sunny tree-tops, I caught myself wondering how Jack would look entering with a big bunch of double-violets. I turned to see whom the door was admitting, and there was he, red and flustering with an armful of flowers, and my double-violets a bunch as large as his head! "These are yours, Mate Woman and these others are for Joan." His elder girl was ill at her mother's home. Jack proceeded:

"Curious coincidence — I've just got your doctor-bill and Joan's nurse-bill. And they're identical — $125 each!"

"I'll tell you something queerer than that," I answered, handing him a New York check for the same amount. "This is in payment for my one and only story, 'The Wheel,' and I mean for you to put it into the family pot to pay Joan's nurse!"

"I'll do it, I'll do it!" Jack looked at me steadily a moment, an odd expression in the eyes that were as blue at the moment as my violets.

But what could be sweeter than the tale of an incident that came from his lips one day when he had slipped into the bedside chair and taken my hand — looking with affection upon where it lay, idle for once, in his palm:

"I'm a silly fool, I suppose — I don't know what ever made me do it; but down in the Forum Cigar Store this noon, matching for cigarettes, the men got to talking about adventure, and women, and what not. I don't know how it came about; but I found myself telling those fellows — I can't even remember their names — how I had once nearly signed on to go to the Marquesas; how I longed to see those and all the isles of the South Seas, with, in my eyes, more especially the romance of conquest among the brown maidens sung by poet and sailor. . . . All very well, my dear; but I didn't stop with that; I went on, the proudest, happiest man you ever saw, and bragged, positively bragged to those city men that when I had at last gone into those same South Seas, with the memory of an old longing, it was with my small white woman by my side. And that, co-adventurers, we lived our own faithful romance of the South Seas."

When I was able to leave hospital and sail on the Roamer, he brought her from Vallejo to Oakland, accompanied by a house-guest, Laurence Godfrey Smith, a concert pianist whom he had known in Australia, To him Jack declared:

"We chose a boat as small as this so that we could flee from even our best friends once in a while; but we re going to make an exception of you, Laurie. Though, I'm afraid, dubiously, "that we'll have to put you to bed on the floor beside the centerboard, with the aid of a shoe-horn!" And when, months afterward, we saw "Laurie" off to Australia, Jack, contemplating the silent grand piano, said: "It seems as if some one had died!"

The Bad Year; Agriculture

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXXVI 1913

1913, though it yielded a measure of good fortune, Jack was wont to name his "bad year." It did seem as if almost everything that could hurt befell him. First, there was the death of a woman friend, an invalid, whom for years he had seen seldom. Never had I observed him so stirred by the passing of any adult person. That this one, so bright, so brave, should have ceased, for once made his philosophy waver.

"I did something last night I never did before," he confessed. "I concentrated every thought and actually tried to call that girl back. If any one could, I think it would be myself. . . . Of course," he smiled half-foolishly, "there was no answer."

His sister's boy, Irving Shepard, was nearly electrocuted while playing in a tree during school recess, and lay precariously ill for months in our house.

Jack himself had to undergo a sudden operation for appendicitis.

One of the most valuable draft brood-mares, in foal, was found dead in pasture, from a bullet.

An old man ran amuck one night and "shot up the ranch." Jack landing upon the scene, in the space of three seconds had disarmed the lunatic, who, in retaliation, haled

him into court for “choking an old man into insensibility.” “Me, choking an old man into insensibility!” Jack fumed. “Can’t you see me?” Then, there was serious want of early rains, and a “false spring” brought out blossom and young fruit untimely, only to be frosted after belated showers. On top of that, the valleys of California were visited by a plague of grasshoppers. They fastened even upon Jack’s baby eucalyptus trees, which were supposedly immune from pest and blight. Nature’s beneficence, in his view, was more than counter balanced by nature’s cruelty. “Certainly,” he would groan in unison with his harassed sister, “God doesn’t love the farmer! Look at that beautiful half-grown cornfield scorched and withered by sun and north wind!”

One of the bitterest mischances was an attack upon him, in court, by a moving-picture promoter whose name enemies metamorphosed into “Porchclimber.” The suit was brought to establish whether or not Jack London owned any copyright in his work. A noted eastern attorney was retained, one whom we heard had had a hand in the drafting of copyright law, to take charge of the infamous prosecution. The whole affair was so baldly pernicious that the Los Angeles judge threw it out of court.

Jack had gone into the fight with every atom of his energy, and, since his downfall would mean that of all American authors, he was backed, should he lose, by the Authors’ League of America, in the determination to carry the fight into the highest courts of the Union. Very quietly the noted lawyer returned whence he came, and it has never come to my ears that he boasted of the part for which he had been cast.

Later on, as an outcome of the controversy, two film-versions of “The Sea Wolf” were being shown on opposite sides of the same street in Los Angeles. Of Hobart Bosworth’s depiction of the hero Jack said:

“When I wrote ‘The Sea Wolf,’ the physical image of Larsen that took shape in my mind was more or less vague in outline and detail. Nevertheless, it was there, in my mind, and I carried it with me for years, until it was almost real to me. But it fled, like a ghost at daybreak, when I saw on the screen Mr. Hobart Bosworth, the real, three dimension, flesh-and-blood Sea Wolf. Until I die the image of the Sea Wolf will be Mr. Bosworth as I saw him on the screen.”

There were moments, during the preparation for the copyright fight, when Jack became so enraged that I was alarmed about him. But one morning, after an untoward outbreak of “catastrophic red wrath” the preceding night, he came to me with a face of humility:

“I’m all right now, Mate. You needn’t be afraid for me any more. I’ll be good from now on. — Only, you know, it’s awfully hard to sit by quietly and let these sons of toads try to take the earnings of your whole life’s work away from you!”

“If they get me,” he said one gloomy day when I had cheered him with the reminder that I shared his trouble equally, and that we must endure everything shoulder to shoulder, “If they get me, you might as well know that we’ll lose everything we have — the Ranch, even; everything. But I’ve still my earning capacity, and we’ll buy a big ship outright, one of those we were looking at last winter in the Alameda Basin. And we’ll put in a fireplace, like Lord and Lady Brassey’s on the Sunbeam, and take your

grand piano, and be quit forever of a country where a man's life-work can be cheated out of him by a lot of theatrical sharks and their crooked copyright lawyers — and we'll tell them all to go to hell!" he wound up out of breath. And later, "Why, we could even pick up odd freights here and there over the world," he became interested in spite of his righteous wrath, and make the old tub pay for herself! What do you say?"

Ranch guests can attest the incredulous delight my attitude afforded him in this dark period. "Would you believe it!" he was never tired of acclaiming, "I actually think she wanted me to ride to my fall! I rather thought the idea did not shock her much. By next morning she had got well under way with cabin-plans — and as the days went by and my troubles and my moods smoothed out, she seemed disappointed that I was not to be driven to embarking upon the endless voyage."

Perhaps I was disappointed — why not? Had he not always proved a calmer, happier soul in a sea-existence away from the warring frictions of the land?

It may be that hardest of misfortunes was the losing of Jack's "dream house" by fire. Everything else paled, however, when one day, overheated on a long walk while suffering from a bad attack of poison-oak, I fell ill. For some time Jack had been absorbed in work, ranch, and other problems; but now, faced with a human, vital consideration, all beside could go by the board. As he said:

"Mate Woman, I always suspected I had a heart, but now I know. I am the proudest man in the world — I have a heart. And when I was face to face with the possibility of losing you, that heart seemed to come right into my throat — I ate it, I tell you, and I forced it down. Truly, truly, I was near dying!"

It was about this time that he said to a man friend, who told me long afterward, "If anything should happen to Charmian, I'd kill myself. I wouldn't try to live without her."

There were strains and wounds unhealable dealt Jack in that unlucky twelve-month, trials of spirit that caused him to say in retrospect:

"My face changed forever in that year of 1913. It has never been the same since."

Still, midmost of all this, he protested having been called a pessimist by a Jewish cub reporter:

"I am not a pessimist at all. Why, I exploited to you that love is the biggest thing in the world, and held out my arms to you and to all the world in love while I was talking to you. No man who is a lover can be a pessimist. When you have grown a few years older, you will realize that a man who disagrees with your political, economic and sociological beliefs, does not necessarily have to be a pessimist — especially if he be a self-proclaimed lover."

I was not surprised when Jack announced that he had made a gamble. Two brothers-in-law of a famous writer, with alluring credentials, had approached him with a proposition to exchange his signature for certain Mexican land stocks. Jack looked very carefully into the business, and assured me he was safe in case the project fell through. "I invest nothing, you see. They want my name in it, that is all; and I stand to win." But they got him in the end.

Then there was a so-called “fidelity” loan outfit that “trimmed” him for a similar amount. This matter was taken into court, and while the company was patently fraudulent, it won upon a technicality. Jack had chosen a youthful lawyer who had his career to make:

“Might as well give an unknown a chance! And he’ll probably represent me as well as another.” He was fond of saying: “A practitioner is one who practices upon his victims, anyway!”

These two ventures left Jack out of pocket about ten thousand dollars. Once I made reference to them, and he said:

“Please — I don’t want to talk albout them at all.” Which was unlike his usual eagerness to elucidate his affairs. It must be recorded that when he went into speculations, he labeled them frankly:

“Remember what I tell you, in case these go wrong — that they are deliberate gambles. I think they are good gambles; but sheer gambles they are. There’s nothing like playing a flyer on a long chance. Pure lottery. Sometimes a chance proves a big winner. I’ve never won anything yet. Maybe now’s my chance!”

All I had to say was that a man who “made good” as he did, in all his obligations, had a right to “take a flyer” upon occasion. Jack smiled with pleasure; and his face bore the same expression when he told some one how, one day aboard the Roamer, lying off an inland city, I had said:

“Don’t let yourself get stale aboard, if you feel like having a little recreation. Why don’t you go ashore and look up a good card game of some sort. It will do you good.”

He took the suggestion, but returned shortly.

Oh, I pirooted around a while, and watched some playing; but I didn’t see anything that looked half so good to me as this cabin and the little wife-woman who wanted me to do as I pleased! . . . Where’s that pinochle deck? I can beat you a rubber of three out of five games before Sano has that fish-chowder ready.”

January aboard the Roamer saw Jack drafting his first chapter of “The Mutiny of the Elsinore” — a whacking good sea-story, true, modern; beneath the romance and action a heartfelt protest against the decayed condition of the American merchant marine. It was finished in August, and serial publication, under title of “The Gangsters,” begun in Hearst Magazine for November. For once, he was touched with his creation. This from my diary: “Mate has a great moment in creating the character of Captain West. Stopped me as I went by, to read me morning’s work; and his eyes were shining with joy in our mutual appreciation of what he had done.” In my gift-copy is written, dated September 21, 1914:

“We, too, have made this voyage together, and, in all happiness, known the winter North Atlantic, the pamperos off the Plate, and the Sou’west gales and Great West Wind Drift off the Horn. And we made westing, as we have ‘made westing’ in all the years since first we loved.”

“Lying on the beach at Waikiki,” wrote a Honolulu newspaperman, “I learned that ‘The Mutiny of the Elsi-nore’ was written to illustrate how the blond white man from

the Northern countries of Europe is rapidly being crowded out of America, and that as he disappears, he will go down fighting to the last, but that he will go down beneath the weight of the Latin, the Slav, and other Southern European races that are pouring into America, whom he can rule as long as he lives, but with whom he cannot successfully compete in the continual struggle for existence."

Home from our blissful river-drifting, Jack plunged deeper than ever into ranch development, the while we honeymooned amidst all the quickening farm activities. A "frosty honeymoon," Jack laughed, for ice was in the ground, and there was an unwonted snowfall. In March he gave me "The Night-Born," with this in its fly-leaf:

"Dear My-Woman:

"The seasons come and go. The years slide together in the long backward trail, and yet you and I remain, welded with our arms about each other moving onward together and unafraid of any future."

In a new edition of "The Call of the Wild," illustrated by Paul Bransom, he wrote:

"It was many dear years ago when I first gave you a copy of this book — in the days when I was hearing a love call; and never has that same love called more loudly than it calls now in this year 1913, when my arms are still full of you, and my heart still full of you."

It was all a part of his yearning to escape from the world at large. Several times, without self-consciousness, even before others, he held out his arms to me when I came into the living room — as if he must clasp something, some one that came nearest to understanding his need. To facilitate his heavy correspondence, a dictaphone was added to our office equipment — a spring machine, in anticipation of the installation of electricity. I was seriously concerned at this innovation, realizing its threat toward the old intimacy of working hours.

"But think, my dear," Jack explained, justly indeed, "I don't have to wait for you; I can dictate to the damned thing any moment, in bed, even, if I please, while you pursue your precious beauty sleep!"

After which he practised on the "damned thing" for an uninterrupted afternoon, reeling off half a hundred neglected letters. When I came to transcribe them, at the end of each cylinder I was greeted with a love message in a fair imitation of my husband's voice: "Her master's voice!" giggled he. How could any one try to obstruct the progress of such a being!

In April, he went to Los Angeles on moving-picture business, but was back in three days: "I never stay very long where you are not," he said upon returning.

In May "The Abysmal Brute," that "brief for the purification of the prize-fight game," came from the Century Company, catching its author in a darker phase than even I had guessed; for when he put the little book into my hands, I found this inside:

"The years pass, we live much, and yet, to me, I find but one vindication for living, but one bribe for living — and that vindication is you, the bribe is you.

"Your Lover,

"Jack London."

And here is something about love:

"Woman, beyond all doubt, remains the biggest thing in the world to-day. The love-motif is the highest thing that can exist between normal humans. To me, existence is impossible without love. Love does not lead nor direct. Love satisfies as no other thing in human knowledge satisfied. Love is the ultimate benediction of living. It ennobles; it makes the impossible possible; it makes life worth living."

A portion of Jack's hypochondria might be laid to the bodily distemper that was leading up to an acute attack of appendicitis. I think he was subsequently in lighter humor. The history of his recovery from the knife, against illustrating that magnificent physical endownment, might be written down as "uneventful" in the annals of surgery, except for its astonishing rapidity.

On July 6, we rushed him to Oakland and into hospital. On the 8th, Dr. William S. Porter operated. Four days later, an important moving-picture conference was held in Jack's room. Other afternoons were filled with callers, and his room was banked in flowers. "Only," the bed-ridden one grumbled sheepishly, "I wish men wouldn't bring me flowers — somehow it makes me feel silly." Frolich, the sculptor, unwittingly mitigated the situation by contributing an absurd corbel, a cowled monk in the ultimate throes of seasickness, and Jack racked himself with mirth. Newspaper men and women came and went, and headlines featuring "The Call of the Wild Appendix," and "Jack London Takes the Count," beguiled his morning tray.

On the seventh day, the patient stood on his feet, then inspected the building from a wheeled chair. Next morning, Dr. Porter, in his own car, conveyed Jack London to the house on Twenty-seventh Street. The obstreperous convalescent insisted upon going out to dine the following night, as well as to the theater, enjoyed a Turkish bath and a café dinner on the tenth day after the operation; and on the twelfth he left for Los Angeles to jump into "the hot test, hardest business fight" of his life with the wily but ingratiating Hebrew, Mr. "Porchclimber." The twentieth day beheld him at home and in the saddle — another tribute to his own vitality and to the cunning of his surgeon friend.

Jack could not abide ether as an anaesthetic. This time he was first given chloroform, and when, once unconscious, ether was substituted, he resisted so violently that chloroform again had to be resorted to.

With that prescience of the Builder that brooks no delay, Jack mortgaged everything in sight, even our cottage and the new one he had erected for Eliza, to obtain funds needful for his big aims. On August 18, with but $300 in bank, and large obligations pressing, he negotiated another mortgage in order to complete the Wolf House before winter. But I always knew, beyond questioning, that no matter what hazards he seemed to be taking, he divined the way out.

The Bank placed an insurance on the Hill Ranch covering half the amount loaned. There was no other insurance on the huge purple-red pile, since every one agreed that rock and concrete, massive beams and redwood logs with the bark on, were practically

fireproof unless ignited in a dozen places, owing to the quadrangular construction and cement partitions.

Nevertheless, three nights later, August 22, the entire inflammable part of the high stone shell was destroyed. I was awakened by voices from Jack's porch. Tiptoeing out, I saw Eliza, by his bedside, point in the direction of the Wolf House half a mile away, where flames and smoke rose straight into the windless, star-drifted sky.

Teams were harnessed, and leaving the Japanese to keep an eye on things at home, if incendiarism was in the air, we drove leisurely across the Ranch. "What's the use of hurry?" Jack demanded. "If that is the Big House burning, nothing can stop it now!"

All the countryside, that had come to feel a personal pride and ownership in "Jack's House," had gathered or was arriving. Public sentiment ran high: and I think, had the criminal or criminals who fired it been detected that night, there would have been a stringing-up to the nearest limbs, in lusty frontier fashion. Already the beautiful red-tile roof had clattered down inside the glowing walls, and the only care that need be exercised was in regard to the adjacent forest. "Promise me," I said to Jack, so lately out of hospital, "that you won't forget yourself, and overdo." He made the pledge and kept it, very quietly walking about and directing the men.

"Why don't you cry, or get excited, or something, you two?" asked a neighbor. "You don't seem to realize what's happened to you!"

"What's the use?" Jack repeated his thought. "It won't rebuild the house. — Though it can be rebuilt!" he swore cheerfully, purpose in his eye.

But uneraseably beneath our contained exterior lay the vision of it six hours before, palpitating in the mid-summer sunset light, when we had emerged on horseback from the ravine Jack called his house-garden. He had burst out:

"How beautiful — Our House, Mate Woman! Did I tell you that Harrison Fisher, after I brought him home from the Jinks two weeks ago, told some one it was the most beautiful house in the West?"

Yes, Jack laughed and buoyed up the spirits of the Ranch while his dream castle ascended in lurid smoke that hot August night. But when at four in the dawn, the tension relaxed, and uppermost in his mind loomed the wicked, cruel, senseless destruction of the only home he had ever made for himself, he lay in my pitying arms and shook like a child. After a few moments he stilled, and said:

"It isn't the money loss — though that is grave enough just at this time. The main hurt comes from the wanton despoiling of so much beauty."

A long pause, and then, referring to the recent death of the bridegroom of a young friend:

"Do you know — thinking it all over, I'd be willing to go through this whole night again, and many times, if it could bring Tom back! We never did learn whose hand applied the torch. I had all but written assassin. For the razing of his house killed something in Jack, and he never ceased to feel the tragic inner sense of loss. To this day the ruins of amethystine stone, arch beyond arch, tower above tower, stand mute

yet appealing. Total strangers, not all of them women, have wept before them, have cried out, "Poor Jack!"

From his immediate actions, however, none but Eliza and I guessed the extent of his repining. Something had to be done, and quickly. Forni, the master-mason, must be taken in hand. He was like a father who had lost a child, and in danger of losing his reason. Two of his men, the big, blue-eyed Martinelli brothers, wandered around the unapproachably hot ruins like spirits suddenly bereft of Paradise, crossing their breasts and murmuring, "Mary!" "Christ!" Even Jack had to turn away when the man who had nailed the last Spanish tile before the conflagration, said with wet eyes: "Well, my roof never leaked, anyway!"

The fire was on Friday. On Monday, Jack had the entire crew putting up a splendid retaining-wall of mossy gray stone, that had long been in his eye, on the right of a driveway to the smoking walls which came to be known simply as The Ruins. Eliza was scarred to the soul by the sudden wiping out of her work — she had superintended the building from start to finish; but she met Jack whole heartedly in showing the workmen and the country round about that the end of the world had not come. It was when we came to readjust that the loss became most evident.

My diary calls it up:

"We lay aside notes and samples, and plans drawn for this and that, and feel as if the bottom had fallen out of everything — light, queer, unreal.

I have been asked why Jack London, socialist, friend of the common man, built so large a house. And I have been glad that there were those who asked, for it has ever been my suspicion that some one who waited not to ask, set the brand to that house.

How shall I say? Jack could not traffic in small things, any more than he could deftly handle trifling objects with his fingers. All he did was in a large way. His boyish memories were of moving from one small, inadequate wooden domicile to another. Being what he could not help being, and remaining true to himself, lover of large and enduring things, he must invite spaciousness and solidity — room to breathe in, and for others to breathe in. The ancient frame cottage in which on the ranch he lived and worked and received all men at his table, was entirely disproportionate to his needs. Being so indefatigable and systematic a worker and thinker he required everything to his hand. A smoothly running domestic menage made for efficiency in other matters. Here, where he had to live during the three years while the Wolf House building went on intermittently, the rooms were crammed and jammed and spilling over with the very implements of his many branches of endeavor. Only the combined efforts of the two of us, and later a third, a secretary, made it anything less than distracting for Jack to function in the cramped apartments. Three-quarters of his library was packed away molding in the big stone barn half a mile away, and many the time he could not lay his hand upon some volume especially needed.

Wanderer, yet deeply fond of his own home, a place for the permanence of his treasures — curios, blankets, books, "gear" — he sighed with content knowing that in the big house there would be a story in one wing devoted to the library; above that, his

roomy work-den; on the first floor, dining room and kitchen. The middle story of the opposing wing was to be mine — a place where I might retreat to rest and call my soul my own when the outside world was too much within our walls. Above, Jack's sleeping tower reared. Beneath mine were the guest chambers, and, still below, servants quarters and the like. The connecting link of these two wings formed a two-story living-room, partially flanked by a gallery; and underneath this high hall lay what Jack termed the "stag room," where no female might venture except by especial ukase from the lords of creation who might lounge and play billiards and otherwise disport themselves therein. The house foundation measured roughly eighty feet from corner to corner.

It should be thought of, that house, in relation to Jack, not as a mansion, but as a big cabin, a lofty lodge, a hospitable tepee, where he, simple and generous despite all his baffling intricacy, could stietch himself and beam upon you and me and all the world that gathered by his log-fires. I know a friend who appreciated this largeness of the man, and who with man's tenderness calls him the Big Chief.

To one who suggests that this house would have been a recreation place for guests acquired by the sole reason of Jack's fame and prosperity," I am able to protest that it would have been the contrary in the Wolf House as in the rickety cottage, our transient household would have been made up mostly of the wanderers, the intellectual (and otherwise) hoboes, sometimes washed, sometimes not, while the master drove his pen for the multitude without. As always, these would have come to sit with us, and furnish grist for Jack's unsleeping brain-mill. That was the sort of "inspiration," to quote my inquirer, he would have continued to draw about him "within such walls of stone." Why, the very form of the rough rock hacienda was an invitation, with its embracing wings, its sunny pool between the wide, arched corridors and grape-gnarled pergola! The reason that seekers after the truth about Jack London find more reminder of him in the simple red boulder that lies upon his ashes than in the aching ruins of his great house, is because they do not know the all of Jack London. He was a man before all else — big and solid, and spacious, and unvaryingly true to himself.

And so with his ranching. There, too, he wrought largely: "No picayune methods for me," he would vow. "When I go into the silence, I want to know that I have left behind me a plot of land which, after the pitiful failures of others, I have made productive. . . . Can't you see? Oh, try to see! — In the solution of the great economic problems of the present age, I see a return to the soil. I go into farming because my philosophy and research have taught me to recognize the fact that a return to the soil is the basis of economics . . . I see my farm in terms of the world, and the world in terms of my farm . . . Do you realize that I devote two hours a day to writing and ten to farming? — my thought-work, my preparation, at night, and when I am out-of-doors."

Similar revelation of himself he gave on the witness stand only a few days before his death, when suit had been brought to restrain him from using his share of the waters of a creek boundary much needed in his scheme of agriculture. But in the whole sad affair, which contributed its weight toward his break-down, not one iota of understanding was accorded him by the prosecutors, among whom were some near and dear to him.

From time to time I would ask: "When, in the years to come, do you think you will ever pull even, financially, with your ranch project?" And it was always with a laugh that he would return: "Never, my dear — at least, I want and expect to have the place eventually sustain itself. That would be the natural object. But it will never make money for me, because there is so much developing I want to keep on doing, endless experiments I want to make."

A noted socialist lecturer, with misapprehension and prejudice in his eye, spent a day or two on the ranch. "At last I see," said he. "I was wrong. In your work here, as you unfold it to me, I see a social creation!" Once more, let me impress: temperamentally Jack London was a Builder of books, of houses, of roads, of soil, of things that would outlast merely temporary uses. My house will be standing, act of God permitting, for a thousand years. My boat, act of God permitting, will be intact and afloat a hundred years or five hundred years hence. Little call to point out that he did not build for himself alone.

"Who will come after us, Mate Woman!" he looked into the distances. "Who will reap what I have sown here in this almighty sweet land? You and I will be forgotten. Others will come and go; these, too, shall pass, as you and I shall pass, and others take their places, each telling his love, as I tell you, that life is sweet!"

He was fond, at this time, of having me play Arthur Foote's Rubaiyat Suite, particularly the section illustrating

"How sultan after sultan, with his pomp,

Abode his destined hour, and went his way."

And Macdowell's "Sea Pieces" swept him out upon the tide of his dreams.

True to his determination not to be downcast over the houseburning, Jack redoubled ranch operations. "I am the sailor on horseback!" chanted he. "Watch my dust! . . . Oh, I shall make mistakes a-many; but watch my dream come true." And, as he loved the name of Sailor, Skipper, Captain, for the love he bore the sea, so he now loved as well to be greeted Farmer, what of his overmastering desire to make blossom the exhausted wilderness. Beauty, in his precincts, began to reveal itself more and more in the light of tillable soil, of food-getting efficiency. "Don't grieve about the clearing of that field, or that little clump of scrubby redwoods," he would say. "We get used to a certain view, and the idea of altering it is untenable. But when it is altered, we are surprised how soon we adjust, and even forget. Remember, there is endless wildwood farther back — it isn't as if I were depriving you of it. Try to dream with me my dreams of fruitful acres. Do not be a slave to an old conception. Try to realize what I am after."

In step with the day-dream went the visions of his slumber, and he loved them: "I am a keen dreamer, and I love to dream. It seems to me that my life is doubled by the amount of dreaming I do every night. Often he recounted to me a story of long hours spent in a verdant land where he seemed to be proprietor, rolling country where, just beyond each hill, great schemes of agricultural betterment were flourishing. Many times, he said, I was by his side: but for the most part he would be instructing

intelligent foremen how to carry out his ideas. This trend in his unconscious mind increased until the day of his death.

The former quiet of the ranch gave place to a pervasive hum of important matters afoot. Rending blasts of dynamite far afield spoke of a new era in the somnolent order of the old land of the Spaniards. Jack founded his pure bred English Shire stable by the purchase of nothing less than Neuadd Hillside, grand champion of California, and once prize-winner in England. He weighed a ton, and was wondrously shaped withal. Cockerington Princess, champion of her own sex, also came to gladden our eyes, while the converting into stables of theretofore unused stone winery buildings went on apace. Into each barn, for the men to scan and heed, was posted a long list of rules borrowed from a great western express corporation for the care and use of the horses.

"Although the tails of these imported horses are docked, we won't dock their colts," Jack remarked on the day the two grand beasts, pranked out show-fashion in colored worsted, were unloaded from the stock "palace car" amidst much comment in Glen Ellen. "Do you know," he asked me, "why horses like those aren't common sights on the country roads of the United States? I'll tell you: because our farmers are so stupidly wasteful about saving feed! I mean just that. Instead of crowding the development of a colt, particularly the first year, by care and feeding, he turns it out to grub for itself in pasture. That first year is like the first year of any other baby. It's what so vitally counts."

Six days before his voice was silenced, Jack said something like the following to an interviewer:

"What is the difference between this good team and that team of scrubs? Man alive! What is the difference between that field, as it is now, and the same field as it was two years ago? What is the difference between anything that is strong and fine and well arranged — be it words or stones or trees or ideas or what not — and the same elements as they were in their unorganized weakness? Man — the brain of man, the effort that man had put into man's supreme task — organizing! That is the work of man, work that is worth a man's doing — to take something second-rate and chaotic and to put himself into it until it becomes orderly and first-rate and fine."

He was, in short, really far more interested in introducing better farming into Sonoma, County and the country at large than he was in leaving behind masterpieces of literature.

As usual, for him to think out a thing was to see it done; and early he had learned, with his instinct for teaching and for effort-saving, to instruct others now to act upon what he thought out. Thus, he was pressing his sister hard and ever harder, firing her with the depth and breadth of his outlook. There were long, grilling hours of discussion — he trying to inculcate his principles, she giving him the benefit of what her practical judgment, regardless of books, prompted her to do.

Here are two loose notes among his many:

"Please, please, know that I carry only general principles in my head, and do not carry details." "You must always allow me the latitude of a mind that is filled with a

million other things that have nothing whatever to do with this ranch, so that when I query, I query honestly and sincerely and without ulterior purpose, so that all I want is what I ask for, and I don t want guessed replies to what you guess are ulterior questions on my part. I ain't got no ulterior questions or motives, but, just once in a while, I have a legitimate, overwhelming desire to know what is, which what is has occurred during my periods of being away from ranch, of being immersed in problems which have nothing whatever to do with ranch, save that they enable me to keep ranch going. I make my living out of the world. I must 90% of my time devote myself to the world. Please, please, give me that 90% latitude of ignorance and of non-remembrance of the percent, of ranch happenings that hit you every moment of every day and that hit me possibly once in six months. Meet me in at least a 9 to 1 percentage sympathy."

Discussion but infrequently took place between Jack and the workmen, for lie was fond of learning by argument. Little they could teach him. And so for the most part he kept from contact with them. "Eliza is the captain I have picked out to run this particular ship of mine," he would say to me, repository of his deductions upon each situation as it unfolded, "and you know how much I interfere between captain and man!" But there was often the irk of those who knew less than Jack, who tried to hold him back: "You can't make it work, Mr. London. We have never done it this way."

"Why not?" he would blaze. "Why can't I make it work? Do you think that I learn nothing from the greatest specialists in your profession, when I put in whole nights, month upon month, studying them? What do you know about government bulletins, government deductions based upon scientific principles that have been put to work?"

I take the following from a transcript of evidence in the water-suit before referred to: "Aren't you a good enough agriculturist to estimate an acre of ground?" was the question put by opposing counsel.

"No," drawled Jack. "We all have our weaknesses. I never could master an acre, by looking at it. I always send somebody out to measure it for me." And to the question, "Have you ever acted as a farmer, practically tilling the soil yourself?" he explained as below:

"I have never had my hands on the handles of a plow in my life, but I know more about plowing than any plowman who ever worked for me. I have acquired practically every bit of my knowledge from the books. I never was a graduate of an university; I never finished the first half of my freshman year at a university; yet I have thought it nothing to face a group of thirty or forty professors hammer-and-tongs on philosophy, sociology, and all the other ologies the group including David Starr Jordan and others of the same high intellectual caliber. I was able to do that and hold a table of debate I, who had never been through a university because I had gotten my knowledge from the same books they had got their knowledge from. The same with plowing and other branches of farm knowledge. I state that I am eminently fitted from my knowledge of the books."

He went on: "My knowledge of agriculture and farming is also derived from actual contact with the soil — looking at it, on occasion hiring experts to come and tell me

their diagnoses of these thick soils or bad soils or wrong soils. I find very often that they disagree with one another; then I go back to my books arid find the right clue, applying it, making my experiments year after year, whether in fertilizer or in methods of cultivation or drainage or the thousand factors that enter into successful tillage."

His aloof supervision was expressed in notes to be passed on. "But see that they are returned and preserved, so that I may refer to them at any time."

From a sheaf I choose almost at random: "Watch out for the first unexpected rain catching lots of our equipment exposed. As for instance the wood-saw and engine. Months in the sun and fog and dew have not done them any good. A rain will do worse."

"Who left half a dozen sacks of cement in rain to spoil under roofless section of rock-crusher house?"

"Near rock-crusher is a shingled roof section, lying flat on the ground, going to hell."

"In any new building operations around the ranch, such as the bath-house, etc., are the men who do the work told to keep the nails cleaned up? Because if they are so told, and continue to let the nails lie around, fire them. To-day it was King who was lamed; some time ago it was one of the Shire mares. To-morrow it may be Neuadd. Is 'father' to sit back and pay for the Veterinary, for the stallion man's time, for the crippled horse's time?"

And first, last, and always, stood his creed:

"What we do must be adequate and permanent."

His plaint to me, aside, when confronted with the obstinate wall of farmer-brains smaller than his own, was like this:

"The reason a man works for me, is because he cannot work for himself. Stupid boobs, most of them, who do not wake up to avail themselves of the fund of knowledge ready for the asking. In the matter of government reports, over and above the price of a postcard of inquiry, knowledge is as free as air."

Out of his despair with the incapacity of employes, their unwillingness to be educated, he coined the phrase "Down the hill," which meant the discharge of those who could neither learn nor take orders. "The more I see of men," he would apostrophize, "the more I turn to the land; yet, in order to manipulate that land, I must deal with those very men who hurt me so with their blind ineffectiveness and lack of foresight. And they try to teach me, who spend my nights with the books. My work on this land, and my message to America, go hand in hand!" And he would ride away, waving his cowboy quirt, bent upon appraising a worn-out plot of ground with the intention of reclaiming it.

Of course, his experiment was being advertised far and wide by the press. He had, as one farm magazine declared, "ideas on the profession of farming that will do the world more good than all the stories he ever could write."

"When I bought one hundred and twenty-nine acres near Glen Ellen nine years ago I knew nothing of farming," Jack gave out. "I bought the place mostly for its beauty, as a place to live and write in.

"About forty acres was cleared and I tried to raise hay for my horses, but soon found I could scarcely get the seed back. The soil had been worn out; it had been farmed for years by old-fashioned methods of taking everything off and putting nothing back.

"The region was a back-water district. Most of the ranchers were poor and hopeless; no one could make any money ranching there, they told me. They had worked the land out and their only hope was to move on somewhere else and start to work new land out and destroy its value.

I began to study the problem, wondering why the fertility of this land had been destroyed in forty or fifty years when land in China has been tilled for thousands of years, and is still fertile.

"My neighbors were typified by the man who said: "You can't teach me anything about farming; I've worked three farms out! Which is as wise as the remark of the woman who said she guessed she knew all there was to know about raising children — hadn't she buried five?

"I adopted the policy of taking nothing off the ranch. I raised stuff and fed it to the stock. I got the first manure spreader ever seen up there, and so put the fertilizer back on the land before its strength had leaked out. I began to get registered stock, and now I sell a blooded cow at nine months for $40 and an old-fashioned rancher comes along and wonders why he has to feed a scrub cow for two years and sell her for less than $40.

"An old-fashioned farmer has thirty milch cows and works eighteen hours a day taking care of them and milking them and can make no money. An up-to-date man comes along, buys the place, pays $10 for a Babcock tester and buys milk scales. Eight away he gets rid of ten of the cows as non-productive, and he makes more with two-thirds of the work."

Jack's disappointment that so much of his main "punch" in "The Valley of the Moon" had been lost by wholesale deletion, in serial publication, was mended by the way the published book was received by the agricultural magazines. One of them declared that it "ought to be adopted for a text book by our 'back to the farm,' missionaries. Besides being a firstrate love-story, it is replete with knowledge of rural conditions. "With that familiar universal touch of Jack London's, this book, while essentially Californian, applies and appeals to America, at large. We wonder that it has not been made a part of the curriculum at the agricultural colleges. It is worth dozens of lectures some times delivered to students."

"Why isn't 'The Valley of the Moon' the 'Great American Novel'?" a correspondent wanted to know. "It lets light in upon the question of why the old American stock is dying out. The ignorant, unlettered foreigners, Italians, Japanese, Scandinavian, and the rest, crowd out the good old American, because the American will not, for one thing, if he can help it, live the way the foreigner does. And because, also, the American will not use his head for the improvement of the land. Result, the carcass of the good old superior American fertilizes his own land for the crowding, thrifty, crafty foreigner."

That one man is more fit than another to become a law giver, Jack London has laid down in "The Bones of Kahekili," written five months before he died, one of seven stories in "On the Makaloa Mat." The old Hawaiian commoner asks:

"Here is something stronger than life, stronger than woman, but what is it — and why?" And Jack, over and above his personal desire and sacrifices toward the masses, speaks his unwilling but inevitable conclusion through the mouth of Hardman Pool:

"It is because most men are fools, and therefore must be taken care of by the few men who are wise. Such is the secret of chiefship. In all the world are chiefs over men. In all the world that has been have there ever been chiefs, who must say to the many fool men: Do this; do not do that. Work, and work as we tell you, or your bellies will remain empty and you will perish. . . . You must be peace-abiding and decent, and blow your noses. You must be early to bed of nights, and up early in the morning to work if you would have beds to sleep in and not roost in trees like the silly fowls. This is the reason for the yam-planting and you must plant now. We say now, to-day, and not picnicking and hulaing to-day and yam-planting to-morrow or some other day of the many careless days. . . . All this is life for you, because you think but one day at a time, while we, your chiefs, think for you all days and far days ahead."

And the old man: "Yes, it is sad that I should be born a common man and live all my days a common man."

To which Hardman Pool: "That is because you were of yourself common. When a man is born common, and is by nature uncommon, he rises up and overthrows the chiefs and makes himself chief over the chiefs. Why do you not run my ranch, with its many thousands of cattle, and shift the pastures by the rainfall, and pick the bulls, and arrange the bargaining and selling of the meat to the sailing ships and war vessels and the people who live in the Honolulu houses, and fight with lawyers, and help make laws, and even tell the King what is wise for him to do and what is dangerous? Why does not any man do this that I do? Any man of all the men who work for me, feed out of my hand, and let me do their thinking for them? — me, who works harder than any of them, who eats no more than any of them, and who can sleep on no more than one lauhala mat at a time like any of them?"

"I am out of the cloud . . ." the old man says. "We are the careless ones of the careless days who will not plant the yam in season if our alii does not compel us, who will not think one day for ourselves. . . .

There were timely trips into the interior — Sacramento, Modesto, and to the University of California stock farm at Davis. Eliza Shepard went along further to imbibe and abet the game her brother wanted to play; and Jack came speedily to accept her judgment in the selection of livestock, for her choices came to be the prize-winners at State and County fairs.

A concrete-block silo, twelve feet in diameter, the first of two, and the first of their kind in California, was rising half a hundred feet into the air near the old cowbarns. Jack put his own and his neighbors corn into the first silo that was finished, and neglected his writing to take a hand in the fascinating work of feeding the cutter. Houseguests

and servants alike were unable to keep out of the busy scene, and remained to help. Their host boasted: “No material comes up the hill except cement. My own machinery has done the crushing of the rock that my own tools and dynamite have got out of my own land, and that my own draft animals have hauled. My own mixer has made the mortar. My ten-inch drain-tile for the alfalfa fields yonder, has been made right here on the ground. And all this paraphernalia will build a dam at the mouth of that natural sink up-mountain, to impound 7,000,000 gallons of water for irrigation. And think of the pressure for fire protection!”

The “piggery” which Jack invented, and which was built during our fall Roamer cruise, became famous the world over, not only among farmers but with curious lay men as well. Entirely of rock and concrete, it is on a circular plan, surrounding, with graveled driveway between, a handsome tower wherein feed is mixed and distributed to the “suites” of apartments, with their individual runways, that came to house, first, the white Ohio Improved Chester hogs, and later, Jack’s choice of what he deemed a sturdier breed for our climate, the red Duroc Jerseys. A system of flushing and antiseptizing both here and in the barns, rendered premises and vicinity “sweet as a nut,” to quote an English visitor who lately registered in the tower guest-book. Crowning a knoll for perfect drainage, surrounded by blossomy madroño trees with bark like Korean red lacquer and glossy leaves so resembling the magnolia, this farm yard “sermon in stone” is an object of distinct beauty.

Jack had conceived the idea of demonstrating that he could restore exhausted grainfields by a system of terracing on a large scale — in his own words, “farming on the level.”

“You increase the organic content by levelling, preventing the destructive erosive effects that draw from it the organic content — so that instead of one-tenth of one meager crop a year you can grow three rich crops a year.

“The hillsides are first ploughed along contour lines, and at intervals, depending on the slope of the land, balks, or small ridges, are thrown up. The process is slow, but its advantages from the start are great. Rains are held back to sink into the soil instead of rushing down the hillsides, tearing out great gullies and carrying rich soil down the streams to the ocean. . . . We have been letting our rich hillsides go to waste, and by ignorant cultivation have increased erosion rather than prevented it. The method I have outlined will restore even impoverished hillsides and turn them into productive fields.”

A dozen acres of old French prune trees were brought up to standard; vineyards, once famous, that had gone too long neglected, were uprooted and given over to barley; and the barley was planted with inoculated vetch.

Beehives, likewise ducks, pigeons, geese, chickens, and a few pheasants, made their appearance on the Hill place as a side issue.

I heard Jack say that “the best blocks of vineyard did not have more than seventy-five percent, of the vines standing when I took over the ranch. In some cases three out

of every five vines were missing." But in time he had those "best blocks" yielding as formerly.

And here are his intentions with regard to fertilizing:

"The Chinese have farmed for forty centuries without using commercial fertilizer. I am rebuilding worn-out hillside lands that were worked out and destroyed by our wasteful California pioneer farmers. I am not using commercial fertilizer. I believe the soil is our one indestructible asset, and by green manures, nitrogen-gathering cover crops, animal manures, rotation of crops, proper tillage and draining, I am getting results which the Chinese have demonstrated for forty centuries.

"We are just beginning to farm in the United States. The Chinese knew the how but not the why. We know the why, but we're dreadfully slow getting around to the how."

Before long this modern husbandman had revolutionized the sleepy neighborhood, to say nothing of his employes upon whom he sprung timesheets, rigorously insisting that these be properly filled in each night. "Any man who isn't willing to give an account of his work and time, is welcome to go down hill," was Jack's ultimatum.

A blacksmith in the village went out of business. Jack relieved him of the entire establishment, which was in stalled in one of our cool winery buildings, pleasantly shaded by a "spreading chestnut tree," while a horseshoer and general blacksmith was added to the payroll. The village thought little about the transaction until a paper in a rival community came out with: "Good boy, Jack! Why not make another trip with your wagon and take the rest of Glen Ellen up to the ranch?"

Then and always, when asked "What do you call your place?" the owner replied, "The Ranch of Good Intentions." Develop it as he might, it seemed to remain only in its merest beginning, in view of his ultimate hopes.

An old neighbor, whose boundaries carve sharply into our property, often suggested that Jack buy him out, lock, stock, and barrel. "But there are too many buildings on your place, for one thing," Jack would object. "It would cost too much to demolish them!" But once he said: "If I ever do buy the Wegener place, I'll turn it over, buildings and all, to my intellectual hobo friends. The community would wax, and oh, my!" As he had written to Anna:

"Some day I shall build an establishment, invite them all, and turn them loose upon one another. Such a mingling of castes and creeds and characters could not be duplicated. The destruction would be great!"

It has always been a sadness to me how, as before hinted, Jack's most intimate acquaintances, given every opportunity to view the magnitude of his interest in agriculture, without exception discounted the importance of it to him, and vice versa. In all the memorial gatherings met so generously after his passing, it never entered the mind of a single friend to whom Jack had expounded his dear ambition, to make mention of the great book he had begun to write upon the mountain fields. I, aghast at the vital omission, protested, and appealed to the lovers of his memory not to forget.

The explanation dawned upon me before ever it was put in words by one, a sociologist, who had no inkling of the bearing of agronomy upon economics:

"You see, Jack's agriculture did not impress me as it should have done — probably because I have no interest in agriculture."

In September we made our first visit to the State Fair at Sacramento. Jack was averse to showing his own stock, holding that putting an animal in "show condition" was a harmful process. His presence at the Fair was for the purpose of getting in touch with "the other fellow" to see what he was doing in the matter of raising draft horses, beef cattle and hogs.

It was during this absence Jack told me that at intervals for months past he had had warning flutters in the region of the heart that gave him sudden moments of foreboding. "Haven't you noticed that I have got into the habit of laying my palm over my heart!" he asked. "I didn't realize I was, until I happened to catch myself at it." He also told me that there had been no report, after an examination by their physician, from a certain life insurance firm to whom he had applied some time back for an additional policy. I, to offset the tremor of my own heart at his intelligence, eliminated one reason after another for his condition, and finally asked if it might be laid to his excessive cigarette inhaling. But he did not take to the diagnosis. After a couple of years the symptoms disappeared.

In mid-October we "joy-sailed on the good, old, dear, and forever dear Roamer," to quote her skipper, spending one of our most care-free seasons, with the resilience that fortunate souls exhibit after an excess of work and emotional endurance. From my diary: "Let's look at the chart we've sailed off," says Jack at two p. m., after our exciting run in a howling norther. Things broke; we missed stays twice on one tack, and went aground in the glistening tules, that were laid flat by the wind. Spouting surf on lee shores. A big scow aground. Ducks flying low. Sierras white with snow, and Mt. Diablo and its range clear-cut sapphire. We did not have a ribbon of canvas on the Roamer except three-reefed spanker and our dandy jib. She eats right up into the wind with that big jib.

In spite of all that has happened this year, Jack reviewed, surveying water and sky with calm, sure eyes, "somehow it seems now as if it has been one of my hap piest — at least, when I think what I have started on the Beauty Ranch! — At any rate, he finished, pulling the old Tam over his fore-top, "there has been no boredom in it all — no danger of rusting."

One morning in the midst of his work he burst out:

"I'm going to live a hundred years!"

"Yes? Why?"

"Because I want to!"

"It's a good reason — couldn't be bettered. But let me remind you that you're likely to become a widower!"

That is a consideration, reaching for me. "I'll have to think it over!"

New York; Mexico; Roamer

VOLUME II – CHAPTER XXXVII 1914

FOR us, ending one year and beginning another aboard ship was the acme of good fortune. The holidays, spent partly ashore while the cook remained to guard the Roamer where she lay moored to one city wharf or another, were full of cheer. The "Porchclimber" episode settled, our future looked brighter, though Jack remarked more than once: "I'm riding to a fall, financially; but I'm not worrying — you've never yet seen me stay down long. I'll work harder than ever!"

Our New Year was ushered in at the Saddle Rock restaurant. Two nights before Christmas, with a big southeaster blowing, Jack and Nakata got me into an evening gown aboard the yacht where she rolled at Lombard Street wharf in San Francisco, then rowed me to a float, from which we mounted to water-front street and taxi, to attend the house-warming of friends uptown. In the early hours we were back, and casting off, on the way to Sausalito. A terrific ebb was running, and Jack breathed a sigh of relief when he had his vessel safely clear of the docks and speeding on the ebb, before the gale, under a little shred of a reefed jigger. When, not far from Sausalito, we ran into the great run-out that tears down through Raccoon Straits to the Golden Gate, it seemed as if the tiny yawl could not possibly make it across. Jack, in his most congenial element, was on the pinnacle of exhilaration. And in fifty-five minutes the thirty-foot craft, under that rag of canvas, had made a passage that regularly takes the huge screw-ferryboats thirty-five.

Threading his way among the tossing sloops and schooners and motor boats at anchor off the yacht clubs at Sausalito, Jack navigated over the mud flats, well on the way into Mill Valley, where in the falling tide he laid the Roamer in the mud and went to sleep for the afternoon, upon his lips the contented murmur, "This is the Life! We've got all others skinned to death, Mate!" The next day, Christmas, Nakata rowed us to a railroad station on the shore, and we dined with friends in Mill Valley. And on the 26th we were cruising once more.

While lying off Point Richmond, Jack developed an earache, and with bandaged head called upon a doctor. In no time the dailies came out with an exciting story of how, in a blow, Jack London had been knocked senseless by the mainboom, while his wife bravely and cleverly brought the vessel to safe anchorage! Jack was aggrieved out of all apparent proportion to the matter; but the reason was that he so especially prided himself upon never having unseamanlike accidents.

He became interested in Richmond real estate to the extent of buying a lot, thereby branding himself as a "booster" for the new harbor subdivision of the Ellis Landing and Dock Company.

Just as we began congratulating ourselves that certain hindrances had been overridden, and upon the general outlook for the New Year, fresh trouble broke that necessitated Jack's jumping out for New York within twenty-four hours, leaving the yacht at San Rafael, where the ill news had found us looking over ground familiar to our

childhood. There was much I must attend to at home owing to the suddenness of his departure, and so our first long separation took place.

"While I'm straightening out this snarl, I can be looking into other details that need attention, such as advances from the publishers," Jack reminded me. "I'll be having good news for you soon, I hope." He often arranged for advances, either in bulk, or in monthly payments, upon contemplated work.

The "snarl," which took him over a month to smooth out, was with reference to dramatic rights in one of his novels. An old friend had held these rights for some years without having made a successful showing. Moving pictures had never been considered in the days Jack had signed contracts for speaking performances, and there were men who tried to befog the issue; hence it behooved Jack, now interested in cinema productions, to clear his way of misunderstanding.

But his friend had entered into a dramatic contract for a production of the novel in question, and borrowed money against future box office receipts, which later did not appear to be imminent. The agent was willing to release the playwright, but to the tune of forty thousand dollars. Jack, appalled by the ridiculous sum, bent all his powers to beat down the "robber." It took him four weeks, and in the end he resorted to what he called his "play acting" to bring about the signing of a "decent" release of the rights. Early in the combat, I would have this sort of message: "Outlook dark," or "Situation ticklish," or "Nothing good to write." But his old unnatural condition when in New York seemed to be absent.

"To hell with New York," he wrote in the midst of this and other difficulties that beset. "I am here to master this Babylon and its sad cave-dwellers, not to be mastered!"

Later: "Hereafter, either before or after Roamer winter trip, my impression is that you and I will spend a month in New York."

One night in a triple collision of taxicabs, he came near losing his life. A certain manager of burlesque had taken him to the playhouse, and afterward introduced him to the leading lights, three of whom the two men undertook to escort to their homes. When the cars crashed Jack found himself at the bottom of the heap of kindling-wood that had been his cab, his mouth full of glass, and with a sense of suffocation, since the other four passengers contributed to the weight. Aside from minor cuts and bruises, the party escaped uninjured, and in some way avoided revealing their identity, so that the newspaper clippings Jack sent lacked all names. The theatrical man longed to have the event featured with "scare-head" lines, for the advertisement of his star, but Jack would have none of it.

"I'd have looked well," he grumbled to me, "with the report flashed all over the country that I'd been 'joy-riding' with a bunch af actresses! — — I've never been joy-riding in my life," he teased; but I'm going some time, for I'll never be satisfied until I come home to you with a pink-satin slipper in my pocket!"

Whatever else Jack London did or did not do in New York City, he always spent much time upon the theatres. About this time he enthusiastically applauded the idea of the Little Theatre, and hoped that San Francisco would take up the idea. Some time

before the breaking of the Great War, friends were promulgating a widely ramified plan for a new opera house and conservatory in San Francisco, and Jack made regular contributions to the promoters. So far, nothing has come of it.

Having succeeded in obtaining a "decent" release of the dramatic rights in his book, and made some very satisfactory agreements for New York, he wired: "General future never looked brighter."

A word as to the "play-acting" which caused the "robber" to throw up his hands, or, rather put his hand to the signing of the "decent release." Jack, partly as a whim, partly in order to compose undisturbed, had hidden himself in a notorious hostelry of the "theatrical tenderloin." When he had telephoned to his publisher to send his money, that person cried out, "Great Scott, man! What are you doing in a house like that! I'll have to bring it myself!"

Jack decided to inveigle the enemy into his room. He endeavored to turn the tables, but Jack, pleading indisposition, also that he was too rushed to come out, since he must leave for California sooner than he had planned, contrived to gain the other s consent to call at an early forenoon hour. He then prepared the stage and made up for the impish part he intended to play:

"You should have seen me," he giggled, "I was a sight to throw the fear of God into any highwayman of his feather. I had sized him up, you see.

"For two days I purposely let my beard grow, and you know how black it comes out. I opened my pajama-coat so that the mat of hair showed on my chest. And of course I left out my upper teeth, mussed up my head and wore an eyeshade. I was not pretty.

"So, when the clerk 'phoned up that he was below, I said, 'Send him right up.' He answered, 'he's stepped outside.' Outside,' says I, 'what for?' I don't know he said he'd wait for you there. Tell him, I ordered, That I'm in bed, and can't come down."

"Well, when his tap came, I sat up in bed, and the high-arm chair I had placed for him had its back to the door so that if he tried to escape me he'd be in an awkward position getting out of his chair to do it. — — It sounds awful, I can see from your face, Mate, Jack interpolated. "But remember, I had wrestled for weeks with him. He had even agreed to my figures and terms, and promised to send me the release, and then I would wait for days without a word, marking time, when I wanted to go home. It was my sheer whimsey to bring him to his senses in this fantastic way. My God! It was ten thousand times more legitimate than his slimy methods and those of his kind!

"To get back. He came in, trying not to look queer when he saw the object I was — haggard from the dark growth on my chin and neck, hair showing on my chest, and a ghastly toothless smile of welcome! In his hand was the document, which I took from him and glanced over. And every little while I looked aside to one or the other of my fists, as if gloating over them. As I talked with him without appearing to study him I took in his sick, scared face and soul. He'd have given anything not to have got himself into that chair.

“And then, I went over the whole business again, all we had talked in our many interviews, and he finally consented to release for a tithe of his original claims. He said:

“‘I’ll go right to my office to make the change, and send you the agreement immediately.’

“I had waited for just that, and didn’t mean that he should elude me again. Said I:

“‘You’ll sign that paper right here on that table, before you leave this room!’ — and when he protested, I went on, closing and unclosing my fists, to tell him just exactly what I would do to him if he refused. He looked this way and that, at the telephone, and half around at the door, and knew his situation for precisely what I had made it. He signed the release and left it with me. . . . And as it is, it will take me months to pay him, month by month.

A little ill news greeted Jack’s return — the best young shorthorn bull had broken his neck, and hog cholera had carried off nearly all his blooded hogs.

“I always seem to have to build twice — everything I undertake,” Jack said thoughtfully.

In his workroom again, The Little Lady of the Big House was begun, in which were exploited his maturing concepts on farming and stockbreeding. Many readers take for granted that the “Big House” was copied from Jack’s Wolf House. As a matter of fact, a picture of Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst’s home at Pleasanton, California, was roughly the model for that of his hero and heroine on an imaginary ranch in the interior foothills.

Margaret Smith Cobb, a poet of the northern California forest country, whose verse Jack had been the means of placing with eastern magazines, sent me the fragmentary thoughts given below. Jack, to whom I forwarded them, commented: “The poem is most sweet, most beautiful, most true. Tell Margaret Cobb the same, for me. I care not to utter another word on that sad topic.”

“Love, let us wander, you and I,
Where but charred embers and pale ashes lie;
Here where my dreams and fancies took still shape,
In all their glory, laid in wood and stone.
* * * * * *
Here, blow thy kisses, many, for a stair,
That we may rise where was thy line of rooms — —
Rooms for thyself alone — we had them thus,
Where none might enter but the moon and I.
Dear love, the smoke is yet about my heart,
The crackle of the fire yet sears my brain.
— You will be kind, and dream and care no more,
Nor sorrow for what was my house of dreams.”

About this time it was rumored that the Prohibitionists wanted to nominate Jack London for President. He, when asked about it, gave his usual breezy consent: “Sure — I’ll run for anything, if it will help, especially if there’s no chance of my being elected!”

A grapejuice company was formed for the manufacture, on a large scale, of the incomparable unfermented drink that we were already pressing, from wine grapes, for our own table. Jack was elated over the prospect. It created a new market for his ranch product, and by the same effort furthered the cause of prohibition. He drank regularly of the clear, natural juice that bore so little resemblance to the commercial article that smacks of stewed fruit.

"Government recipe, my dear, government recipe!" he would gurgle, holding his little glass to the light. "Free advice to every one — and they wonder how I find out these things!"

There was crookedness in the grapejuice company, as there had been in the past year's ventures. Jack, who had no money in this, only his name, was ultimately sued for $41,000; but the case never came to trial.

With travel in his eye, Jack had been plotting to convince an eastern weekly of the value of a series of articles on all the world, and there was talk of having him begin with Japan. I was joyous at the prospect of realizing our old hope to visit those fascinating isles together. But the Mexican fracas in the spring of 1914 came in between and the other articles never were undertaken. Hearst had asked Jack the preceding autumn if he would go to Mexico in case trouble broke. When the time came, there was some disagreement upon the price, and Jack went for Collier's instead. This constituted no infringement of his fiction contract, so long as he delivered the appointed measure of the fiction.

"And now," he said, hopefully, "I may be able to redeem myself as a war correspondent, after what I was held back from doing by the Japanese Army!"

If he had been able to foretell how slim was the chance of attaining his wish, he would not have gone. As it was, Collier's wired to know how long it would take him to make ready to start for Galveston, Texas, should they telegraph him to go. "Twenty-four hours," was the response. Came the bombardment of the Naval Academy at Vera Cruz, and on April 16 the summons arrived. We left Glen Ellen the next morning, and Oakland the same afternoon.

"I'll see you on your way as far as Galveston," ventured I, taking for granted that Galveston would be the end of my journey.

"You can't get ready in time!" Jack said, but with a bright expectancy that was balm to my apprehension, for I had not been enthusiastic about his going under fire.

"Oh, can't I!" and out came the trunks.

"Well," he paused from his own preparations to gladden my heart, "if you get that far, maybe we can get you to Vera Cruz at least — even if you have to stay there when we go on march to the City of Mexico."

Shortly before leaving, Jack handed me a copy of "The Valley of the Moon," inscribed:

"Dear My-Woman:

“This is our ‘Book of Love,’ here in our ‘Valley of the Moon,’ where we have lived and known our love ever since that day you rode with me to the divide of the Napa hills — Ay, and before that, before that.”

It was at Galveston that Richard Harding Davis in the second instance rendered Jack London a service. Several days had passed, the date of departure with General Frederick Funston was nearing, and all the other correspondents who were to accompany him on the transport Kilpatrick had received their credentials from Washington and were gaily making ready. Jack’s alone seemed to be withheld, for Edgar Sisson, editor of Collier’s, kept wiring Jack to the effect that he was not to worry — everything would reach him in time.

On the morning of the transports’ sailing-date, I was shocked from sleep and upon my feet by a burst of martial music that led a host of men in olive-drab who marched, with brave, ominous sound, along the sea-wall drive. Jack joined me at the window and silently we watched the stream of human life go down to the gulf in ships. Although thrilling to the spectacle, Jack could not forget, and quoted from Le Gallienne’s “The Illusion of War”: “‘War,

I abhor,
And yet how sweet
The sound along the marching street
Of drum and fife, and I forget
Wet eyes of widows, and forget
Broken old mothers, and the whole
Dark butchery without a soul.’“

As the morning wore, and still no word from Washington, we became genuinely concerned. Before others, Jack preserved a careless demeanor; but when he looked into my eyes I saw in his the baffled, pained expression that he must have worn in childhood.

“I can’t understand it, I can’t understand it,” he puzzled. “Each time I’ve called on General Funston, his aide has courteously put me off. I know the General is not well, with that abscess in his ear, poor devil; but that isn’t the reason. So there seems to be simply nothing I can do.”

“I don’t care for myself,” he would reiterate. “I want to make good to Sisson, whose idea it was for me to go for Collier’s. I don’t want to throw him down.” Presently, having dictated to me his final letters, and sent off his Article I to Collier’s, he disappeared downstairs, murmuring:

“‘And even my peace-abiding feet
Go marching down the marching street,
For yonder, yonder goes the fife,
And what care I for human life !
And yet tis all unbannered lies,
A dream those little drummers make.’“

An hour passed, and I thought to reconnoitre in the lobby. Emerging from the elevator, my heart leaped to see Jack and the General's aide, Lieutenant Ball, each grasping the other by both hands, and laughing like schoolboys too pleased for words.

"Why, Mate," Jack explained as we hurried upstairs to put the last touches to his packing, "it's all up to Richard Harding Davis. He came to me and said he wondered if I knew what was going on. You remember that so-called 'Good Soldier' canard that was attributed to me? It has turned up again. As soon as Davis mentioned it, I could see the whole trouble in a flash. We looked up Lieutenant Ball, and — well, you saw us when you came down. Funny how pleased he was to get the thing cleared up!"

At luncheon, our table was near that of the General. He and his aide were consulting earnestly; and after a while the Lieutenant came toward us. Jack rose, and the two returned to the General.

I gave him my word of honor that I did not write a line of that canard," Jack reported to me, "and upon that word he takes the responsibility of adding me to his already filled quota of correspondents. It seems that he had had word from Washington that my going was left up to him, but he, personally, was up in arms about the canard."

Next, a telegram came from Secretary Josephus Daniels that if Jack could not be accommodated on the transport, he should go on one of the convoying destroyers. "And that would be an experience new to me, too," Jack exulted. But a place was shaken down on the Kilpatrick, on which he sailed Friday afternoon. Any regrets that I may have felt at my inability to accompany him were tempered by the fact that I expected to depart twenty-four hours later, and to meet him on the very date of his arrival in Vera Cruz. This was made possible by our good friend Mr. Robert T. Burge, who had proffered me passage on a vessel of the Gulf Coast Steamship Company, of which he was President.

"I'm only too glad to present you with a ticket," he smiled, "but for goodness' sake, don't go. The steamers are not suitable for ladies' travel. . . . But go if you really must!"

Never shall I forget that evening the little old Atlantis (wrecked the next voyage) approached Vera Cruz. Across the mighty slopes of the storied land, Orizaba towered blue against a sunset sky; and to the south were raised the turrets of the "far-flung battle line" of our own Navy, its smoke mingling with the low tropic clouds. " War, I abhor, and yet — " that has nothing to do, per se, with just valuation of the magnificent machinery invented by brain of man. One of Jack's Mexican articles, in want of real war news, was devoted to what he saw at Tampico's oil-fields. Certain radical contemporaries raged against him, and one, a noted socialist writer, accused him publicly of having been subsidized by the oil interests — subsidized! Jack London! None but a stupid, or at best a warped creature, it would seem to those who knew him, could seriously conceive such a thing.

"Me! subsidized?" Jack stormed, "My worst capitalist enemies have done me the honor to know better than that. Why, no human being has ever dared even to hint subsidization to me, thank God!"

Here again, friend and enemy were like to convict him of paradox. Few could comprehend that universality which made him grasp the whole through all its parts. While decrying war, he could at the same time appreciate the romantic majesty of conquest, hail the bunting of great armadas, respect the courage and deeds of men who battled according to their lights. I have seen him almost weep over the exploits of British admirals and fearless midshipmen of old. "Look!" he would cry, following me with a dusty tome in his hands, "Listen to this, and this . . . this is the sort of stuff that went into the making of you, white woman, and me, and all of us who conquer ourselves and our environment!" In order to preserve a clear view of Jack, it must be held in mind that despite the warm human emotionalism of him he always came to rest upon his intellectual conceptions.

Achievement, to him, was achievement, though he saw all around and under it. "I take off my hat to it," he would say, whether inspecting the Culebra Cut, or the Harbor of Pago Pago, or the oil fields of Tampico, or the bene ficial organization thrown into Vera Cruz by the army and navy. "If only the whole world could be made so clean and orderly," he said. "If such cleanliness and order could emanate, not from the idea of militarism, but as a social achievement. Let us not wantonly destroy these wonderful machines, these great world assets, that produce efficiently and cheaply. Let us control them. Let us profit by their efficiency and cheapness."

Upton Sinclair, commending upon Jack's detractors, made no mistake:

"He wrote a series of articles that caused certain radicals to turn from him in rage. But I felt certain that the exponent of capitalist efficiency who counted upon Jack London's backing was a child playing in a dynamite factory. . . . If a naval officer took him over a battleship, he would perceive that it was a marvelous and thrilling machine; but let the naval officer not forget that in the quiet hours of the night Jack London's mind would turn to the white-faced stokers, to whom as a guest of an officer he had not been introduced!"

While decrying war, in time of danger Jack said: "Although I am a man of peace, I carry an automatic pistol. I might meet somebody who would not listen to my protestations of friendship and amity. And so with nations — we're a long way from universal disarmament. The most peaceful nation to-day is likely to run up against some other nation that does riot want peace. It would look as if we shall need armies for a weary while to come, to enforce the idea of peace."

He appeared to be surprised at the personnel of the army and its officers. I must confess that my own general idea of the hard-bitten "regular" underwent a revelation. The rank and file were of a youthful and mostly blond Anglo-Saxon type. I noticed also that Jack was pleased to find many of the officers of both army and navy less "machinely crammed" than he had thought, quite able to stand on their own feet when it came to up-to-date, independent thinking. Jack held that the world would have no more big wars for a long time. "There will be wars, at one time or another," he believed. "You can't change man entirely from the primitive, fighting animal he is. But I do not

think we of to-day shall see a big war. The nations are enlightened enough to stop short of that, and arbitrate their differences." I borrow this from The Human Drift:

"War is passing. It is safer to be a soldier than a workingman. The chance for life is greater in an active campaign than in a factory or a coal mine. In the matter of killing war is growing impotent, and this in the face of the fact that the machinery of war was never so expensive in the past nor so dreadful. . . . War has become a joke. Men have made for themselves monsters of battle which they cannot face in battle. Not only has war, by its own evolution, rendered itself futile, but man himself, with greater wisdom and higher ethics, is opposed to war."

But his uniformed acquaintances, sitting in the portales of the old Diligencias Hotel, sipping Bacardi rum cocktails, disagreed:

"Germany will start something before a great while — see if she doesn't. And she's dying to get her hands on the United States."

For once, Jack was a poor prophet.

Aside from his old associates of Jap-Russ memories — E. H. Davis, "Jimmy" Hare, "Bobbie" Dunn, Frederick Palmer there were present in Vera Cruz the veteran war artist, Zogbaum, and Reuterdhal, who incidentally made a Collier" cover from a sketch of Jack; J. B. Connolly, whom we had met in Boston; Burge McFall (Associated Press); John T. McCutcheon; Arthur Ruhl, Vincent Starrett, Stanton Leeds, Oliver Madox Hueffer from London, and Mrs. Dean, the "Widow" of the New York Town Topics. And from Mexico City, Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Murray, representing the New York World. There were others, whose names escape me.

Jack was not the only correspondent who chafed under the restraint imposed upon the army in Mexico; nor did the six weeks in that country strengthen his already weak regard for the Latin American. When the report came that Huerta had slipped out of Puerta Mexico to the south, the whole force was personally in mutinous humor with sitting inactive. Several of the newspapermen broke parole and made their precarious way to the capital, where some of them landed in prison. Jack had declined to go, saying he did not feel it was fair to General Funston. But later on he mitigated the control he had put upon himself, and sailed on the Mexicana for Tampico, the round-trip cover ing a week. He would not hear of my going to share any possible nip-and-tuck hazard. Realizing that I would be in his way, I did not urge, but remained, with Nakata, at the hotel. Jack charged me, in case orders should come for the army to march for Mexico City, to buy him a horse, and have all in readiness for him to go when he should jump back from Tampico. He also had me wait upon the good General, to discover if Nakata, being Japanese, might go along in such event. This the General did not think advisable; so I kept alert for some other man.

"If there is any advice you need, Mate," Jack adjured me, "any help at any time, apply to Richard Harding Davis." Which clinched what he thought of the "white man" who had so staunchly declined to see a brother correspondent labor under disadvantage. Davis died shortly before Jack; and six days before Jack's death, I heard him deliver an impassioned encomium on Davis as a man. There being no military action about

which to write, Jack employed himself turning out articles upon general observations and conditions as he saw them. For recreation, there were horseback rides and drives within the proscribed radius; swims at Los Baños; dinners and luncheons aboard the fleet or with the officers of army and navy ashore; shopping for laces, Mexican blankets, serapes and opals; visits to the little provost court where the natives gaped at a kindly dispensation of justice beyond all their conception; dancing in patios along the portales of the hotels; bull fights — General Funston watched these carefully, and allowed no horses in the ring. Aboard the Solace, the hospital ship, we found the wounded boys reading J. B. Connolly and Jack London, and forgetful of suffering in their pleasure at meeting the authors.

Those broken boys were forerunners of the thousands from all classes, one in pain and purpose, for whom in the hospitals of Europe Jack was to fill so many needs. "There, in hospital," wrote one, "I read Burning Daylight . . . then the doctor sent me to Blighty. There I left Burning Daylight — in the midst of volumes neat and clean and new, damp-stained and broken-backed, I left it . . ." And from our friend Major Harry Strange, at the Front: "I always knew somewhat, and Jack taught me more, and war has quite convinced me, that the only happiness and joy worth while is in service, good, big, noble, brave-hearted service." The Tommies called Jack's books "the Jacklondons"; and one of them, a hot-hearted young Celt, wrote me from Dublin: "I only know that the man who comprehends as he did is always right, and that every one else is wrong." Which voices my own conviction. Again I listen to Jack's appeal: "Be patient with me in the little things; I am really patient in the big ones — I have not winced nor cried aloud." And whereas he might be hasty in little things and little judgments, upon the big issues of mankind and of his own affairs in relation to mankind, he laid a divining finger that could not touch other than wisely and rightly.

There were visits to San Juan de Ulua, with its spew of filthy, dehumanized prisoners, whom, with their unthinkable dungeons, our navy cleansed and deodorized. Some of these unfortunates had no faintest notion as to what, if any, offense had condemned them to that living burial below sea level. Others recited haltingly the most trivial of incidents that had doomed them to exist for years without standing-room or light.

"Pretty awful, isn't it? — But don't forget, Mate," Jack, who never forgot anything, would point out, "that we ourselves aren't half-civilized yet, in our treatment of convicts. Also, there's such a thing as railroad still existing in the land of the free!"

All this time, busy working and playing in Vera Cruz, waiting while Washington held the army and navy bound in port, Jack, according to rumor in the capitalist press of the United States, was leading a band of insurrectos somewhere in the north of Mexico! Rumor, did I say? The large headlines read:

JACK LONDON LEADS ARMY OF MEXICO REBELS.

That some one was making use of his name, however, seems probable; for later on we heard of persons who had met "Jack London" in Mexico and in Lower California. And an American firm dealing in artist's materials, waited for years for this or another spurious Jack London in Mexico to settle his account.

Whether Jack gathered the bacilli in Tampico, or whether General Maas' blockade that prevented the ingress of fresh food to the occupied town of Vera Cruz, combined with the hotel's filthy kitchen, was responsible, we shall never know. But on May 30, the day set for him to go up in an army aeroplane, instead he went to bed in our lately bullet-riddled room, with acute bacillary dysentery. Nakata and I took charge of the nursing, under the resident American physician, Dr. A. E. Goodman, in consultation with Major Williams. The latter wanted him to go into army hospital, but Jack seemed to prefer a woman nurse, being myself. Thereafter, every spoonful of water that passed his lips or was used in nursing, was first thoroughly boiled in our room by means of electric appliances, "Thanks to American efficiency," he groaned from his bed; and his food we cooked by the same process.

It was a desperate, cautious campaign against death, but as usual the patient managed by his uncommon recuperative powers to make a spectacular recovery. After a few days he insisted that I take the air with our friends, and upon my accepting dinner invitations in the portales below. "And be sure you don't stint yourself at the lace shops!" he would call after, with indulgent eyes. Or he would turn to greet a decayed Spanish gentleman who tip toed in, who must part with certain ornaments of coral and ancient gold filigree:

"Do you like it, Mate?" he would finger a bracelet or rosary. "If you do, say the word. A woman must have some loot of war, even if her husband has to buy it!"

Nine days after he was stricken, and with pleurisy to boot, he was able to go aboard the cattle transport Ossabaw, bound for Galveston. "If anything breaks in Vera Cruz, which I don't think likely, I can return, he said. "Meantime, me for the Ranch, where I can have white-man's climate and grub!"

"Do you know what are in the long boxes where those soldiers are sitting to play cards?" Jack pointed down to the main deck. And before I could gasp a reply, he finished:

"Those fellows were dead in four days of what I pulled through."

About this time occurred the riots in the hopfields at Wheatland, California, resulting from shocking conditions and treatment, and for once the high-handed methods of certain detectives had roused the ire of the public. Jack's opinion concerning this u death hole" was sought — indeed, looking over his clipping-books, I notice how frequently he was asked for his opinion upon widely variant subjects. I quote:

"The sheriff fired a shot in the air, and then, presto! it all happened at once. As a matter of fact, nobody knows what happened. I am willing to bet that if every one of these witnesses went before God Almighty and told, to the best of his recollection, no two would agree. It was the well-known crowd psychology on the job.

"These men were not organized. There was only one amongst the 2300 of them who held an I. W. W. card. They did not need organization. They had seen the cost of living soar and soar, their purchasing power grow less and less; they had all felt within them selves, 'Something must be done.' Above all, they have had force preached into them, pounded into them, from the beginning — by whom? The employers.

"The employers have always ruled the working class with force. One incident happened that is strangely typical. One of the Durst Brothers struck one of the leading workmen in the face. He said he did it 'facetiously.' Maybe he did; it isn't likely. But, facetious or not, that blow symbolized the whole relation between employer and employee. Where they do not actually strike blows, it is because they fear the blows will be struck back.

"Now, Sheriff Voss and District Attorney Manwell came on the scene not at all in the interest of equity, but in the interest of the employer. They were not there to see fair play; they were there to 'keep order.' The sheriff expected his shot in the air to cow them.

"Why didn't they cow? Simply because they are becoming more and more imbued with the belief that force is the only way. I look back over history and see that never has the ruling class relinquished a single one of its privileges except it was forced to.

"It is always the things we fight for, bleed for, that we care most for. This lesson of force is soaking into the workers — that's all." Another question upon which Jack's views were solicited was as follows: A grown man in the State of Illinois took advantage of a young girl, and was sentenced to thirty years in the penitentiary. A child being born, the young mother started a movement to free its father so that he might marry her for the sake of the child. Jack's answer to the Newspaper Enterprise Association is below:

"The world and civilization belong to the races that practice monogamy. Monogamy is set squarely against promiscuity. Wherefore monogamy, as the cornerstone of the state, demands a legal father for Vallie. Also the father and the mother of Vallie de sire to make their parenthood legal. Therefore the only logical thing for the state of Illinois to do is to make possible this legalization of Vallie's birth and parentage. Otherwise the State of Illin ois stultifies itself by kicking out the cornerstone of civilization on which it is found, namely, the family group that can exist only under monogamy."

No one could be more shaken than Jack, in July, by the beginning of war in Europe. And while he went on unremittingly with writing and ranch, the war was the undercurrent of every thought. More staunchly than ever before he reiterated his faith in England. "England is fighting her first popular war," he would say; and he could not for give Germany, over and above her sworn Frightfulness, for having been stupid enough to think that England would not fight.

But to any proposition bearing upon his presence in France as correspondent, he practically turned a deaf ear, in 1914 and thenceforward until he died.

"Again I say, the Japanese settled the war correspondent forever, by proving him non-essential. Look at Davis and the rest, some of the best in the world," he would indicate as the conflict widened. "Eating out their hearts over there. Not for me. If I went, I would be unable to get what I went after. I have learned my lesson. If I ever do go to this war, it will be to fight with England and her Allies. . . . Meantime, I have a lot of mouths to feed, and irons in the fire, and I could not leave with my affairs in their present shape."

Yet I knew that had there been the ghost of an opening for him to see what he wished, he would have managed to go.

He and Collier's corresponded upon the possibility, to find, in the end, that they agreed upon the matter. They wrote him:

"We learned . . . that of the twelve English correspondents chosen to join Sir John French's army not one has as yet been allowed the privilege, and the prospect seems that the thing has been indefinitely postponed. . . . The precariousness of the whole business of war correspondents at the present time seems to make it rather futile to put first-class men in the field, so to speak, and break their hearts by making it impossible for them to get anywhere of real importance. . . . We sent you a clipping some days ago which shows that finally all belligerents have decided to do away with correspondents. The result is that we can only get certain casual articles from roving writers of one sort or another with very little or real stuff from the front."

Exasperated with the way he felt the Mexican crisis had been mishandled at Washington, Jack grew more so with the failure of his own country, as time went on, to take a hand in the European crisis. The effect of all this was to stimulate his brain to more thinking, while at the same time he increased his work and plans for work in every direction.

When in June he gave me "The Strength of the Strong," the fly leaf reminded me of that in a book he had sent me the month before our marriage, in which was written: "The red gods call to us. We fling ourselves across the world to meet again and not to part." And here, nine years later, I found: "Back again from Vera Cruz, and all the world, you back with me from the war game, I am almost driven to assert that our little war game adventure was as sweet and fine as our first honeymoon."

In the Indian summer we rejoined the Roamer at San Rafael and spent months upon the big bay. The Exposition was rising from the water's edge and many the late afternoon we pulled up our fishing-lines where we lay off Angel Island, and sailed to where we could watch that dream city of domes and minarets in the flood of sunset rose and gold.

On December 8, Jack signed and dated the manuscript of "The Little Lady of the Big House," and began working up notes for the Grove Play, which the Bohemian Club had asked him to prepare for the 1916 High Jinks.

Return to Hawaii; Fortieth Year

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WANT to hear some of your husband's verse?" he queried with mock gravity, inking a period to his first morning's work upon "The Acorn Planter." "Come below, and listen how it runs along!"

He had much sport writing this thin little volume. But let no one mistake that he was not in dead earnest with regard to its motif. Far from attempting formal versification,

he but fixed more noticeably the runic tendency in earlier work which had dealt with the Younger World. When it was done and read aloud, he passed me the last slender sheaf to copy, sighing:

"I don't know what to think of it — and yet, I don't believe it is so bad! Good or bad, however, it is done; so send it along to the Secretary of the Bohemian Club. — One thing about it, though: I'll bet the composers in the Club are going to have merry hell putting music to it. They've done Indian stuff before now; but this goes too far back into the raw beginnings of the race, I fear. . . . Ready to cast off, Nakata?" And Jack sprang to the Roamer's wheel, and in fine disdain of wind and wave forgot "The Acorn Planter," and all its works.

It was for the very reason feared by Jack that the Grove Play was finally written by some one else. "The Acorn Planter" has never been enacted, but appeared in book-form in 1916. "And somehow, I like the little thing," he would say, passing his hand over it. "And now," he announced at nine the morning after it was finished," now for a dog-story. I just seem to have to write one every so often."

This was "Jerry," which was followed by a companion book, "Michael," as "The Call of the Wild" had preceded "White Fang." When, Jack gone beyond consulting, I was confronted with the dilemma of issuing "Jerry" simultaneously with a book of the same name from another house, I hit upon "Jerry of the Islands," with "Michael Brother of Jerry" to balance the sequel. Jack had planned, after bringing out both volumes, eventually to combine them under the title of "Jerry and Michael." I remember how he reveled in creating the Ancient Mariner.

"Michael," beneath its delightful romance and character portraiture, is frank propaganda for the stamping out of stage-training for animals. To this end, Jack had for years been quietly collecting data from every available source. No reader who would understand his motive should pass by the Preface of "Michael, Brother of Jerry," which states his views. Out of this book has grown a rapidly expanding, international organization known as The Jack London Club. There are no dues.

"Jerry" and "Michael" appeared duly in The Cosmopolitan Magazine, and the books were published in 1917 and 1918 respectively. "Jerry" was partly written in Hawaii.

Young friends in Stockton persuaded us to leave the yacht at anchor and join a week-end jaunt to Truckee, for the winter sports. There in the High Sierras we tobogganed and went on sleighing parties. A visit to the lake where the ill-starred Donner Party had made its last stand against odds, affected Jack — that frontier tragedy, with others of the brave old days, having always stirred his imagination. The skiing, while he watched it by the hour, and ice-skating, Jack would not attempt with his "smashed" ankles, which had been cramping at night. "Getting old, getting old," he would grit through his teeth while I manipulated the small feet. "Do you realize that your husband is in his fortieth year?"

Then he met "Scotty," otherwise Mr. J. H. Scott, champion dog-musher, with his prize teams of Malemutes and Siberian huskies, gee-pole sleds and all. Jack's pleasure knew no bounds because, forsooth, beyond all personal joy in renewing acquaintance

with the trappings of a wonderful phase in his youth, he could now show me the old way of the Northland. "Scotty" appreciated the situation, and we must drive with him. Two sleds swung up to the curb, one driven by Mr. Brady, and we took the novel airing for glistening miles to a neighboring mountain town — Jack behind the eight Malemutes, I drawn by the dozen lighter dogs, little chow-like things of fluff and steel, with plumy curled tails and the brightest, merriest eyes and manners in the world, ready to stampede the outfit any moment a rabbit hove above the white horizon.

"Gee! I wish it were possible to film 'The Call of the Wild,' Jack considered. "What good materials right here! But I don't see how it could be done — a dog hero would be necessary."

"How about your stage-training for animals?" I hinted. But he thought the "cruelty" would be negligible in preparing a dog, whose part at best could be but subsidiary.

"Remember," he worked it out, "a long time, in one place, with no harsh traveling conditions, would be taken to get the dog in shape. A few performances, at most, would do the trick, which is very different from the vaudeville circuit, my dear, where the animal is obliged, fair weather and foul, to go through the same act, often of most unnatural character, from two to four times a day, year in and year out."

Right here is a good place to make clear Jack London's position with regard to a much-mooted issue, that of vivisection. He subscribed to the use, not the abuse of vivi-section, approaching this subject, as all others, through the scientific avenue.

"No, I'll admit, I'd run a thousand miles rather than see a pet dog of mine cut up. But if it were a choice between having my dog or any dog experimented upon, and my child or any child, I'd say the dog every time."

Thus, he had little time to waste in argument with men and women who made claim that no benefit had been derived from vivisection, no human life saved by the conclusions therefrom. He considered that he knew better, what of the time he spent with the books.

"There will always be fanatics, and there will always be abuse, in any field of research," he would declare. "But the legitimate practice of vivisection should not be interfered with. It should be subject to inspection and control — but not by ignorant and prejudiced sentimentalists, who won't listen to the good features of a proposition, and who exaggerate the regretable."

There was something inimical working in Jack's blood those days. No sooner were we back on the Ranch, than the sporadic cramps were succeeded by an attack of rheumatism in one foot.

"And gaze out of that window, at the weather," he grieved, pointing from his bed to the streaming landscape. "Last winter there wasn't enough rain. This year we're swamped! God doesn't love the farmer! But the draintile is carrying off a lot of the overflow — things are working, things are working!" he cheered up.

Severe pyorrhea of long standing contributed its quota of poison; and, in his acid condition, his yachting fare of twelve-minute-roasted canvasback and mallard, and red-meated raw fish, was hazardous menu. He experimented with emetine, and had the

village doctor make tri-weekly calls at the Ranch to give him intramuscular hypodermic injections. Jack's mouth altered considerably in latter years, from loss of all upper teeth and wearing a plate. The upper lip, once full and narrowing to the deep corners, grew thinner and more straight of line. It was no less beautiful — merely different from the more youthful feature. Jack's face, at whatever age, breaking into smile of lips and eyes, was one that, once seen, was never forgotten. It is undying. It will persist as long as the life of any one who beheld it.

Before sailing for Honolulu on February 24, we made several trips to that loveliest of evanescent cities, the Pan-Pacific Exposition. Jack cared little, as a rule, for that sort of spectacle and amusement. But the sunset metropolis enfolded him in its golden embrace, charmed him into hours of unwonted idleness, through afternoon and blue twilight, listening to the fountains and watching the Tower of Jewels blossom against the starlit skies. One day I particularly recall, when we had arrived early and stepped into the human, holiday atmosphere that pervaded the vast inclosure.

"I never drove a car in my life," Jack threatened. "It's time I began. Woman, climb in!" What I was so summarily invited to climb into was one of the handy electric-driven wheel-chairs that rest many tired limbs. How we laughed; and how the morning strollers laughed with the enthusiastic, noisy boy with the cap and curls, who coaxed the feeble mechanism into doing his will, and when it would not respond, talked to it eloquently before dismounting and lifting it around. It was Jack London, any of you who joined in gayety with the exuberant boy that crisp California morning. Once, stalled momentarily in a geranium nursery behind the giant arbor that was the Horticultural Building, he stopped to admire the floral flames. He did not live to learn that one of them, a large crimson single variety, had been named for himself.

Going to Hawaii had been farthest from our thoughts that winter of 1915, and our decision was a result of the merest turn of events. Jack, beneath almost more than he could stagger, even with his large earnings, intended to stay close at home and work out his financial salvation under double pressure of work. The Cosmopolitan had offered release from his fiction contract long enough for him to accompany the Atlantic Fleet, carrying the President, on its jaunt through the Panama Canal to the Exposition. Jack's personal desire, or lack of desire to leave home, is expressed in his telegraphic reply:

"Glen Ellen, December 18, 1914.

"Don't want to go anywhere. Don't want to do anything except stay in California and write two dandy novels, the first of which I am now framing up. However, since I like to be as good to my friends as I like my friends to be good to me, I am willing to fall for the Panama adventure if it does not compel me to lose too much financially.

"European war has hit me hard financially, wherefore in view of fact that Panama trip is short enough not to prevent my delivering next year's serials on time, the primary stipulation is that regular check comes to Ranch every month, including the month in which I do Panama. Wire me full business details, dates, and amount of stuff I am expected to write. Should like several days in New York before sailing."

It was not for me to sail on the battleship, and while I accepted my feminine fate, I declined again to remain in California during an absence of Jack. "I shall go to Honolulu and join Beth," referring to my cousin, Beth Wiley, who was wintering here. "I can be in San Francisco for your return."

Jack, though outwardly falling in with my plan, I think was rather taken aback at the idea of his small woman going her own way, alone. It was amusing to note his restlessness. Not once but many times he would boil over.

"I don't want to go on that damned Panama trip — I want to go to Hawaii with you, and work on 'Jerry' and 'Michael!'" Or: "Somehow, I can't be content not to see the Islands again, with you."

The exigencies of the European conflict having made it necessary to call off the Fleet's Exposition voyage, Jack's voice rang with the good news:

"Look what I've got! And now, Mate Woman, I can go to Hawaii with you!"

But when, standing on the deck of the Matsonia, we waved farewell to our friends, he confessed:

"Do you know the true reason I am aboard this ship to-day? Because I could not bear to disappoint you — and incidentally myself. I ought not to go away, with all those important things needing my attention. But I just couldn't risk the sight of your face when I should tell you that you'd have to go alone after all!"

"But I wouldn't," said I, with a great relief that our feet were on the outward-bound planking. "I should have staid home, of course, where I belonged — and beside," I put in slyly, "if you had let business keep you home, it would be the first time! You've always been able to manage things from a distance, and the mails and cable facilities are still working."

"You're right," he acknowledged.

This and our next visit, as before written, are detailed in my book "Our Hawaii." In the 1921 edition, I have included three articles written by Jack in 1916, entitled "My Hawaiian Aloha," which one of the Territory's leading men pronounced "worth millions to the Islands."

We took our own servants and set up housekeeping, in the first instance on Beach Walk, whence we came and went on inter-island travels in the group. Our daily life in the pretty cottage included the same working habits as at home; and afternoons were spent on the beach. Each day, after luncheon, saw Jack, often robed in a blue kimono of bold design, carrying a long bag of similar fabric containing reading matter and cigarettes, with a bath-towel wound turban-wise around his head, soft-footing Kalia Road bound for the Outrigger Club. They were happy hours, lying on the shady sand among the barbaric black-and-yellow canoes, reading aloud, napping, and chatting with our friends. Later in the day we swam through and beyond the breakers and spent some of the most wonderful moments of our united lives floating in the deeper water where, in the swaying, caressing element, undisturbed betwixt sky and earth, all things lost their complicated aspect, and we talked simply and solemnly of the issues that count most in human relationship.

When “The Scarlet Plague,” written just before the baby was born, had been received, in it he wrote:

“My Mate-Woman:

“And here, in blessed Hawaii, eight years after our voyage here in our own speck boat, we find ourselves, not merely again, but more bound to each other than then or than ever.

In March he wrote a Preface for “The Cry for Justice,” by Upton Sinclair.

The following letter, written on June 3, is interesting:

“Dear Cloudesley:

“In reply to yours of May 15. First of all, whatever you do, read Conrad’s latest — VICTORY. Read it, if you have to pawn your watch to buy it. Conrad has exceeded himself. He must have deliberately set himself the challenge, and it is victory for him, because he has skinned “Ebb Tide.”

“He has made a woman out of nothing — out of sweepings of life, and he has made her woman glorious. He has painted love with all love’s illusion — himself, Conrad, devoid of illusion.

“Lena goes without saying. She is Woman. But it is possible, absolutely possible, for the several such men as Mr. Jones, Ricardo, Pedro, Heyst, Schomberg, Morrison, Davidson, and Wang and his Alfuro woman, to exist. I know them all. I have met them all. I swear it. “As regards the love of this book, the sex of this book — all the love and the sex of it is correct, cursedly correct, splendidly, magnificently correct, with every curse of it and every splendid magnificence of it duly placed, shaded and balanced. Yes, and the very love of Ricardo is tremendous and correct.

“In brief, I am glad that I am alive, if, for no other reason, because of the joy of reading this book.

“Jack London.”

The next day, still filled with his emotion, he could not restrain himself from passing it on to the author of “Victory”:

“Honolulu, T. H., June 4, 1915.

“Dear Joseph Conrad:

“The mynah birds are waking the hot dawn about me. The surf is thundering in my ears where it falls on the white sand of the beach, here at Waikiki, where the green grass at the roots of the cocoanut palms insists to the lip of the wave-wash. This night has been yours — and mine.

“I had just begun to write when I read your first early work. I have merely madly appreciated you and communicated my appreciation to my friends through all these years. I never wrote you. I never dreamed to write you. But ‘Victory’ has swept me off my feet, and I am inclosing herewith a carbon copy of a letter written to a friend at the end of this lost night’s sleep. [The letter to Cloudesley.]

“Perhaps you will appreciate this lost night’s sleep when I tell you that it was immediately preceded by a day’s sail in a Japanese sampan of sixty miles from the

Leper Settlement of Molokai (where Mrs. London and I had been revisiting old friends) to Honolulu.

"On your head be it.

"Aloha (which is a sweet word of greeting, the Hawaiian greeting, meaning 'My love be with you.")

"Jack London."

Never, before or since, have I taken such hazards with the water as during those months at Waikiki, under Jack's tutelage. Always relying upon that sixth sense of his in matters of life and death, I followed his lead wherever he thought by direction I could go, and accomplished what I would not have deemed possible for myself. But he never led me where he feared I could not safely swim. And when once or twice we had surmounted conditions that kept shorebound the canoes and even surfriders, and returned unexhausted, his joy and pride in his "one small woman" were unlimited.

"You're so little, so frail, white woman of my own kind," he would marvel, his great eyes looking into me as if to discern the fiber of which I was made. Look at that arm, with its delicate bones — I could snap it like a clay pipestem . . . and yet, those arms never faltered in that succession of smoking combers to-day . . ." He tapped his forehead: "That's where it resides that's what makes the trivial flesh and bone able to do what it does!"

Deep thinker though he was, and worshipful of the brain stuff of others, he ever found shining things of the spirit in courageous physical endeavor. I think, in a dozen close years with him, year in and year out, "in sickness and in health," till death did us part, that never have I seen him more elated, more uplifted with delight over feat of one dear to him, than upon one April day at Waikiki.

An out-and-out Kona gale had piled up a big, quick-following surf, threshing milk-white and ominous under a leaden, low-hanging sky. At the Outrigger beach no soul was visible; but a group of young sea-gods belonging to the Club sat with bare feet outstretched on the railing of the lanai above the canoes. Joining them, Jack inquired if they were "going out." "Nothing doing," one laughed. And another, "This is no day for surfboards — and a canoe couldn't live in that mess!" "But we are going to swim out," Jack said. "You'd better not, Mr. London," the boys frowned respectfully. "You couldn't take a woman into that water." "You watch me," Jack returned. "I could, and shall."

We went. Now, understand: it was not to be spectacular that Jack led me into the sea that day. This was not bravado. With the several weeks' training he had given me in sizable breakers, he expected as a matter of course to see me put that training to account. And I felt as one with him. The thing was, first, to get beyond the diving-stage, for a freshet had brought down the little river a tangle of thorned algaroba and other prickly vegetation, which, with a wild wrack of seaweed, made the shallow almost impassable.

Very slowly we forged outward, and at length were in position where the marching seas were forming and over-toppling. Rather stupendous they loomed, I will confess;

but, remembering other and smaller ones and obeying scrupulously Jack's quiet "Don't get straight up and down — straighten out — keep flat, keep flat!" I managed not badly to breast and pass through a dozen or more smoking combers that followed fast and faster.

When I finally ventured, "I think I have had enough," immediately Jack slanted our course channelward where the tide flows out toward the reef egress. But after half an hour we found we were, despite all effort, drifting willy nilly out to sea. By now, the young sea-gods had followed with their boards, fearing we might come to grief; and upon their advice we rejoined the breaking water, and "came in strong" with our best strokes to the Beach.

Which I tell, further to point his passion for physical courage and prowess that after all are but mental. "I'd like you to write books, if you wanted to," was his final word; "but I'd rather see woman of mine win through those great seas out there than write great books!"

Jack's health was fairly good that summer, though he seemed to be on tension, and prone to argue overlong and over-intensely. Indeed, as time went on, he battled with this and that opponent, or provoked skirmishes, with an increasing fervor and violence that ill-betokened a peaceful old age. Oh, well, I'd rather wear out than rust out!" was his verdict on the matter.

And once Jack told me a thing that will abide like a dove of peace until I die, as one of my sweetest touches with this sweetest of men:

"I never said this to you," he began; "but many years ago, before I knew you existed, I lay one afternoon on a California beach — at Santa Cruz — in one of my great disgusts . . . you know — when I have dared look Truth in the face and become blackly pessimistic about the world and the men and women in it who cannot learn, who cannot use their puny minds. It was a warm, still day; and while I lay, with my face on my arms, over and above the steady breathing of the ocean and splashing of a small surf, there came to me, from very far off, almost like skylarks in the blue, the voices of a man and a woman.

"I couldn't for the life of me figure where the voices came from. I raised my head, but no one was in sight on the beach; and at last, the nearing conversation guided me seaward where I could just barely make out the heads of two persons very leisurely coming in, talking cozily out there in deep water, as unconcerned and comfortable as if sitting in the sand.

"Something inside me suddenly yearned toward them — they were so blest, those two together. And I wondered, lying there sadly enough, if there was a woman in the world for me who so loved the water — the little woman who would be the right woman who would speak my own language — with whom I could go out to sea,, without boat or life-preserver; hours in the water holding long comradely talks on everything under the sun, with no more awareness of the means of locomotion than if walking. — — I could have told you this eight years ago," he mused, "that wonderful morning we swam together across Urufaru Bay in Moorea, while the Tahitians worried about the sharks.

. . . I thought of it at the time. But we were not alone. The stage was not set for you and me."

I could see that the shame of civilization, the Great War, worked havoc in him. That any white nation, hunting for a place in the sun, should have made such a thing possible, was never out of his consciousness; and he raved in his choicest vocabulary concerning Germania. Still, he did not think the war would last long. We were on Hawaii, the "Big Island," with the 1915 Congressional junketing party from Washington, on which Jack had been made one of the entertainment committee, when the stunning intelligence came of the sinking of the Lusitania. Jack, for once, was shocked into something akin to silence. To his mind, the best characterization of that crime was the one made by I have forgotten whom: "When Germany, with paean of joy, committed suicide!"

To certain harsh comments upon a young English friend who, answering Great Britain's call, left his mother and his children in Honolulu, Jack pleaded with blazing eyes:

"You do not seem to understand: he had to go. There was no other way out, for him, than the one he chose; he could not have done other than he did . . . as well criticize the flame that burns, as criticize this royal thing of the spirit within him that drew him from success, and love of children, and fat security, half-way across the world to fling himself into the maelstrom of battle, pain and death — all for an Idea.

In the latter part of July, we bade good bye to Honolulu. Jack said: "We must go back soon. I feel as if our visit had been interrupted." For he had made many friends, conquered a few outstanding prejudices, and felt much at home in this neighboring "fleet of Islands" above the Line.

We landed into the annoyance of trouble with the grapejuice company, but it seemed as if difficulties of this sort were all in the day's work. "What am I to think? I go into the cleanest sort of business, to make the best nonalcoholic drink known, and I get it in the neck, pronto — just like that!"

"But the lake's full of water for my alfalfa, he checked himself, "and that means more life, more abundance of butter-fat from your little Jerseys, bigger Shire colts, heavier beef cattle, and the rest!"

To our mutual rejoicing, the water was warm enough for swimming, and Jack asked his sister to shift a gang from some other section of the ranch, "run up" a log bathhouse of six rooms and lead the necessary piping for two showers. Inside of three days this convenience was a reality, as well as an appropriate accent in the scenery of the meadow. A rustic table and seats, set within a circle of redwoods, two canvas boats forgotten out of the Snark's dunnage, together with a diving float, perfected our equipment for al fresco entertaining.

Jack stocked the lakelet with catfish brought from the San Joaquin river, and these proved a great advantage, both for sport and table.

A trap-shooting outfit was purchased, but he never got around to having it installed. "I can't find a place that seems exactly right," he omplained; "nor a good spot for a

tennis court. As for golf links — " he put it up to Joe Mather, "if you'll make suggestions where they can be laid out, I'll go ahead and have the work done."

There had been correspondence with Mr. Edgar Sisson, then editor of The Cosmopolitan, as to writing a "movie" novel based upon a scenario by Charles Goddard, author of "The Perils of Pauline" and other "thrillers" of the screen. Chapters of the novel were to appear in the string of Hearst newspapers, and simultaneously illustrated in the cinema theatres. Jack was not enthusiastic at first, but saw a possible way to recoup his pocketbook from his tremendous outlay on the ranch. His suggestion being agreed upon for a lump sum running into five large figures with temporary release from his regular measure of fiction, he launched into it with glee:

"Think — it'll be sheer recreation, though I double my usual daily portion, at double my usual rate! And I don't have to do a thing but reel off the stuff, upon Goddard's scenario notes. I don't have to worry about plot, or sequence of events, or contribute a single idea if I don't want to!"

He never ceased to maintain that he hated to write — had to drive himself to it. It made him flare when this was questioned. In reply to an unknown admirer, he wrote: ". . . Let me tell you that I envy you. You delight to write. You delight in your writing. You are enamored of writing, while I, with the publication of my first book, lost all joy in writing. I go each day to my daily task as a slave would go to his task. I detest writing. On the other hand it is the best way I have ever found to make a very good living. So I continue to write. But his best work was conceived in passion for its own sake, and I think one feels his urge of self-expression, while many were his enthusiasms over what he was doing. One short piece of work gave him a great deal of pleasure — a Preface for a new edition of Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast." Because of absence from California, his manuscript did not reach Macmillans in season, and it was a keen disappointment to Jack that the book was published without his appreciation. So the most he could do was to include it in a book-collection, and it appears, under the title of "A Classic of the Sea," in "The Human Drift."

Mr. Sisson and Mr. Goddard paid us a visit to discuss ways and means, because Jack avowed his determination of taking this work to Hawaii, where Mr. Goddard would have to send his installments of scenario for the novelist's guidance. When in the spring of 1916, at Waikiki, he completed this manuscript of what has been called "frenzied fiction" he wrote a Foreword explaining at length how he had come to lend himself to such a bizarre undertaking. "In truth," he says, "this yarn is a celebration. By its completion I celebrate my fortieth birthday, my fiftieth book, my sixteenth year in the writing game, and a new departure. I have certainly never done anything like it before; I am pretty certain never to do anything like it again. And he then goes deeper into his subject.

"Hearts of Three," they named it; and, as a sympathetic critic has suggested, it should be viewed as something of a joke — the most adventurous, high-spirited, rollicking, ridiculous, impossible stuff in the world, an outrageous thing of delightful absurdity. In this light Jack regarded it, and had the time of his life in its fabrication.

He received his money, but died before the story was published in the newspapers; and for some reason it has not, up to 1921, been presented upon the screen.

Our loss of Nakata, to marriage and career, at the end of 1915, constituted more than a domestic flurry. He had nearly every prerequisite of the close and confidential servitor, and it is hard to decide which suffered more from his absence, Jack or myself. All in all, I think it was Jack. Next, our guests missed his cheery and charming service, for "Where is Nakata?" ordinarily followed greetings from our friends.

The War; Hawaii

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AND now I come to the last and most difficult movement in my undertaking. The mere narrative is nothing that in March, with our Japanese, we sailed on the Great Northern for Honolulu, rented a spreading old bungalow at 2201 Kalia Road, Waikiki, and lived the gay life of the subtropic city, breaking the round with wonderful inter-island explorations, and returning to California after seven months.

What is so difficult is the developing of this last earthly phase of Jack London, so that all who run may read and not wonder overmuch why, through sheer neglect, he cut himself off, or caused himself to be cut off from the larger fulfilment of himself. For I truly believe that his best work was yet to come. That he believed it, I am equally convinced. "Just wait, wait until I've got everything going ahead smoothly, and don't have to consider the wherewithal any more, and then I am going to write some real books!"

Jack's life is the story of a princely ego that struggled for full expression, and realized it only in a small degree. There were so few to heed his deeper self-manifestations. As a mere lad, he was conscious of that superiority and of its environmental discrepancy, and all the while fought for the congenial environment. As he grew in mental stature, he recognized himself as part of the whole ego-substance, and proceeded to fight for the proper environment for egos other than his own. Hence, Jack the Individualist, and Jack the Socialist.

The result of his individual struggle for expression, when young, was Success, Recognition. Yet, as I have already written, such was the universal quality of his mind that he would have reached success, as the world regards it, by way of any medium of expression he had selected under ceaseless urge of that princely ego. Perhaps, as the years lapsed, if the world had demanded more, he might have been forced into an expression somewhere nearly adequate to his inner demand. But the world acclaimed what he did do, and the money that same world paid enabled him to search for happiness — a goal in itself. Yet happiness, as he saw it, was endeavor, always endeavor, the accumulation of knowledge, and to no small end. He created an environment which bade fair to balance in extent his royal requirement — the wide-reaching acres with their herds of the best, the lavish hospitality, the great house. Yet throughout he preserved

the collective ideal, gave to others the unselfish help of his brain and time and money, impelled by an incorruptible ideal of making the world a better place for his having lived in it — of "causing two blades of grass to grow where one grew before."

But with all this in his grasp, the instinct to search still drove him on. He was doomed to remain unsatisfied, and unsatisfied he remained. The ultimate aim could not be fame, nor money, nor anything the world had in its gift. I had almost said that Love itself left him empty; but insofar as he loved Love, and could not live without Love and what understanding and ease of spirit Love could vouchsafe in his unguarded moments of despair, Love, I say, given and returned, kept him alive for many a year. This I know.

He had tried during his life all the ways known to man for getting away from an insatiable ego. And all he had really succeeded in was to obscure the demands that he had by his white logic interpreted, and had striven so hard to placate. It may be he sensed this long before he came face to face with and acknowledged it; and this probably led him more or less consciously to greater emphasis upon all the things with which he drugged his perception of futility — his work, his amusements, and the dream of scientific husbandry into which his unquenchable pioneering spirit had led him. And when, once in a while, he brought up and staggered before a flash of insight to the way he was bound, he called upon all the artifices of a superb intellect to prove he was right in defying the vision. It was a regal battle, and he lost — at least, so far as concerns the perceptions of most of us who are left. No man with his capacity could ever really bury the melancholy heritage that is coincident with the brain that seeks and scans too closely the fearful face of Truth. "My mistake in opening the books," he would repeat. "Sometimes I wish I had never opened the books." Still, except as he was warped by sickness, at any time he was glad to quote, " 'E liked it all." The game was worth the candle.

The conflict shows in the caliber of literature that first earned him renown, and the caliber of that which served his chosen end, preaching the things which filled his brain and hands with work that waided off the final capitulation he made to his fate. The first is distinguished by the impersonal note; the second marked equally by the personal. Had the human clay of him been equal to his mental capacity and urge, he might in time have stood out grand and free and his gift to the ages been of unequaled value. As note:

For months Jack had been reading, in his intensive method, in conjunction with the works of all the best alienists, upon the subject of Psychoanalysis — Freud, Prince, and, most of all, Jung. Much he read aloud, calling me to him, or following me about to instil certain passages. But it was one utterance, in that summer of 1916, that made me realize, distinct from the excitement that the conquest of Knowledge always produced in him, that he had at last come upon something commensurate with his highest powers of penetration. His eyes like stars, his face still with a high solemnity I had never before seen upon it, in a voice so prophetic that my soul has been listening ever since, he said:

"Mate Woman, I tell you I am standing on the edge of a world so new, so terrible, so wonderful, that I am almost afraid to look over into it."

As I came to look with him over that brink into the possibilities of that new world which is as old as Time, I began to see what it was beginning to mean to him who had sensed its abysses as long ago as when he wrote "The Call of the Wild," ay, and before that. With his synthetic mind, he would have been a splendid exponent of what bids fair to be the limitless scope and application of the principles of Psychoanalysis. At times, when he expounded his hopes of what he would be able to accomplish in this research I was caught up into his vision. But so terrific was the marvel of what he dared dream he might do, that one's every-day senses reeled away from the contemplation. I have no words, no skill, with which to transfer to my reader this look into the gulf. But why, Jack thought, if he could learn to analyze the secret soul-stuff of the individual and bring it up to the light of foreconsciousness, could not he analyze the soul of the race, back and back, ever farther into the shadows, to its murky beginnings? His eyes, when he thus speculated, were those, not in the least of a fanatic, but of a seer, deep as the ages. He walked on air, yet the actual material practically of it appealed before all.

While he laid aside the heavy volumes read and annotated, until such time — say on a voyage to Japan in 1917 — as he could review them with me, Jack applied their principle more than was entirely safe for the complacency of those with whom he came in contact. If he had ever before used the world and its inhabitants to keep him interested in the game of life, he now employed them in ways they never guessed in casual association with him. Applying his new system of approach, all in the way of social intercourse he was delving into the soul-stuff of men and women as they never would have dared analyze the significance of their own repressions. He went to startling lengths in this risky game of "playing with souls." Old curiosities, long since laid, were resurrected, to be dipped in the alembic of psychoanalysis, and he experimented with his own caprices in the most unexpected ways.

Perhaps the majority of the minds which he laid bare were not of a quality to make his investigation profitable. However that may be, it brought to him — and this was my greatest fear — yet more disillusion with the human element that had already suffered much in his regard. When the measure of a thinker s associates steadily shrinks in his estimate, that thinker, maddened by their immobility to ideas, is facing annihilation. The situation becomes insupportable. The "will to live" weakens and breaks down, no matter how fair the world nor Love how sweet. Jack's conclusions were saddening in the extreme. A paragraph from H. G. Wells's "The Discovery of the Future" so appositely expresses Jack's attitude from time to time, that I shall quote it instead of trying to reconstruct his own words:

"I do not think I could possibly join the worship of humanity with any gravity or sincerity. Think of it! Think of the positive facts. There are surely moods for all of us when one can feel Swift's amazement, that such a being should deal in pride. There are

moods when one can join in the laughter of Democritus; and they would come oftener were not the spectacle of human littleness so abundantly shot with pain."

Wells goes on to say that the pain of the world is also shot with promise; but Jack at this stage was grudging of this expectation. I was too close to it all to see the full drift of his fall; or, better, in my characteristic way, while doing my best in a given set of circumstances, I would not admit what I shrank from facing. The test of my endurance was severe, for Jack required so greatly of me in the capacities of wife, lover, friend, even confessor, for he withheld nothing — nothing, I repeat — of what he was passing through; and my responsibility, it may be guessed, was almost more than I could bear and preserve a cheerful poise. That he missed little of this, I am assured. More than thrice he suddenly remarked: "You are the only one in the world who could live with me!" Which was with direct reference to his intellectual vagaries, and not to any personal difficulties. It is all an inexpressibly dear heritage — the memory of that with which he entrusted me. I might think I had failed in many particulars, except for the continuance of his confidence and his almost childlike dependence upon me when his burden was too great. A generous friend, talking with him shortly before his death, has given me Jack's declaration, speaking of myself: "She has never failed me. I have had the comfort of her stedfastness, and have gained strength from it. She is always ready to act with and for me at any moment."

No matter how strange he seemed at times, nor how isolate, I learned I must stand by, night and day, for his instant need. There would be, say, a tirade against the infinitesimal natures of folk, or an argument, and he might work himself into a frenzy wherein I accused him of intellectual unfairness; or, we might disagree vitally upon some personal matter. Once, twice, I withdrew and left him to work out his humor by himself. But he could not, or would not. I found myself not daring to pursue this course; and thereafter, in the Islands and later at home, when the impulsion was upon him, I did my best to maintain my end in discussion, into the small hours if necessary, until he was exhausted, when, suddenly, in his fighting-face there would dawn the sweetness that disarmed anger and criticism alike in friend and foe. He would fall asleep in my arms, awakening penitent for the pallor of my cheeks that no smile could camouflage, and gratitude for the smile. A conversation something like this would ensue:

"Bear with me, Mate Woman — you're all I've got."

"I do. I do."

"Then, do more than that!"

"I will! I will!"

Any chiding that he was not taking sufficient nourishment, and neglecting his exercise, elicited the time-honored response:

"I'm all right — don't bother. And you're never up in time to see the huge breakfast I tuck away — three cups of coffee, with heavy cream, two soft-boiled eggs, half of a big papaia!"

But it was months before I learned that every morning the ample bedside repast, which he so enjoyed with his morning Pacific Commercial Advertiser, was completely

lost. That abiding pride in his "cast-iron stomach" had suffered an eclipse; and with it his God-given ability to sleep whensoever he elected. This was indeed a desperate case, and I was frightened, because from birth on I myself had bedded with insomnia, and feared its consequences upon one of Jack's temperament. Only three times did he tamper with a narcotic, for he realized its peril. "Oh, have no fear, my dear," he reassured me more than once, "I'll never go that way. I want to live a hundred years!"

It being an unwritten rule that I was never to be disturbed from sleep, I awoke in swift terror one morning in Honolulu to find Jack, his face working with pain, at my door:

"I had to call you, Mate I am sorry but you must get a doctor. I don't know what it is, but it is awful!" And he crept back to his sleeping-porch. His friend Dr. Walters was out, and Dr. Herbert responded, as best he could helping Jack through the agony, diagnosing the cause as a calculus.

I suppose it is a wise wife who, rather than make marriage hideous by nagging, lets her husband destroy himself in his own uncaring way! Even with the excruciating omen of worse to come, Jack made little or no effort to put off his day of dissolution. The friendly physicians exhorted in vain: he clung to his diet of raw aku (bonita), and, aside from the breakfast fruit and occasional poi, which he termed a "beneficent food," quite neglected the vegetable nutriment his malady demanded, while the cramping of his ankles did not lessen.

As for exercise, save for the most desultory and infrequent dips off-shore, he took none. My question, "Are you going to swim with me to-day?" was oftenest met with:

"Yes — believe I will . . . No, I'm right in the thick of this new box of reading-matter from home. Oh, I don't know — the water looks so good . . . But no; I'll go out in the hammock where I can read and watch you." And his bodily inertia won out.

But it would strike me, looking back across the seawall to where, in blue kimono, he swung under the ancient hau tree, that he read little; whenever I waved back to him there was an immediate response that bridged the jade and turquoise space. But the arm stretched out to me was all too white from seeking the shadows. If I did not ask him to go out, then, the same day or another, he would remind me of it, with a mild reproach.

Not a block would he walk to the electric tram, but called an automobile three miles from town whenever he wanted to go in for a shave. If he were not going out, and expected no company, he spent the day in bathing-trunks and kimono and sandals, not only for coolness at work, but because it was too much effort to dress. This calls up an incident that occurred one day in Honolulu, though I did not come upon the inwardness of it until long afterward. It goes to illustrate the sheep-mindedness of the mass of beings who wish to find famous men and women fashioned in the image of the quibbling, foppish, gnat-brained incarnation that is their own. Jack himself, small as was his respect for these, never failed to react to the clumsy stab of their inert yet harmful smugness — harmful because it influences and fixes the attitude of masses of humans who might, otherwise guided, attain a freer view of life.

A woman of Russian birth, passing through, wanted to meet this man Jack London, who so dominated the fancy of her countrymen. According to her story, certain tourist acquaintances warned her: But he isn't decent — he's likely as not, we hear, to receive you dressed only in a kimono!" The lady was not to be balked; and one day, unannounced, she called during Jack's working hours. In spite of his irritation at being so unceremoniously interrupted, she found him courteous and interesting, and did not stop over-long.

"What did you think of him? What is he like?" her informants asked.

"I think he is a very decent fellow," the Russian began.

But wasn't he in his kimono?"

"Why, yes — I believe he was," coolly she rejoined. "And I want to say that, in his kimono, he seemed to me more fully clothed than most of the men one meets in full conventional attire."

Except that he sat through long dinners without eating, Jack was normal enough to all intents. When anxious hostesses drew his attention to the untouched plate, he would repeat that story of the large breakfast, and declare that except at a Hawaiian luau (feast), where he made a practice of banqueting shamelessly, he would rather talk than eat; and thereupon he closed the topic by taking up the thread of his discourse where it had been cut. He drank very moderately. "Sometimes I think I'm saturated with alcohol, so that my membranes have begun to rebel," he observed upon more than one occasion. "See — how little in the glass and this is my first drink to-day!" A month before the end, in response to a telegram from Dr. W. H. Geystweit, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, San Diego, California, Jack wired:

"Never had much experience with wine-grape growing. The vineyards I bought were old, worked out, worthless, so I pulled out the vines and planted other crops. I still work a few acres of profitable wine grapes. My position on alcohol is absolute, nation-wide Prohibition. I mean absolute. I have no patience in half-way measures. Half-way measures are unfair, are tantamount to confiscation, and are provocative of underhand cheating, lying, and law-breaking. When the nation goes in for nation-wide Prohibition, that will be the end of alcohol, and there will be no cheating, lying nor law-breaking. Personally I shall continue to drink alcohol for as long as it is accessible. When absolute Prohibition makes alcohol inaccessible I shall drop drinking and it won't be any hardship on me and on men like me whose name is legion. And the generation of boys after us will not know anything about alcohol save that it was a stupid vice of their savage ancestors."

In Hawaii for the most part he ordered "soft" drinks or "small beer" during the nights we spent in the open-air cafés, I dancing, he visiting at the tables with his friends. But ever he kept an eye upon me, as if looking for some one stable in a crashing world. Seldom, swinging near, did I fail to catch his glance and a little indulgent smile he had for the "kid woman" who, loving the dance, had gone without it for so many traveling years after marrying him.

In a côterie of excellent players among Honolulu's men and women, both American and Hawaiian, much of Jack's recreation time was at cards mostly bridge, with now and then a poker game.

To show the restlessness that was in him, I can instance the entertaining we did. Day after day at our house it would be a luncheon, a bridge party, tea, swimming, a dinner, and theatre, or dancing either at home or on the Roof Garden or at "Heinie's," and, likely, a midnight swim before bed. Some of the luncheon guests might be included in the afternoon cards outside in the little jungle of that magnificent hau tree, but new players had also been bidden. A fresh bevy blew in for tea and bathing, and the diners would be still another party. Friends for noonday or dinner usually numbered an even dozen, since the round table accommodated just that number. We lived in a whirl; and many times, while I was at the telephone inviting for three different events for a certain day, Jack would come pattering in his straw sandals across the large palm-potted rooms, and whisper: "While you're about it, better plan the crowds for the day after."

A Honolulu neighbor, Charles Dana Wright, one day asked Jack:

"Why do you always have twelve at your table?"

"Because it won't hold any more!" was Jack's reply.

He seemed running away from himself, filling in every moment, as if uneasy with too many disengaged dates in prospect. Yet he would suddenly tire of it all, and there would be a lull. One night, after an undisturbed day when we had worked, and swam, read aloud, played pinochle, and eaten alone together, he breathed with satisfied demeanor: "Happiest day I ever spent in Hawaii!"

He had a way, at work in his cool green lanai (veranda) — a mile from where B.L.S. once wrote by Waikiki waters — of looking aside upon me as I walked about the long rooms; and when I caught him at it, his lips would frame kisses in the air. What was behind the inscrutable, star-blue eyes that were never so beautiful as that summer in his Happy Isles, when he made no attempt to retard an illness that could not be less than fatal if not checked? Was that mind that had "known the worst too young," and that he had systematically overworked, now longing for surcease, "restless for rest," as William Herbert Carruth so aptly put it? Does that account for the apparently deliberate want of resistance? He, the eternal fighter, patently refused to fight for the reconstruction of a failing body, or to exert his powerful will to conserve his physical strength. On the contrary, it would seem as if the longing, at least of his unconscious mind, for cessation of effort to continue existence, swung him into a non-resistance which made for destruction. When he looked at me as he would look, was he hiding something he knew would fill me with terror — did he have an intuition that I would be unthinkably alone with the falling of the autumn leaves? One late after noon, in the hammock, he read me "In Autumn," from George Sterling's "The Caged Eagle," just received from the poet. His voice broke at the last, and the eyes he raised to mine in a long, long gaze, were deep pools in which I felt us both drowning. But when at length he spoke, it was of the wonder of the man who had written the poem.

I shall never know. All I do know is that he was upon the night ward slope of living, and that all I had to cling to was what sometimes fell from his lips when I had thought him absorbed in book or writing — abruptly, as if wrung from him:

"God! — Woman, if you knew how I love you!"

And again, his eyes burning:

"Child, child — you don't know what love is!"

Or he would murmur in a golden voice, across the length of the house, so that I must harken closely to hear:

"I love you . . . I love you."

Once:

"Take my heart in both your hands, My Woman."

To me, who asked nothing from fate but to serve, he said one day:

"I can refuse you nothing. Anything you ask for, in seriousness, you may have. I am so entirely yours; you can have anything you want of me. I'd do anything for you — actually, I believe I'd murder, if you asked me?" He added: "Some day, when we are seventy, you and I, in the autumn of our long years together, I'll tell you some things about myself — how I have come to know how unthinkably I love you."

All this intensity was part of the raw state in which he was, dying, the dear heart, and how were we to know? One morning, it seems he thought I had told him a deliberate falsehood in a vital connotation, and I was at a loss to account for his alarming recklessness throughout the day. That night, worried, for once I eavesdropped, and heard him with his own soul: "To think of it! To think of it!" he wrestled with despair. The next day, quite as unwittingly as I had dealt the erroneous impression, I undid the same. Then it all came out, with boyish jubilance in his relief, how he had agonized that "All I've got in the world" had thrown him down!

When he heard that the old bungalow, whispering of romance, was on the market, he came to me, his eyes dilating with the pleasure of giving :

"Do you want me to buy it for you, or do you prefer to wait till the war is done, and then get a sweet three-topmast schooner, fit her out, throw aboard your grand piano, a big launch, and a touring car, and start around the world for years!"

Naturally I chose the schooner, and told him that if for only selfish reasons, the war could not terminate any too soon to please me! — There he was, at it again — his "crowded hour of glorious life" all too short for the large plans for work, thought, play! I finger the sun-tanned notepad upon which he scribbled expense calculations for that post-bellum voyage: Six men, so much; Captain, so much; Engineer, Mate, Cook, Servants, Doctor — with loose margins for his figures. "But, Mate," I objected, "that means no letup for you — harder work than ever." "What of it?" cheerily he laughed it off. "I make my work easy — I've got 'em all skinned to death!"

Those little note-pads of Jack's — I find them at every turn. "Always carry a notebook," he advised. "Travel with it. Eat with it. Sleep with it. Slap into it every stray thought that flutters up into your brain. Cheap paper is less perishable than gray matter, and lead pencil markings endure longer than memory."

Certain photographs, one of himself and me in the garden, and one of myself on Neuadd Hillside, he kept near his work-table, and often looked at them. And at home afterward, "Charmian, Charmian . . ." he would murmur as he had murmured the day we first met, "I love your name. You've no idea how I stop all work and reading, and lie here just looking at your face in the frame."

There were six weeks on end in Hawaii that Jack seemed quite his healthy, hearty self. This was during what can best be termed a "royal progress" upon which, in company with Miss Mary Low, a part-Hawaiian friend, diamond-trove of information and imagination, who made it possible at that time, we encircled the "Big Island." The details of this journey I have related in "Our Hawaii." It was a passage of unalloyed pleasure, fraught with plans for the future when we should return to do the thousand things that this time must be left undone. In my hand at this moment is one of Jack's yellow note-pad leaves, scribbled with the most fragmentary penciled items:

"How not to know Hawaii . . . How the Tourist does — it the tourist route — never dreams.

"How to know Hawaii. Wait — under that surface excess of hospitality — the deeps of a remarkable people — really exclusive . . . Make no quick judgments. Come back, and come back, and then, some day, you will begin to find yourselves not only in their homes but in their hearts. And you will be well beloved . . ." "I almost think," he said in retrospect, "that this has been the happiest month and a half I ever knew!"

On that trip, having finished "Michael Brother of Jerry," he wrote his last gift to the Islands, the three articles which were published in The Cosmopolitan Magazine, "My Hawaiian Aloha." A few short months there after one of the Territory's most distinguished mouthpieces said of him. "In the death of Jack London Hawaii suffered an irreparable loss. . . . Among our most lasting memories of him will be his earnest and enthusiastic assistance in the organization of the Pan-Pacific Union. There was nothing that he disliked more than making speeches; but at meeting after meeting his voice was heard advocating the principle of the brotherhood of mankind and the recognition of that principle as the guiding star of the peoples of the Pacific."

Next, Jack produced a short story, "The Hussy," dating the end of the manuscript at "Kohala, Hawaii, May 5, 1916." "The Hussy" is in book entitled "The Red One," issued posthumously. Followed the short story, "The Red One," in which is evidenced the author's profound meditation upon the reaching out of the most primordial toward the most cosmic — all in stride with his study in race consciousness. Sometimes I wonder if it can be possible, in the ponderings of the dying scientist, Bassett, that Jack London revealed more of himself than he would have been willing to admit — or else, who knows? more of himself than he himself realized. His ultimate discouragement with the endless strife of humanity even unto the modern horrors of the Great War, are in the mouth of his puppet, speculating upon the inhabitants of other planets, and playing square with the old cannibal, Ngurn, because, forsooth, the old man had, according to his lights, "played squarer than square," and "was in himself a forerunner of ethics and contract, of consideration, and gentleness in man." "Had they won Brotherhood?

Or had they learned that the law of love imposed the penalty of weakness and decay? Was strife, life! Was the rule of the universe the pitiless rule of natural selection?"

Some one has written of Jack London: "This Lord of Life was never far from the consciousness that he held a brief and uncertain sovereignty. He himself has said:

"Man, the latest of the ephemera, is pitifully a creature of temperature, strutting out his brief day on the thermometer." And: "All the human drift, from the first apeman to the last savant, is but a phantom, a flash and a flutter of movement across the infinite sky of the starry night." He thrilled to George Sterling's line, "The fleeting Systems lapse like foam."

A couple of months before the "royal progress," Jack had sent in his resignation from the Socialist party, the reasons given surprising some of his radical acquaintances who had scoffed that he was becoming "soft."

"Radical!" he would snort, lurching about in his chair, "next time I go to New York, I m going to live right down in the camp of these people who call themselves radicals. I m going to tell them a few things, and make their radicalism look like thirty cents in a fog! I'll show them what radicalism is!"

Among his equipment of notes are the following addresses:

The Liberal Club, The Greenwich Village Inn (Polly's Restaurant) The Hotel Brevoort, James Donald Corley, Hippolyte Havel, Sadakichi Hartmann, Charles and Albert Boni, John Rampapas, Hutchins Hapgood, II Proletario, J. J. Ettor and Iva Shuster, Carlo Tresca, Arturo Giovannitti, McSorley's Saloon.

Jack's action in resigning, though it had been gathering momentum for some time, was precipitated by the withdrawal of a friend whose reasons were based upon the prevalent "roughneck" methods of other than the "well-balanced radicals." I can still hear Jack's battle-tread, somewhat muffled by straw slippers, as he marched toward my door, and his peremptory voice: "Take a letter please!" I can see him plant himself on the edge of my bed, curls towsled, wide eyes black with purpose under the brows that were like a sea-bird's wings, his full chest half-exposed by the blue kimono, and one perfect leg thrust forth to steady himself. And here is what he rapped out, as fast as I could click the keys:

"Honolulu, March 7, 1916.

"Glen Ellen,

"Sonoma County, California.

"Dear Comrades:

"I am resigning from the Socialist Party, because of its lack of fire and fight, and its loss of emphasis on the class struggle.

"I was originally a member of the old revolutionary, up-on-its-hind-legs, fighting, Socialist Labor Party. Since then, and to the present time, I have been a fighting member of the Socialist Party. My fighting record in the Cause is not, even at this late date, already entirely forgotten. Trained in the class struggle, as taught and practiced by the Socialist Labor Party, my own highest judgment concurring, I believed that the working class, by fighting, by never fusing, by never making terms with the enemy,

could emancipate itself. Since the whole trend of Socialism in the United States during recent years has been one of peaceableness and compromise, I find that my mind refuses further sanction of my remaining a party member. Hence my resignation.

"Please include my comrade wife, Charmian K. London's, resignation with mine.

"My final word is that Liberty, freedom, and independence, are royal things that cannot be presented to, nor thrust upon, races or classes. If races and classes cannot rise up and by their strength of brain and brawn, wrest from the world liberty, freedom, and independence, they never in time can come to these royal possessions . . . and if such royal things are kindly presented to them by superior individuals, on silver platters, they will know not what to do with them, will fail to make use of them, and will be what they have always been in the past . . . inferior races and inferior classes.

"Yours for the Revolution,

"Jack London"

The foregoing, published in the Socialist press, caused much comment. Jack's grim amusement can be pictured when it was reported that a distinguished member of the Party, upon reading it remarked: "I'd have done the same long ago, for the same reasons, if I had not been so prominent a figure in the movement."

"And now," I queried, when Jack had got the letter off his mind and cooled down, "what will you call yourself henceforth — Revolutionist, Socialist, what?"

"I am not anything, I fear," he said quietly. "I am all these things. Individuals disappoint me more and more, and more and more I turn to the land. . . . Well," he reconsidered, "I might call myself a Syndicalist. It does seem as if class solidarity, expressed in terms of the general strike, would be the one means of the workers tying up the world and getting what they want. It would raise Cain, of course, but nothing ever seems to be accomplished without raising Cain. A world-wide strike would produce inconceivable results. — But they won't stick together — there is too much selfishness and too much inertia."

Surely, surely, Jack's experience with the "inertia of the masses was not unique in the annals of reform movements. In Doctor William J. Robinson's "The Medical Critic and Guide," I come across this sentence: "It is not the slave that rebels against his slavery; it is the free man who sees the injustice of slavery who starts the fight for its abolition." Other social seers had suffered unto death. I could not but pray that the healthier side of Jack's philosophy of life might preserve him from despair.

Concerning sabotage, he stood somewhat like this: Peaceful methods having failed, and with his views on the frightfulness of capitalist exploitation of labor, he would not hesitate, were he an underpaid wage-slave, insidiously to wreck the machinery of production by the means of which he had become the underpaid, underfed, overworked, exploited tool and fool of his economic masters. But when confronted with the futile, desultory methods of bombing innocent persons by mistake, his impatience knew no bounds. Following one such mishap that had shaken the country, I asked him what he thought of it; and he used a word I had never heard in seriousness from his lips:

"I think it is wicked."

Many resignations followed Jack's — quite an avalanche, in fact, when the Socialist Party at the St. Louis Convention in 1917 pledged itself to oppose, by every means within its power, the prosecution of the war against Germany.

When James Howard Moore, because of heartbreak over the world, had put a bullet through his brain, Jack was deeply moved. In his handwriting, at the head of a printed address delivered by Clarence S. Darrow at the funeral services, I find this:

"Disappointment like what made Wayland (Appeal to Reason) kill himself and many like me resign."

Reading over the mass of material for this Biography, I am struck anew by Jack's old faith in the workingman, and anew saddened by his ultimate disillusion. Let me quote a letter, written several years before he died, stating the nobilities upon which he had founded his hope:

"To the Central Labor Council,

"Alameda County:

"I cannot express to you how deeply I regret my inability to be with you this day. But, believe me, I am with you in the brotherhood of the spirit, as all you boys, in a similar brotherhood of the spirit, are with our laundry girls in Troy, New York.

"Is this not a spectacle for gods and men? — the workmen of Alameda County sending a share of their hard-earned wages three thousand miles across the continent to help the need of a lot of striking laundry girls in Troy!

"And right here I wish to point out something that you all know, but something that is so great that it cannot be pointed out too often, and that grows only greater every time it is pointed out, — AND THAT IS, THAT THE STRENGTH OF ORGANIZED LABOR LIES IN ITS BROTHERHOOD. There is no brotherhood in unorganized labor, no standing together shoulder to shoulder, and as a result unorganized labor is weak as water.

"And not only does brotherhood give organized labor more fighting strength but it gives it, as well, the strength of righteousness. The holiest reason that men can find for drawing together into any kind of an organization is BROTHERHOOD. And in the end nothing can triumph against such an organization. Let the church tell you that servants should obey their masters. This is what the church told the striking laundry girls of Troy. Stronger than this mandate is brotherhood, as the girls of Troy found out when the boys of California shared their wages with them. (Ah, these girls of Troy! Twenty weeks on strike and not a single desertion from their ranks! And ah, these boys of California, stretching out to them, across a continent the helping hand of brotherhood!)

"And so I say, against such spirit of brotherhood, all machinations of the men-of-graft-and-grab-and-the-dollar are futile. Strength lies in comradeship and brotherhood, not in a throat-cutting struggle where every man's hand is against man. This comradeship and brotherhood is yours. I cannot wish you good luck and hope that your strength will grow in the future, because brotherhood and the comrade-world are bound to grow.

The growth cannot be stopped. So I can only congratulate you boys upon the fact that this is so.

"Yours in the brotherhood of man,"

That Jack London expected no glory nor even lasting appreciation from his comrades for his life-long work in the interests of Socialism, was evident to me early in our association. It was with utter absence of bitterness that he said:

"In a few years the crowd I have worked for and with, the Socialists, will have entirely forgotten that a fellow named Jack London ever did a stroke to help along. I shall be entirely forgotten, or counted out, or, at best, merely mentioned."

And when, even in his own short time he had proved his own words, in spite of a cool intellectual attitude he showed the hurt to his affections. There is bitterness and to spare, though essentially toward the race of men who had dis appointed his warm confidence, in the following, already referred to in part, written in his last months for a Socialist publication:

"Some years ago Alexander Berkman asked me to write an introduction to his 'Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist.' This is the introduction. I was naive enough to think that when one intellectual disagreed with another intellectual the only difference would be intellectual. I have since learned better. Alexander Berkman could not see his way to using my introduction, and got some one else to write a more sympathetic one for him. Also, socially, comradely, he has forgotten my existence ever since.

"By the same token, because the socialists and I disagreed about opportunism, ghetto politics, class consciousness, political slates, and party machines, they, too, have dismissed all memory, not merely of my years of fight in the cause, but of me as a social man, as a comrade of men, as a fellow they ever embraced for having at various times written or said things they described as doughty blows for the Cause. On the contrary, by their only printed utterances I have seen, they deny I ever struck a blow or did anything for the Cause, at the same time affirming that all the time they knew me for what I was — a Dreamer.

"I'm afraid I did dream some dreams about their brains, which now I find knocked into a cocked hat by their possession of the pitiful humanness that is the birthright of all sons of men. My dream was that my comrades were intellectually honest. My awakening was that they were as unfair, when prejudice entered, as all the other human cattle entered to-day in the human race."

There are some of Jack's compeers who do not forget, who give him his place, and a high place. And there are others who, perceiving him nurse his efficiency by decent living after his too-lean years, became fearful that he might lose his head through worldly success, but held judgment and were rewarded for their openmindedness. One socialist, not fussing as to whether Jack belonged to the Socialist Party, or any party, had this to say: "He was one of us. A genuine, strenuous American, he fought a good fight in the sacred cause of human progress. Against the predatory Big Interests' attempt to enslave the workers and the Booze Interests' attempt to degrade the workers, his pen was a mighty weapon. Like a true comrade he died fighting. Alas, my Comrade!"

But sadly enough I note that only too often his name is missing from the roster that includes his intellectual friends such as Walling, Spargo, Hunter, Stokes, Heron.

Jack's especial bête noir was the type of socialist, of either sex, who heckled him because he declined to lecture before small groups. Wasted upon these hecklers was his argument that with a stroke of his pen, while following temperamental bents in manner of living, he could reach millions, whereas his voice could be heard by but a few. This being so, he did not see why he should misapply energy by speaking to a few, when he so disliked public appearances. Further, reports of his speeches were almost invariably garbled. His gospel as propounded in his books was not garbled. Ergo, and finally, he would write rather than talk. Incidentally, his voice had gone back on him, so that it became husky at any attempt to project it into large spaces. Far from regretting this break-down in his anatomy, he hailed it with frank delight as another excuse from lecturing. The failure of his throat was precipitated, happily enough, by an excess of laughter at the Bohemian Jinks. He had returned unable for a while to speak above a faint wheeze, the vocal cords ruptured forever.

He would add that he had done his share of platform work, and why not step out and let the younger generation have a chance. Here is his somewhat impatient reply to a suppliant who had tried sarcasm upon him:

"Dear Comrade:

"In reply to yours of September 14. I don't see anything to laugh at. With courtesy and consideration, on an average of five letters a day, I turn down propositions of comrades that run all the way from gold mines to perpetual motion. I sent you what I thought was a fair, courteous, sweet-natured and comradely letter. If you choose to laugh at that letter and me — why, go to it! I, however, am very sorry that you should laugh.

"You say you had hoped that your letter would have inspired me to nobler things (those are your words). What nobler things? — to attend a meeting at your place which you say nobody attended? To put money in your project and raise for you a temporary fund, when I am worrying over my own overdue life-insurance? FOR heaven's sake, dear woman, be fair, play fair, and get away from your own self-centering long enough to remember that all the others in the world may not be persuaded nor clubbed into following your immediate lead and desire, and that because they are not to be so persuaded nor clubbed is no license for you to laugh at them.

"Yours for the Revolution,"

Much earlier than that, in answer to a call that he could not afford, he had written:

"It's this way: I feel that I have done and am doing a pretty fair share of work for the Revolution. I guess my lectures alone before Socialist organizations have netted the Cause a few hundred dollars, and my wounded feelings from the personal abuse of the Capitalist papers ought to be rated at several hundred more. There is not a day passes that I am not reading up socialism and filing socialistic clippings and notes. The amount of work that I in a year contribute to the cause of socialism would earn me a whole lot of money if spent in writing fiction for the market."

It is not remarkable, however, that Jack London was much misinterpreted by the general run of men lost in pettifogging. He would not even be circumscribed by his broadest conceptions, if I may be allowed a paradox. And there was where he invited trouble with economists, who wanted him to be what they called consistent. The many sparkling facets of his mind dazzled and befuddled merely average thought processes. I speak with feeling. Sometimes we would battle for hours, he and I, earnestly, hotly, because, although I was doing the best I knew how, he was thinking so far beyond the logic of ordinary mortals who think they think. "Don't you see? Can't you get it?" he would almost wail in ardor and onrush to convince. And we would metaphorically roll up our sleeves and go at it hammer and tongs. To me, who was more "kin" to him than the rest, he declined to "mute his trumpets. His own woman must speak his language. And then, suddenly, out would slip some little key-word he had unwittingly left unsaid, the door would fly open, and I would seem to drop a thousand light-years in space, alighting softly, happily, yet excessively puzzled at last by the cosmic simplicity of his reasoning.

In logic he bowed to no one. His supple mind that never stiffened from disuse was of a clarity that allowed of no master. He but grasped and applied the conclusions of Master-minds, used them in the mosaic of his own. Yet here is a curious thing: In his dreams, at widely separated intervals, appeared the Man who would contest Jack's self-mastership, to whom he would eventually bend a vanquished intelligence. He never met such an one in the flesh, yet that entity stalked through more than the hallucinations of sleep. It was long ago he first told me of this ominous figure in his consciousness. The last manifestation was within a very few years of his death. The man, imperial, inexorable with destiny, yet strangely human, descended, alone, a vast cascade of stairways, and Jack, at the foot, looked up and waited as imperially for the meeting that was to be his unknown fate. But the Nemesis never, in that form at least, overtook him. Was it Death? Or may it have been a reflection of his own most exalted self that he came face to face with at these times? There showed a certain pathos in his accounts. I do not think he had yet brought his inklings of psychoanalysis to bear upon his interpretations.

What gifts Jack had for all who could see and hear! But the world is prone to look askance at gifts that are tendered freely, without price. And what he offered was so open-handed, so open-hearted. He never wore nor waved a flag — his flags, his colors, were in his eyes, streamed from his pen, and waved from his printed page. Every one who tried to understand him was better for it. When persons say, "I never met him," I can only return, "I am sorry." If it was a privilege to know his work, it was a greater privilege to know himself, if ever so slightly, for he was greater than his work. He had few enemies among those who came into personal contact with him. With all his self-knowledge, for the most part in social dealings he preserved that unconsciousness of self which is above modesty, yet which spells modesty to the casual observer. And no matter how firmly he believed himself right, fought for it, shouted it, he also respected a similar belief existing in his opponent. This charity, however, had been sorely taxed

during earlier years, by dark and helpless souls incapable alike of clear reasoning or appreciating his superiority; hence his impatience with inconsequential minds. But with the majority of acquaintances, no frown of his, no stern word, ever out weighed the morning of his smile, that beautiful smile that lured the bitterest antagonist under his charm.

Much non-understanding arose from the misleading habit of others in quoting his isolated opinions without context, deleting them of the vital connotations that his catholicity brought to ripe consideration of any theme. Only a few of his fellows could anticipate or supply the thousand factors embodied in his thought. Myself, I learned to hesitate before leaping to conclusions, to wait for the full drift. Just about the time, say, that Jack would begin to sink into lowest disheartenment over the abysmal significance of the War, and our failure to bear a hand, all at once he would flame anew to the undying wonder of the human. A case in point arose when Hall Caine wrote him from London, asking a contribution for the "King Albert Book. Jack responded:

"Belgium is rare, Belgium is unique. Among men arises on rare occasions a great man, a man of cosmic import; among nations on rare occasions arises a great nation, a nation of cosmic import. Such a nation is Belgium. Such is the place Belgium attained in a day by one mad, magnificent, heroic leap into the azure. As long as the world rolls and men live, that long will Belgium be re membered. All the human world passes, and will owe Belgium a debt of gratitude, such as was never earned by any nation in the History of Nations. It is a magnificent debt, a proud debt that all the nations of men will sacredly acknowledge.

Yet the very sending of the foregoing from Oakland brought him face to face again with human smallness. He thought to see if the cable company would share in the tribute by standing half the expense of the message. They politely declined, and Jack shrugged his habitual "Cheap at the price to learn them," under such circumstances.

The murder of Edith Cavell,

". . . a simple English nurse,

Slaughtered between a challenge and a curse,"

snapped something in Jack. Eyes and soul full of this and the rest of the mad slaughter, he became more and more furious with the brutal stupidity of the Hun. He lingered in almost speechless wonder over the monstrous bestiality of German cartoons, in nearly all of which lay a boomerang unguessed by that same bungling stupidity.

He did not believe this to be a capitalistic war, but that it was being waged for a principle at its best, and must be fought to the death. He would have stamped his approval, I know, upon the "irreduceable minimum" of peace terms, and Mr. Balfour's deliverance: "Next to being enslaved by Germany, there is no worse thing than being liberated by her."

Jack would refer to Germany as the "Mad Dog of Europe."

"I am with the allies life and death. Germany to-day is a paranoiac. She has the mad person s idea of her own ego, and the delusion of persecution she thinks all nations are against her. She possesses also the religious mania — she thinks God is on her

side. These are the very commonest forms of insanity, but never before in history has a whole nation gone insane."

"God help them when the British turn savage!" he cried at the first rumor of hostilities. His opinion of the country has been very adequately expressed by one who fought in France: "Germany has no honor, no chivalry, no mercy. Germany is a bad sportsman. Germans fight like wolves in a pack, and without initiative or resource if compelled to fight singly."

A hundred times I have heard Jack say: "It will be a war of attrition." He saw no abrupt termination, no brilliant, decisive victory. But for the Armistice, he might have been proven right. He was also heard to say that he believed the nations would eventually repudiate their war debts.

The Pathé Exchange wrote on June 16, asking his views upon the meaning of the World War, and this was his reply:

"I believe the World War so far as concerns, not individuals but the entire race of man, is good.

"The World War has compelled man to return from the cheap and easy lies of illusion to the brass tacks and iron facts of reality. It is not good for man to get too high up in the air above reality.

"The World War has redeemed from the fat and gross material-ism of generations of peace, and caught mankind up in a blaze of the spirit.

"The World War has been a pentecostal cleansing of the spirit of man."

Another of his public utterances:

"I believe intensely in the Pro-Ally side of the war. I believe that the foundation of civilization rests on the pledge, the agreement, and the contract. I believe that the present war is being fought out to determine whether or not men in the future may continue in a civilized way to depend upon the word, the pledge, the agreement, and the contract.

"As regards a few million terrible deaths, there is not so much of the terrible about such a quantity of deaths as there is about the quantity of deaths that occur in peace times in all countries in the world, and that has occurred in war times in the past.

"Civilization at the present time is going through a Pentecostal cleansing that can result only in good for mankind."

That none may misconstrue the central paragraph, but may know upon what the assertion was based, I append this item from the Scientific American:

"Industrial accidents cost this country 35,000 human lives and many millions of dollars annually, according to the Arizona State Safety News. In addition, dismemberments and other serious injuries total about 350,000 yearly, while the annual number of minor accidents, causing loss of time, exceeds 2,000,000."

It is interesting, while on the War, to quote his disagreement, when a youth, with David Starr Jordan:

"There is something wrong with Dr. Jordan's war theory, which is to the effect that, the best being sent out to war, only the second best, the men who are left, remain to

breed a second-best race, and that, therefore, the human race deteriorates under war. If this be so, if we have sent forth the best we bred and gone on breeding from the men who were left, and since we have done this for ten thousand milleniums and are what we splendidly are to-day, then what unthinkably splendid and god-like beings must have been our forebears those ten thousand milleniums ago. Unfortunately for Dr. Jordan's theory, these forebears can not live up to this fine reputation."

His full emotions toward the United States in with holding help from

". . . the embattled hosts that kept

Their pact with freedom while we slept!"

are expressed in a telegram sent in reply to a New York daily asking his choice at election time, and of which I have no record that the paper dared print it:

"I have no choice for President. Wilson has not enamored me with past performances. Hughes has not enamored me with the promise of future performances. There is nothing to hope from either of them, except that they will brilliantly guide the United States down her fat, helpless, lonely, unhonorable, profit-seeking way to the shambles to which her shameless unpreparedness is leading her. The day is all too near when any first power or any two one-horse powers can stick her up and bleed her bankrupt. We stand for nothing except fat. We are become the fat man of the nations, whom no nation loves. My choice for President is Theodore Roosevelt, whom nobody in this fat land will vote for because he exalts honor and manhood over the cowardice and peace lovingness of the worshipers of fat."

To Henry Meade Bland, a month before his death Jack wrote:

"I am inclosing you herewith a clipping about 'Martin Eden.' 'Martin Eden,' and 'The Sea Wolf' a long time before 'Martin Eden,' were protests against the philosophy of Nietzsche, insofar as the Nietzschean philosophy expounds strength and individualism, even to the extent of war and destruction, against cooperation, democracy, and socialism. Here is the world war, the logical out come of the Nietzschean philosophy.

"Read both these books yourself to get my point of view. Also make note that no reviewer ever got my point of view in those two books, and that this is the first time I have ever shouted my point of view in those two books."

The theory of alternate eras of Evolution and Dissolution fought with his work for the human. Yet, casting back into the hopelessness of the ages, citing fourteen cities built one atop another, and all lapsed, gone, with their pomp and circumstance — yet, I say, Jack suffered unendurably over the Great War, and perished in the midst of his deepest of all Great Disgusts because of America's "Safety First" policy that held us from protesting even the Belgian atrocities. We blunder along. The times blunder along. History-making blunders along. And he saw the blundering way of the race.

His main comfort throughout that Armageddon was his Anglo-Saxonism, his pride in England in the conduct of her "popular" war. How he would have rejoiced in the invincible combination of American man-power and British seapower! I am exasperated all the time, consciously and unconsciously, that he is not alive and quick, to function in the gigantic tangle of world events growing out of the war — to see his own

prognostications taking shape, and to lend a hand in the reconstruction. Indeed, it is hard to write calmly of this creature who strove so manfully for the great and simple integrities of human intercourse, looking as he did far through and beyond the small, petty thing of the moment. Always, while responding to the little tragical affairs of men, he could but compare these with the big, cosmic facts and dreams that lured him on. This verse, by I know not whom, so well envisages the Jack London whom I knew:

"Your stark vision and cold fire,
Your singing truth, your vehement desire
To cut through lies to life.
These move behind the printed echoes here,
The paper strife,
The scurry of small pens about your name,
Measuring, praising, blaming by the same
Tight rule of thumb that makes their own
Inadequacy known." How often I start up to share with him the very things he so missed and would love to know from the lips of fellow authors. "He was an honest writer," says an Englishman. That would have pleased him above all things. And another: "A strong and virile writer of clean prose — robust, honest, straightforward, and an artist." Berton Braley's "He never struck a ribald note," calls to mind a conversation in Honolulu. Alexander Hume Ford exclaimed:

"But, Jack, you have never written anything smutty — you've done almost everything else!" He had meant to be facetious, but in a flash Jack was all gravity:

"No! — and I never shall. I have never yet written a line for print that I would be ashamed for my two little girls who are growing up to see and read, and I never shall!"

To me he would say: "When I swear my worst, I really don't mean it — only words, letting off steam. But when you say 'Damn!' you are positively evil in your ferocity! Wicked woman!"

Never shall I forget his indignation, too vast for any expletives at his command, when a minister of the Gospel wrote him that his novel "The Little Lady of the Big House" was unclean, unfit for the youth of America to read. "Show me!" he raged, "where there is a line in that book 'unfit' for any young man or woman to read!" Hard upon this accusation came a book-review in a conservative New England monthly, employing the most extraordinary nomenclature to interpret the alleged pruriency of the book. Jack could not contain his ire, but started a battle royal with the sons of Adam who had in his opinion so degenerated as not to know clean frankness when they saw it. There is no telling where the controversy might have fetched up, had he lived. "I've given over sitting back and listening to gross misinterpretation of my clean and healthy motives," he said with smoldering eyes. "It is like malicious slander, and whenever it appears I am going after it and knock off its ugly head in the open!"

How does the foregoing comport with this: "He was an uplift to the young. The world is better and purer for his having lived — an inspiration to thousands of men

and women to work and keep on working, to create and keep on creating, to live the full life wherever they are or whatever may be their work."

My copy of "The Little Lady of the Big House," dated three months before Jack died, carries this inscription:

"The years pass. You and I pass. But yet our love abides — more firmly, more deeply, more surely, for we have built our love for each other, not upon the sand, but upon the rock.

"Your Lover-Husband."

In the last weeks of his life, that was often the burden of his talk with me — the firm foundation of the house of love we had builded in the decade of our close companionship. So, in my memories of that year of unusual vicissitudes in our fortunes, the warm and deathless love-message in his hand in "The Little Lady of the Big House" is a rock of ages, made yet more immovable by the declaration in Jack's next volume. "The Turtles of Tasman," the last he ever was to hold in his fingers:

"After it all, and it all, and it all, here we are, all in all, all in all.

"Sometimes I just want to get up on top of Sonoma Mountain and shout to the world about you and me. Arms ever around and around,

"Mate-Man."

"The Ranch,

"Oct. 6, 1916."

The Last Summer

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UPON returning from Hawaii in August, Jack went about making plans to get away to New York three months thence. His contract with Mr. Hearst was due to expire at the end of another year, and he wished to be timely in reconnoitering the market. His requirements, looking toward ranch expansion and rehabilitating the red ruins of the Wolf House, were not diminishing. From Honolulu he had urged his sister to gather the materials; but she has ever since contended that something more than want of funds held her back. The second cutting of logs had long been seasoning. There was what I can only call a telepathic impulse that had more than once warned her when all was not well with Jack — a sudden intuition that he was ill or in difficulties. She had not failed in this present instance, and I knew, when her eyes rested upon his telltale face at the dock, that some premonition had been verified. Jack's secretary, his sister Ida's widower, after Jack's death reported that Eliza had said that day:

"Our Jack has not come back to us."

When in Honolulu, he had first broached the New York trip, my unexpected decision to remain at home disquieted him as much as had my intention to go alone to the Islands on the occasion of his projected Fleet trip through the Canal.

"At least," he urged, "don't quite make up your mind that you are not going with me. Give it more thought." I had been seized with determination that was not to be resisted, to revise old Hawaiian notes into the companion book of my "Log of the Snark," and knew beyond question that there could never be time nor strength to give to it unless Jack were absent. When he had gone to a farther port, never to return, a railroad ticket for New York, dated for just a week after his death, lay upon the roll-top desk beside his work-table. But he had not been happy about my consistent refusal to accompany him.

August 9 to 13 he spent at Bohemian Grove, bringing home George Sterling and James Hopper. On the 17th he finished a short story begun on the steamer, "The Kanaka Surf," and before leaving for the State Fair on September 3, had completed another, "When Alice Told Her Soul," both included in "On the Makaloa Mat."

In "When Alice Told Her Soul," underlying its rollicking humor, Jack evidences that his feet had crossed the threshold of psychoanalytical understanding, and it is fascinating to note, in Jung's "Psychology of the Unconscious," marked passages showing the concepts that quickened Jack's imagination to express itself in that tale. Knowing what I already knew of Jack's last days, it was wonderful to check up this knowledge by the aid of those markings. It was my privilege to have the guidance of a pupil of Jung's, our friend Mary Wilshire. Here is an underlined section:

"The possession of a subjectively important secret generally creates a disturbance."

"It may be said that the whole art of life shrinks to the one problem of how the libido may be freed in the most harmless way possible. Therefore, the neurotic derives special benefit in treatment when he can at last rid himself of its various secrets."

Upon this Jack based his picture of the woman struggling to free her soul from a life-long accumulation of secrets which led her to the confessional of a mongrel Billy Sunday type of evangelist.

In the last story ever written by this master of the short story, "The Water Baby," completed on October 2, the theme is more subtly presented through the medium of Hawaiian mythology. Throughout Dr. Jung's chapter on "Symbolism of Mother and Rebirth," there are penciled indications of Jack's grasp of the meaning of folk-lore and mythology of recorded time. Also the comprehension of how to raise lower desires to higher expressions. He has underscored Jesus's challenge to Nicodemus, cited by Jung:

"Think not carnally or thou art carnal, but think symbolically and then thou art spirit."

"The Water Baby" is clearly a symbolic representation of the Rebirth, the return to the Mother, exemplified by the arguments of the old Hawaiian Kohokumi. A similar chord is struck in the following paragraph from Jung's book, indicated by Jack:

"The blessed state of sleep before birth and after birth is, as Joel observed, something like old shadowy memories of that unsuspecting thoughtless state of early childhood, where as yet no opposition disturbed the peaceful flow of dawning life, to which the inner longing always draws us back again and again, and from which the active life must free itself anew with struggle and death, so that it may not be doomed to destruction.

Long before Joel, an Indian Chief, had said the same thing in similar words to one of the restless wise men: 'Ah, my brother, you will never learn to know the happiness of thinking nothing and doing nothing; this is next to sleep; this is the most delightful thing there is. Thus we were before birth; thus we shall be after death.'"

Even in "Like Argus of the Ancient Times," written in the first half of September, is exhibited, in the "Freudian dream" of old Tarwater, as he faces extinction in the Arctic forest, the influence of Jack's probings into the stuff of the psyche. And to the lighter reader, I call attention to the fact that Jack himself walks across some of the pages as young Liverpool.

Jack's emphasis upon the primitive elements in life did not emanate from the fact that his readers especially wanted it, because upon this point he was in conflict from first to last, tooth and nail, with editors and reviewers. He was thorough, that is all. It can easily be seen how his early instinctive use of the methods of psychoanalysis abetted this thoroughness in seeking for the noumenon of things, the better to reveal the process by which man has become what he is to-day. Look in "Before Adam" and "The Star Rover," again to find evidence of his knowing how important a part is played in our lives by old, primal emotions, long thought extinct. To him the work of Freud and Jung and others of the school presented a psychological-philosophical key to the "understanding and practical advancement of human life" which leads to synthetic evaluation of human endeavor. It was inevitable that his brain, which was both analytic and synthetic, should first take hold of the analytic half of psychological under standing and quite as inevitably pass into the synthetic half which forms the whole of psychological understanding. With quick, incisive mind he apprehended the scope of the Freudian method in contemplation of the material thus acquired, and then with Jung moved on into the realm of cosmic urge of which man's psychic energy is a part.

A man of Jack London's fearless quality, who prized truth at its proper worth, could but accord a royal welcome to any form of philosophy which offered to render knowledge more complete. His was "the character and intelligence which makes it possible for him to submit himself to a facing of his naked soul, and to the pain and suffering which this often entails." This, from Dr. Beatrice Hinkle's Introduction to Jung's book, Jack had heavily underlined. To face his naked soul he dared to the uttermost, but that was not new with him. It was the old tragedy that began with his earliest gropings. Yet see, in another marked passage, how in his loneliness he realized himself as brother to all other human beings:

"To those who have been able to recognize their own weakness and have suffered in the privacy of their own souls, the knowledge that these things have not set them apart from others, but that they are the common property of all and that no one can point the finger of scorn at his fellow, is one of the greatest experiences of life and is productive of the greatest relief."

"My one great weakness, "Jack once wrote to Cloudesley Johns, "is the study of human nature." And when human nature through its repressions baffled discernment,

he suffered inexpressibly. He had us bared to the quick those last days. After a set-to with his sister, on ranch questions, or personal ones growing out of controversy, he cried, trying to pierce her brain:

"I'd give my right hand to know what you are really thinking of me!"

And to me, in privacy, after I had been almost overreaching myself in self-illumination — once or twice, alack, goaded even to resentment — he would grit out, intensely, with a gesture of despair:

"You tell me this and you tell me that, and you state your reasons. But your true inner impulsions are withheld in spite of yourself. Close as we are, you and I, hard as we strive to give ourselves to each other, the old reticences remain, repressing the utmost revelation. You do your best. It is not enough. Can't you see, oh, my dear, can't you let go completely, and let me see the real you that I want to fathom? . . . I'd give my soul to know what you are actually thinking!"

But when, in sudden unasked circumstances, our minds came together in almost superhuman enlightenment, the man was caught up into a supreme and wondrous exalta-tion. I can only think that to sustain such heights one must needs seek a new world in which to live!

Read this section of Dr. Hinkle's Introduction, which, noted by Jack, throws light upon the struggle extraordinary which he was making to come breast to breast with us in mental sympathy:

"There is frequently expressed among people the idea of how fortunate it is that we cannot see each other's thoughts, and how disturbing it would be if our real feelings could be read. But what is so shameful in these secrets of the soul? They are in reality our own egotistic desires, all striving, longing, wishing for satisfaction, for happiness; those desires which instinctively crave their own gratification, but which can only be really fulfilled by adapting them to the real world and to the social group."

"The value of self-consciousness lies in the fact that man is enabled to reflect upon himself and learn to understand the true origin and significance of his actions and opinions, that he may adequately value the real level of his development and avoid being self-deceived and therefore inhibited from finding his biological adaptation. He need no longer be unconscious of the motives underlying his actions or hide himself behind a changed exterior, in other words, be merely a series of reactions to stimuli, as the mechanists have it, but he may to a certain extent become a self-creating and self-determining being."

I shall never cease to remember the day when, all a-tip-toe with discovery, Jack entered the dining room, slipped into his chair and repeated the foregoing italicized sentence. I, knowing his theretofore immovable position regarding free will, sat aghast at the implication upon his tongue. At length:

"Do you realize what you are saying? What you are implying?"

"I know how you feel — how surprised you are," he answered. "But it almost would seem that I can grasp, from this, some sort of inkling of free will. I'll explain further — we will read together."

Bear with me, in fairness to a comprehension of the point Jack London, as an individual, a member of society, and an artist, had reached when he descended "into the dark," while I quote a few, so very few of the many, marked sentences from Dr. Hinkle's introduction:

He, Jung, saw in the term libido a concept of unknown nature, comparable with Bergson's elan vital, a hypothetical energy of life, which occupies itself not only in sexuality but in various physiological and psychological manifestations such as growth, development, hunger and all the human activities and interests. This cosmic energy or urge manifested in the human being he calls libido and compares it with the energy of physics. Although recognizing, in common with Freud as well as with many others, the primal instinct of reproduction as the basis of many functions and present-day activities of mankind no longer sexual in character, he repudiates the idea of still calling them sexual, even though their development was a growth originally out of the sexual. Sexuality and its various manifestations Jung sees as most important channels occupied by libido, but not the exclusive ones through which libido flows.

"In this achievement lies the hopeful and valuable side of this method — the development of the synthesis."

" — an absolute truth and an absolute honesty.*

" — the often quite unbearable conflict of his weaknesses with his feelings of idealism."

"The importance of this instinct (sexual) upon human life is clearly revealed by the great place given to it under the name of love in art, literature, poetry, romance and all beauty from the beginning of recorded time."

I was convinced that no mortal frame could out-last the terrific strain Jack was putting upon his own. Something had to break. And one can only give thanks forever that it was the body. That was the lesser sacrifice.

At this late date there rises out of my mind, quite humbly, the question as to whether certain independent manifestations of myself to which he had been unaccustomed, were upsetting Jack more than he cared to voice — as notably my insistence, in face of his dissatisfaction, upon remaining at home alone to do work of my own. I have come to see it as an inevitable self-liberation after an association that had held me like one enchanted, my faculties paralyzed in every function except as toward him and what of assistance I could be to him. If, as may have been the truth, my ego was unconsciously making effort to win to itself, it was probably due to the impetus of the tuition Jack's superior ego had contributed. I am only trying to clear up phenomena that it now seems might have been more or less portentous to him, and the inner meaning of which he was bending every nerve to discover.

"For the first time in my life," he remarked one day, "I see the real value to the human soul of the confessional."

The effect of this budding impetus in me did not terminate with the termination of his dominating personality. It went marching on, evident in the most amazing ways. Instead of still requiring, in order to go on, that superb domination under which I

had so loved to dwell, suddenly I stood free, an ambitious, sure soul for the first time, almost unrecognizable to friends and self, bent upon making the best of that self and its remaining span upon earth; this, if only to prove its appreciation of the gifts that had been bestowed upon it, in the discharge of its tender obligation to the one who had gone. Life-long, inherited insomnia fell from me, and nights were none too long to compass the rejuvenation that was mine, and that prepared me for each looking-forward day of the many days of hard work which had descended upon my willing shoulders. No task, in contemplation, discouraged — even the most exacting, this Biography.

It hardly matters that I am ahead of my story, inasmuch as the events immediately preceding and succeeding Jack's death are all of a piece. Closely following his passing "into the Silence," on every hand speaking evidence of his thought and achievement, even lacking the maturer masterpieces we shall never know, it came to me this way:

"It seems clear that there was no limit to his mind. Could he have lived, that cerebration would have gone on and on, stretching incredibly, interminably, no bounds to its elasticity in every direction. It was enormous."

This to George Sterling, sad beyond despair above his friend's "holy ashes." And he repeated after me:

"There was no limit to his mind. It was enormous."

Jack was so tired that hot evening we arrived at Sacramento, September 3, that he went to bed after dinner instead of joining Mrs. Shepard at the Fair. We were hardly ready to "turn in" when a general fire-alarm called us to the hotel window, and in the direction of the Fair Grounds we could see the flames rising.

"It's the Exhibition going up, all right," Jack said, peering through the glare for the towers of the buildings.

"But aren't you going to dress and drive out to see if the stock is safe — Neuadd and the rest?" I asked, surprised at his lack of excitement.

"Oh, no — Eliza's there, or will get there, and she'll do everything that can be done."

And surely enough, his indomitable superintendent, already bound back to the hotel, had turned about and somehow bluffed her way through the cordon of police thrown about the place, and marshaled our stockmen to convey her precious charges to an unthreatened open space.

As before written, she and Jack had disagreed upon the question of showing animals, at least thus early in the establishment of his reputation as a stockbreeder. But having seen, upon his return from the Islands, the prime state of his beasts which she had ready for the journey, he had relented, admitted her standpoint, and was loyally on hand to see them win. That they did; and no one, even Eliza, so proud as he with his handful of gold medals and blue and gold ribbons to prove that the Jack London Ranch was "on the right track."

But not with his own eyes did he behold our proud grand champions carry off their honors. Only the one day after arrival was he able to leave the hotel, for he was obliged

to keep to bed for eight days with a session of rheumatism in his left ankle. Fortunately the torture was intermittent, or it would have been unbearable without a hypodermic. As it was, the doctor had to prescribe powders for the worst nights, or there would have been no rest for either of us. I went out of the house but three times, and then to buy books for the invalid, who seemed not to want me out of his sight.

In the longer pauses between recurrences of grinding misery that drenched the poor boy with sweat, we made genuinely merry over games of pinochle and cribbage, and read aloud, turn about; or he entertained callers, while I gently rubbed the ankle by the hour. Often I could put the sufferer to sleep by this means. Evenings, from the window, Jack enjoyed following the starry trail of Boquel's aeroplane flights.

For once, stung alert by pain, he was seriously anxious about the future as regarded bodily comfort. "Although, if I became permanently crippled, I'll have endless time in bed to do all the reading I can never get around to, and be the happiest fellow that ever came down the pike," he grinned with native paradox. But I noticed that he did not hasten that glad day by disobeying the physician, who told him he was in a precarious state and must mend his diet and work off some of his excess fat. He weighed in the neighborhood of one hundred and ninety-four pounds.

So all toothsome fleshpots were missing from the tray, while I was pressed to invent salad dressings and suggest the most tempting vegetable dishes. Upon one especially precious day, when we two were reviewing our long run of years together, calling up memories sacred to our companionship, I asked Jack if he could remember a sweet thing, the idea of which, coming from him, had astonished me one day in Honolulu. I challenged:

"I'll wager anything you say, that you cannot repeat it just as you said it."

"Which sweet thing?" he came back; "There were many, if I remember aright. I'll subscribe to it, whatever it was, even if I can't remember it! Be kind, though, and give me a tip!"

When I had done so, he said very soberly:

"Yes, I not only remember and subscribe to it, but I can repeat it word for word. I told you: If I should go into the dark, and wake again — which I do not for a moment expect to do — but if I should open my eyes again, yours would be the first face I should want them to rest upon! — — And I mean it, Mate Woman. I surrender to you, you are the only one. — — Ask me for something that I can do for you!"

I have no personal evidence that Jack did not die a firm unbeliever in any hereafter — materialist monist to the end. In a story, "The Eternity of Forms," included in "The Turtles of Tasman" collection, he has given his lifelong confession of faith, "simple, brief, unanswerable":

"I assert, with Hobbes, that it is impossible to separate thought from matter that thinks. I assert, with Bacon, that all human understanding arises from the world of sensations. I assert, with Locke, that all human ideas are due to the functions of the senses. I assert, with Kant, the mechanical origin of the universe, and that creation is a natural and historical process. I assert, with Laplace, that there is no need of the

hypothesis of a creator. And, finally, I assert, because of all the foregoing, that form is ephemeral. Form passes. Therefore we pass."

Two years before his death, he had more briefly stated his old position in a letter to a young socialist in Chicago: "June 25, 1914.

Dear Ralph Kasper:

". . . I have always inclined toward Haekel's position. In fact, incline is too weak a word. I am a hopeless materialist. I see a soul as nothing else than the sum of the activities of the organism plus personal habits, memories, experiences, of the organism. I believe that when I am dead, I am dead. I believe that with my death I am just as much obliterated as the last mosquito you or I smashed.

"I have no patience with fly-by-night philosophers such as Bergson. I have no patience with the metaphysical philosophers. With them, always, the wish is parent to the thought, and their wish is parent to their profoundest philosophical conclusions. I join with Haeckel in being what, in lieu of any other phrase, I am compelled to call 'a positive scientific thinker.'"

Yet it was the same Jack London, caressing the thought of Death at the close of "The Human Drift," who wrote:

"There is nothing terrible about it. With Richard Hovey, when he faced his death, we can say: 'Behold! I have lived!' And with another and greater one, we can lay ourselves down with a will. The one drop of living, the one taste of being, has been good; and perhaps our greatest achievement will be that we dreamed immortality, even though we failed to realize it."

Jack's sister thinks he was on the way, those last weeks, to modify his uncompromising attitude. At least, she considers, judging from things said and unsaid in their closer moments, that he was shaken in his certitudes about a number of subjects. He had always smiled or good-naturedly scoffed at her telepathic "hunches," as he termed them; but himself underwent a puzzling experience. Mid-most of his forenoon work, all at once he obeyed a call that his mortal ears had not heard, and discovered himself standing by the window straining his eyes toward Eliza's cottage, on a slight eminence several hundred yards away. Everything looked as usual in the serene prospect, and he came to himself with a laugh, turned to watch the big Shire mares hauling his prided manure-spreader, and returned to the interrupted manuscript. But he continued uneasy. Odd it seems to me that Jack did not tell me of the incident; for later in the day Eliza reported that the husband of her new cook had arrived unheralded and with a gun threatened herself, who had been totally ignorant of her cook's marriage status, for keeping his wife away from him.

I repeat that I have no evidence at first hand that there was any radical change in Jack s method of thinking. He only showed an intensification of his old instinct for the "inexorable logic of the shadowland of the unconscious." What he did say to me, and more than once, was the old: "If you should ever go 'soft,' I'd never forgive you!"

It was not until after the Fair had closed and his sister gone home, that Jack was fit to make the journey by automobile. About sunset we had a breakdown, and I remember

him hobbling about a little village while the repairing went forward, and halting to watch some small boys spinning tops.

"But don't you do this, and this?" he said, all interest in the new generation, taking the toy from an urchin, and trying to resurrect his own cunning. No, they couldn't spin it his way — had never seen it done, in fact; nor could they, as did he, make it spin on the vertical trunk of a tree. Suddenly one of the lads sprang away to the side of the road and glibly named the make of an approaching car while the headlights were still distant.

"Well, I'll be — " Jack left it becomingly unsaid. How did you know what was the name of that machine?"

Know its engines, of course — I can tell most of 'em a long way off, the boy bragged, nicely even with his interlocutor for superior skill in the top-game.

"See, Mate," Jack lit a cigarette and contemplated the group, "I'm getting old. I'm out of touch with the younger generation. All they know is gasolene — but I will say they know it pretty thoroughly!" He was very quiet the rest of the ride, and I recall a curious misapprehension displayed by him as we made ready to leave the town of Napa in a moonlight haze. Though we had often visited here, this time we differed as to an avenue that led into the twenty-mile road to Glen Ellen. Jack's sense of locality was usually faultless, mine far from being so. But on that night I was so positive that finally he relapsed into silence, sending forward the parting shot:

Very well — have your way; but you'll soon find you are entirely off the route."

It happened otherwise; but I made no comment as the dim moonlit leagues were left behind. And then I became conscious of a pressure as Jack's hand clasped my shoulder, and over it came the love-husky, golden whisper I knew of his most humble and generous moments:

"I love you to death, my dear."

A return hand-caress, and "I know you do," closed the incident, and no reference to it was ever necessary.

To the tune of a merry household, after finishing "Like Argus of the Ancient Times" Jack went at a fantastic, whimsical tramp study entitled "The Princess," last of the "On the Makaloa Mat" cluster. The denouement is founded upon an after-dinner story once told at our table by a Bohemian clubman, an inimitable raconteur. Jack seemed to enjoy making this tale, and could hardly wait each day to catch me with his "Come on and see how it goes!" The accomplished ease of his method seemed only to increase; too much, some friends and critics thought. Yet, reading over his last stories, with their sure technique and character-drawing, profound thinking in the processes of the human soul, I cannot consider that he had fallen off.

How gay were host and guest, outside of what might be called natural sports such as swimming, and swimming the horses, "hiking," boating, riding, and the like, may be judged by a reckless prank that broke up one noonday meal. I do not remember how it started, nor whose was the suggestion, but some one was dared to swallow, alive and

whole, the tiny goldfish that swam among plants in a low cut-glass bowl on the long table. In the babble among the horrified girls, Jack shouted:

"We'll play a hand at poker for it, and the fellow who loses must not only swallow the fish, but keep it down for ten minutes, no matter what is said to him."

Remonstrance was in vain — the trio, Jack, Finn Frolich, and Joe Mather, were "on their way." Joe, slender, fastidious, was "stuck," and exhibited, in paying the forfeit, the keenest courage I ever have witnessed.

"Gee," gasped the chesty Frolich, "I couldn't have got it down!"

"I'd have died if I'd had to do it!" Jack said in awe-struck admiration when confronted by the tragic face of the man who had "put away" the scaly morsel. And "I never can feel quite the same toward you again," Joe's young wife murmured betwixt laugh and sob.

"That was an awful thing to allow," afterward I chided Jack.

"It was a wild thing," he giggled concurrence, "but think of the fun!"

"How about the fish?"

"Now you're saying something," he admitted. "Just the same, it was quicker 'curtains' for the fish than your fish in the garden pool get, slowly smothering in the gullets of the water-snakes! And how about live oysters, now, my dear . . . think, think! — Anyway, I'd rather have been the fish than Joe!" he grimaced in conclusion.

When, on October 2, "The Water Baby" was sent off to The Cosmopolitan, Jack went at his notes for a new novel, "Cherry," which was left less than half completed. This romance is laid in Hawaii. The heroine, Cherry, is a Japan-ese girl, mysteriously wrecked in the Islands when a baby, and evidently, by the trappings and the dead servitors on the abandoned sampan, infant of high degree. She is adopted and given every cultural advantage by a wealthy white couple who were childless. The motif of the work is a racial one, the climax depending upon Cherry's choice of a husband among the many, of various nationalities, who sue for the hand of this tantalizing oriental maid whose brain has divined her situation in every connotation. There are enough notes to guide a reader to the conclusion; but up to the end of the year 1921, I have not matured my plans for this book and that other incomplete manuscript, "The Assassination Bureau."

Evenings were spent in cards, or games like "packing peanuts," in which Jack nearly died of mirth. Or he would be inclined to read aloud, poetry, or perhaps his own stories. And I know there were listeners, captured and enchained by his charm, in whose ears still rings his rich and solemn voice in the stately numbers of Ecclesiastes. He had read from this favorite several times to certain friends in Honolulu, and now recurred to it with increasing appreciation. At these times Jack was extremely handsome, with something hard to describe — a fine nobility in expression and pose, but something also of the unconscious hauteur of isolation, of the aristocrat, of the imperator.

One little party that was with us for a day or two consisted of my uncle, Harley R. Wiley, of the University of California faculty, who had brought up his long poem "Dust and Flame" to read to us; and Blanche Partington, whose contribution, in this

instance, beside her own ever-welcome personaliy, was the young Irish revolutionist's, Kathleen O'Brennan, whom she wanted to see lock horns with Jack London. She was not disappointed. The pair went into the arena in fine form, while the rest of us sat panting with emotions that ranged from serious to comic. "Never in my life," Blanche revives the occasion, "did I hear such a racial dressing-down as Jack gave Ireland!"

More often than he went himself, Jack sent me over the trails with parties, and never did we twain go on any of the long rides once so reveled in. When guests were absent, the ranch claimed all his daylight recreation hours, and he forewent the Outlaw, and Sonoma Maid, and Hilo, preferring Prince, the "Love-Horse" of our fore-in-hand, on whom leisurely he explored the uplands, testing with eye and hand for soils he ached to "put to work." This was not sufficient exercise for me, and I rode my colts longer distances, usually hunting for Jack in the woods, when we would descend together. Many was the day he said, though uncomplainingly:

"I got in a lot of reading last night, but not much sleep. I'll nap this afternoon."

But it was seldom, homing alone from a canter, that I failed to see his tumbled handful of curls bobbing out of the door to meet me.

"You'll never know," he said again and again, "how I love to hear your horse galloping toward me. I wouldn't miss being here to see you come in for anything!"

I was far from easy about him. There was a twilight stealing over our lives — was it to be ever this way, that I rode solitary while he must sleep? Whither were we trending?

"Near the end," an author has told me, "he wrote me about my book, and in that letter he complained of being ill. Said he had been down with rheumatism . . . complained of having had a severe time of it. Complaint of any kind from him seemed unusual. My impression was that he was not himself when he wrote this way. It came stealing over me that his work was nearly done."

Jack had expected to go east in the early part of October, but the water-suit intervened. He was supposed to be away, however, and I am always grateful to fate that we had those last few weeks uninterrupted save by a few loved ones. To one, my cousin Beth, he gave a book in which the inscription verified my fear in that he was going too fast, his mind increasing upon itself with an insupportable rapidity, wave upon wave, factors climbing upon the backs of factors, the thousand-thousand connotations that might have suggested the loom of madness to any who could not know his natural scope. But to me it represented an enormous sanity, a huge, normal functioning, only a madness if to be super-sane is to be mad; and the only question was, how long could a man live in so unchecked a mind-functioning, while neglecting his body?

"It is a long time," he complained in the inscription to Beth above referred to, "since I've seen you to renew acquaintance with you. When you were here, the world was here, and the world was very much and too much with me. Darn the wheel of the world! Why must it continually turn over? Where is the reverse gear?"

Evening after evening he read aloud from Percy's "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," and reread certain of these to Beth and to his two "saints," my sister Emma

Growall, and my uncle s wife, Villa Wiley. Two large volumes we went through, and the third and last to Page 288. The next selection is “St. George for England,” and Jack’s book-mark, the ubiquitous safety-match, still rests between the leaves. Dryden’s “Jealousie Tyrant of the Mind” was an especial treasure to us. I shall hear until I die Jack’s voice of the lover in “The Nut-Browne Mayd,” which he never tired of repeating, and which I called for over and over, if only for the spell of the “viols” in his throat, and to see, under the long curl of lashes, the eyes he raised to mine at the verse-ends:

“I love but you alone.”

He fastened upon the sweet old-English spelling of Darling — ”Dearling” — and thenceforward used it exclusively when addressing me, his voice like a prayer. Interspersed with these poems we also read the Beaumont and Fletcher Elizabethan plays, the power and beauty of some of these affecting Jack profoundly.

He frequently asked me to play or sing for him, and was strangely touched by a song-relic of my girlhood, “Recompense,” in which occur the lines:

“And at the last, I found that she
Was more than all the world to me.”

Handel’s “Largo,” Wagner’s “Pilgrim’s Chorus,” and the trio of funeral marches, favorites of all his adult life, were resurrected and rendered him as much pleasure as ever. Whenever he went to Oakland, he put in an hour or so in some music store, after which there was sure to arrive in Glen Ellen a box of phonograph records, most of them operatic. Many he retained, and while we had supper at a card-table on my glass porch, it was the duty of Sekinè or the house-boy to run off a succession of disks laid out by Jack. In line with tracing back into race-consciousness, he showed increasing preference for folk songs, and the American negro melodies. After supper he would throw himself on the couch by my side, and have these reeled off, while he dreamed beyond all following of the significance of these human cries for rest.

“It’s always been that way,” he would reflect. “Mankind has always bowed under some galling yoke, physical or mental, that has made it supplicate for rest, to escape ‘the dreary agitation of the dust.’ Can’t you hear it, beating down the ages — listen to that — play it over, Sera, so Mrs. London can hear it again.”

Sometimes he was very calm, and evenings were of our sweetest, he reading aloud or talking, I embroidering the beloved “L” upon absurd little “guest-towels” for the Wolf House that was soon to be rebuilt. His dislike to see me sew had been modified these many years. My philoso-phy upon needlework had so pleased him that he incorporated it in “The Little Lady of the Big House.”

Again, over-intense, on hair-trigger to snap up any word as a pretext to start an argument, if he caught me trying to placate or turn him into smoother channels he flew into a mental fury, at times hot, at others deadly cool. Sometimes, as before noted, I let him wear himself out. And when, as might happen, he was soon over the mood, resting in my embrace he would tell me what it meant to unburden to me in any way at any time.

On October 22, precisely a month before Jack went out, Neuadd Hillside, the "Great Gentleman," our incomparable Shire Horse, died overnight while we slept. Rupture, they pronounced it, and veterinaries were summoned from all quarters.

It was a heavy blow to Jack. Aside from the monetary loss this was an incalculable set-back in his far-seeing plans, already under way, for breeding and in-breeding. I learned of the event when at nine of the morning I found Jack still in bed, lying quite idle. I had not time to ask the reason for his stricken face when he said, reaching out to me:

"Come here and sit beside me. I have bad news for you — your Great Gentleman is gone."

"What? Who? — what do you mean?"

"Good old Neuadd died last night."

. . . And a little later: "I'm not ashamed, Mate-Woman," looking at me like a lost child through his man's tears. He followed me around much that day, telling more than I had ever dreamed of what the glorious animal had meant to him.

"I tell you, Mrs. London," said Hazen Cowan, our cowboy, who had had the care of the stallion, "I hadn't cried since the last time my mother spanked me, until Neuadd fell down. He wouldn't lie down till he was dead, but stood there shaking all over." Hazen pulled a freckled hand across his hazel, black-lashed eyes: "I'd really slept with him, lived with him, for months, you know."

"Cherry" was laid aside, and Jack went to making notes for a novel upon the horse. "You, too, make me some memory-pictures of him," he begged. He now believed that he had been right in the first place about "show-condition" for live stock, and that had Neuadd been maintained in proper working-flesh, he would have been saved to the farm.

He did not begin that book. After making a sufficient sketch to fix his motif, he returned to what was already begun — how vain the endeavor we were not then to know. But the death of the "chief of the herd" weighed more than we shall ever realize. At times he gave way to a listlessness I had never before seen in him.

Next, the gentle Prince developed what eventually proved an incurable rheumatism, and could not be used. One day his master charged: "If anything should happen to me, and Prince's case become hopeless, don't ever let him go off the ranch." So the "Love-Horse" came to sleep with Neuadd, Sonoma Maid and Hilda, in a wooded ravine on the "Beauty Ranch." The only one remaining of our joyous coaching team is the indefatigable Outlaw, Gert, who lives and moves and delivers the finest of colts each and every renascent springtime.

When, in mid-October, the duck-hunting season opened, Jack flung caution to the four winds and with gusto consumed two large birds, canvasback or mallard, each day. An Oakland market kept him supplied. Poisoned as he already was with uremia, this richest of diets was nothing less than suicidal, and put him out of the world of human affairs in less than six weeks. "Oh, I love them so," was his in corrigible waive of my

remonstrance. “I’ve been good as gold ever since Sacramento, you’ve seen; and now it won’t hurt me to fall off my diet. Don’t forget I’m naturally a meat-eater!”

The last guest Jack ever entertained, and who left three days before lie died, was a frail little stranger who came to ask if he would accept a joint guardianship of her children. “Sure!” said that obliging friend of the needy. “Put my name down with the rest!” She had studied medicine, and writing to me later inquired if Jack was accustomed to the amazing menu she had seen him consume twice daily while she was with us. None but a plowman could have survived it.

On the 28th, shaking off the dejection of the court proceedings in the water-suit begun two days previously, Jack with apparent joy read a letter from the Newspaper Enterprise Association, of New York City, and appended is his reply to their self-evident query:

“Gentlemen:

“. . . When I lie on the placid beach of Waikiki, in the Hawaiian Islands, as I did last year, and a stranger introduces himself as the person who settled the estate of Captain Keller; and when that stranger explains that Captain Keller came to his death by having his head chopped off and smoke-cured by the cannibal head-hunters of the Solomon Islands in the West South Pacific; and when I remember back through the several brief years, to when Captain Keller, a youth of twenty-two and master of the schooner Eugenie, wassailed deep with me on many a night, and played poker to the dawn, and took hasheesh with me for the entertainment of the wild crew of Pennduffryn; and who, when I was wrecked on the outer reef of Malu, on the island of Malaita, with fifteen hundred naked bushmen head-hunters on the beach armed with horse-pistols, Snider rifles, tomahawks, spears, warclubs, and bows and arrows, and with scores of war-canoes, filled with salt-water head-hunters and man-eaters holding their place on the fringe of the breaking surf alongside of us, only four whites of us including my wife on board — when Captain Keller burst through the rain-squalls to windward, in a whale-boat, with a crew of niggers, himself rushing to our rescue, bare-footed and bare legged, clad in loin-cloth and sixpenny undershirt, a brace of guns strapped about his middle — I say, when I remember all this, that adventure and romance are not dead as I lie on the placid beach of Waikiki.”

Here is a letter to his London agent, Mr. Hughes Massie, dated November 5:

“I have not replied by cable because of two things.

“First, I expect to be in New York sometime after the middle of November. I should then be able to talk the matter of such an autobiography of 50,000 words, about my writing, with my magazine publisher. In any such event, I would personally handle the sale of the American first serial rights.

“Second, I am not sure about what the contemplated 50,000 words would be concerned. From reading your letter it would seem that what is asked is how I obtained at first hand the experiences that are at the back of my writing. I do not see how I could write on such a subject — at least no more than several thousand words. My idea would be to give my writing experiences from my first attempt at writing right

on down the line to the present date, I mean my experiences with newspaper editors, magazine editors, book publishers, etc., etc., entering intimately into my various books and short stories themselves, I mean in relation to the sale of them to the purchasers.

"If you could write me a letter conveying more adequately the subject that would be acceptable, as well as some sort of suggestions about the rate that the Wide World Magazine would pay for the first serial rights in Great Britain, I would be better equipped to discuss the matter with my people when I get to New York."

"The money I get for this," he exulted, "will buy more farm machinery, more seed to plant, and the rest!"

On the afternoon of the second court-hearing in the riparian rights contest, Jack was threatened with a repetition of the severe attack he had suffered in Honolulu, and drilled me again in the use of the hypodermic, should the pain get beyond him. He was very wretched, but the calculus passed without resort to the needle.

His fourth appearance in court was on November 10. He came home looking ill, and complained of distressing symptoms which toward evening so strongly resembled ptomaine poisoning that finally, as the pain increased, I got him to take an antidote, which produced the desired effect. Very gravely I talked with him, and he owned that he was shockingly out of condition, with an increasing tendency to dysentery. "I've never been quite right in that respect since my sickness and operation in Australia — and Mexico didn't help matters any. — But don't worry, don't bother; I'll be all right, my dear!"

And still he made no alteration in his diet of underdone wild fowl.

Philosophically, and helped by psychoanalysis, Jack better and better understood and sympathized with human frailty; but temperamentally, due largely to physical and nervous breakdown, he became more and more intolerant under the torment of his uncovered sensibilities. Those last days were not the first wherein he had gone stark against the apparent truism that any one who accepts benefits never forgives the benefactor.

As I sit at my typewriter, I can see him, back to me, elbows on desk, head in both hands, and hear him say, not for the initial time:

"It's a pretty picayune world, Mate — what am I to think? Are they all alike! Every person I've done anything for and I've not been a pincher, have I? — has thrown me down: near ones, dear ones — and the rest."

"Some of us are still standing by," I reminded him soothingly.

"Oh, I don't mean you, of course, nor Eliza. But the exceptions are so rare — friend and stranger alike. Run over the list. Take that socialist woman east — I've forgotten her name who wrote begging me to stake her to a small sum for a certain number of months, so she could devote herself to writing a book. It's ages since she acknowledged the last check Eliza sent, and she has never written me one line of thanks, nor even reported progress. And she's but a sample of the whole hopeless, helpless mess! And take cases nearer home. The hand I feed smites. It's only the ones I have helped. What am I to conclude?" he finished, swallowed in gloom, suffering damnably.

“But even so,” I argued, trying to offset the somber discord induced by those raw sensibilities that made him pierce too easily through even the unconscious petty shams of civilization — ”even so, it is nothing new to you; do not forget that it has always been that way. Do not think you are the only one who suffers from this lamentable tendency of the human. Your kind has plenty of company in the world. No man who ever made money and played Santa Glaus to many, has escaped your fate. So don’t isolate yourself as a martyr. Be a real philosopher, and forget it.” Then in a vain attempt to sting him out of his lethargy to a normal sense of values, I dared: “Be careful, or you’ll find yourself nursing a persecution mania!”

But the only reaction to this last bolt was a rather spiritless challenge to show him where he was wrong in his facts.

Although Judge Edgar Zook urged the plaintiffs to allow him to apportion the water, which he was empowered to do, their lawyer declined to consider this. “We stand or fall,” was his ultimatum. On November 14, the injunction was dissolved. Jack, desiring in neighborly manner to convince the plaintiffs of the veracity of claims upon which his testimony had been based, drove around inviting one and all to break bread with us at noon on Friday the 17th, and accompany him on a little tour of inspection. Nearly all accepted, and with one or two exceptions it was their last meeting with the big neighbor whose visions for agricultural welfare were for the most part incomprehen sible to them. Jack appeared very bright during the meal, and no business was talked until its conclusion. But when we started out of doors, he became all earnest enthusiasm to persuade his opponents to the worth of his moral as well as legal rights in the matter at issue. One of them was heard to sigh:

“We should never have gone into this fight with you!”

And another: “What a pity we didn’t get togelher with you in the first place and thrash out this matter instead of rushing into court with it!”

Saturday I myself went to bed. I cannot, to this day, name my illness; but looking back it seems that I was on the verge of a nerve-collapse. I must have been laboring under too great anxiety. The Thursday before, when Ernest Hopkins and two cameramen had been photographing Jack both for “movies” and “stills,” I had suddenly, in one or two of the poses, noticed something in Jack’s face, or an accession of something more than dimly felt of late, that struck fear into me. It might be described as a deadness — or an absence of life; something that no face, upon an upright figure, should be. Others were full of vivacity, with all that Jack could command of charm and aliveness — sitting with his rifle, laughing from the high seat of the water cart, or driving two monster Shire mares in the manure-spreader. How eloquent, like a message of the year’s increase, that oval ring of fertilizer lay for weeks upon his field until erased by the winter rains! How eloquent was the whole fruitful prospect, when he lay, in his own White Silence, in the midst of the fair land of his devising! To me, then, wandering among his kindly herds, in the effort to orient myself with a new universe, came the thought that he, our Jack, was the most eloquent dead man in all the world. That small, potent hand had written a deathless scroll upon the hills, and he seemed to live

and speak and move at one with the growth he had encouraged in the pregnant dust of his Sweet Land. One could not quit and lie down in the face of such vital challenge to make short shrift of tears and rise to carry his banner as long as fate should be generous enough to let one work. When on a day I gallop along the blossoming ways to Jack's mountain meadows, missing my Strong Traveler, it takes little effort still to hear his blithe, companionable "Toot! Toot!" I would feel no startlement did he emerge, reining the Outlaw from the shadows of the trees, laughing from under the cowboy hat.

He had been radiant in his hope that had no horizon. "I want to live a hundred years!" was his lusty slogan, repeated within a fortnight of his death. "See the dozens of boxes of notes filed away? Why, writers I know are looking about for plots, and I've enough here to keep me busy with twice a hundred novels!"

It was the expression of just such exuberance that Jack felt in this stanza of John G. Neihardt's:

Let me live out my years in heat of blood!
Let me lie drunken with the dreamer's wine!
Let me Hot see this soul-house built of mud
Go toppling to the dust — a vacant shrine!

When he was gone, I smiled with appreciation of an enthusiastic, but uninformed, reviewer who, despite Jack's fifty-odd books written within seventeen years, credited him with more than double that number, "to say nothing of other forms of literature."

And there was also a letter that pleased me, written on November 20, and never read by Jack:

"I have just seen your picture, driving two huge draft-horses to a manure-spreader. This is the picture of a man with a wagonload of fertilizer. He is going to spread it over an acre of ground and make it fertile. In reality the man has an inexhaustible supply of mental pabulum which he spreads over the whole world, the dark spots are made lighter, the sloughs of despond are drained and made to blossom . . . the weary and heavy laden are lifted up. . . . In reality you are subsoil-plowing the world, preparing it for the seeds of Universal Brotherhood, the while you dream dreams." It would not be hard to imagine him a happy ghost revisiting his beloved lands or the running tides of San Francisco Bay, irresistibly drawn back to

". . . The horses in the wagons with their kind long faces,
And little boats that climb upon the waves."

I could but think, viewing the excellence he left behind, the purity of his purpose, the way he went straight to his goal, that he made a shining exception to the rule that

"The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones."

I was sad when, on Saturday the nineteenth, our tenth wedding anniversary, I was unable to join Jack and a quaint woman guest at dinner. Jack brought her in to meet me, and later, having settled her somewhere with a book, returned to stroke my throbbing head. I remember reminding him of the fact that I was born and married in

the same month, and that eight days hence, the twenty-seventh, would be my birthday. How little I imagined that there would intervene the date of my widowhood! Yet doom was in the air. Subtly I felt its clutch, and this was all my malady.

Jack wrote with unabated industry on Monday morning, and in the afternoon he came and coaxed me in a cheery and loving way to pull myself together and accompany him up-mountain. He wanted to see again a piece of land that adjoined the ranch, which he recalled as being well watered by springs.

"I may buy it," he said. "I could develop the springs, and that would mean bigger crops, bigger and better cattle and horses, life, more life, Mate-Woman! Oh, it's big, and I have so many plans and so much to do! Come on up with me."

It hurt to refuse, but I felt too weak and tired to face the long ride; so he went out alone, looking unusually disappointed. Yet what strength was mine but half a hun-dred hours later to meet the worst and not fail — so strangely are we constituted.

Upon his return he came breaking through the house with his merriest step to tell me every detail of his exploration.

"I found the trail without any trouble," he told me, "and when I came to the field I had in mind, there was a young farmer plowing. We talked quite a while, and I got off old Fritz to handle the soil myself. I found it of very good quality. It ran through my fingers, so friable, you know. I've discovered who owns it, and I'm going to take up the matter as soon as I can land the prospect of some money in New York. Maybe that autobiographical stuff will pay for it. Then further: "I'm planning to go on the twenty-ninth. And you're still not coming with me?" he finished wistfully. Then he resumed the tale of his projects for increasing the abundance upon his acres.

There followed a wakeful night for Jack, and he rose very late, frankly blue, and complaining of fatigue. The dysentery was so much worse that I protested at his taking no measures to check an alarming condition. He worked but a short time, and the few pages of manuscript were the last he ever set hand to. The several letters he dictated to the machine were transcribed afterward by his secretary. The very last letter he ever talked into the horn was the following:

"Editor Every Week,

"My dear sir:

"Curses on you, 'Every Week'! You keep a busy man busy over-time trying to get rid of you while unable to tear himself away. I wish the man who writes the captions for your photographs had never been born. I just can't refrain from reading every word he writes.

"And the rest of your staff bothers me the same way.

"Hereby registering my complaint,

"Sincerely yours,

"Jack London." The last literary notes he ever penciled, I take from his bed-side tablet:

"Socialist autobiography.

"Martin Eden and Sea Wolf, attacks on Nietzeschean philosophy, which even the socialists missed the point of."

Another page:

"In late autumn of 1916, when Adamson Bill (8 hrs. for Railroad Brotherhoods) rushed at the last tick of the sixtieth second of the twelfth hour, through Congress and Senate and signed by President Wilson, agreed with my forecast of favored unions in Iron Heel."

"Novel.

"Historical novel of 80,000 words — love — hate — primitiveness. Discovery of America by the Northmen — see my book on same, also see Maurice Hewlett's 'Frey and his Wife.' Get in interpretation of the genesis of their myths, etc., from their own unconsciousness."

He did not go out all day, and slept in the afternoon, rousing himself with an effort. Eliza came over to talk ranch business, and they were still at it when the first and then the second gong sounded for our supper. Having shaken off the half-stupor in which he had awakened, he had become very excited outlining his immediate intention to erect on the ranch a general store, a school, and a post-office. I heard him wind up:

"There are enough children on the ranch to open a school. The ranch people can have their homes here, trade here at better prices, be born here, grown up here, get their schooling here, and if they die they can be buried on the Little Hill, where the two Greenlaw children's graves are. . . . No, I haven't in mind a community in the usual sense of a reform colony. I only look forward to making the place self-sustaining for every soul upon it."

Five days after that utterance, Jack London's own ashes were laid there on the whispering ridge.

Eliza told me later that in those days she worried about the over-working of Jack's brain. As far as possible she met him, yet wondered how he expected her to put into prompt execution the enormous tasks he prepared. A lesser man, in the throes of the toxemia that was destroying him, would have evinced a lesser "mania." Jack's mental vigor was spent logically along the lines of his ambition.

Even with modern familiarity with body chemistry, scientists are not able to determine with exactitude the nature of the toxins that produce uremia. "A gastro-intestinal type of uremia," the doctors pronounced Jack's disorder. The symptoms had been present for a long time — stomachic disturbances, insomnia, sporadic melancholia, dysentery, rheumatic edema in ankles, and dull headaches alternating with the speeding up of his mental enginery. Convulsions were absent, and the only coma was that in which he breathed his last.

When Jack at length parted from Eliza that night of the twenty-first, he brought with him into the warm and cozy veranda the sweeping current of his fervor, and continued talking in the same vein. But I saw that he was strung to a breaking pitch of excitement.

“Your duck was perfection half an hour ago,” I said, “but I’m afraid it is far from that by now.”

But he was not interested in ducks, and spoke much more than he ate, roving into a future heydey of the ranch. I distinctly recall one part of his conversation, and am again made glad for his clean soul:

There’s a big slump coming in real estate, country, not city. Recollect that man who came the other day to interest me in some of the land among the little hills north of us? I didn’t like the looks of his speculation. But if I cared to play the dirty business game, I could buy in largely when the slump comes, cut up the property and later on sell, as that man expects to do, to poor people at big profit. But I don’t care to make money that way, Mate-Woman,” he broke off earnestly. “My hands are pretty clean, aren’t they?”

I could thankfully respond to that. His business was clean: his vocation, the making of books; his avocation, agriculture.

He did not ask for music, nor did he frolic with the fox terrier, Possum, as he had done so much of late, testing that keen little brain and great heart in a hundred ways. In half an hour, Jack’s exuberance had worn out; and with an apprehension to which I had been no stranger of late, I saw that he was getting argumentative, as if looking for trouble lest he fall into melancholy. He picked up two wooden box-trays of reading matter that he had brought with him, and lifted them to the table on which stood his almost untasted supper.

“Look,” he said, his voice low and lifeless, “see what I’ve got to read to-night.”

“But you don’t have to do it, mate,” I said, trying to stir his spirit. “Always remember that you make all this work and overwork for yourself, and it must be because you choose to do it rather than to rest. My ancient argument, you know!”

There followed a colloquy upon relative values, and then he stood up abruptly, came around the small table, and flung himself on the couch into my arms.

“Mate-Woman, Mate-Woman, you’re all I’ve got, the last straw for me to cling to, my last bribe for living. You know. I have told you before. You must understand. If you don’t understand, I’m lost. You’re all I’ve got.”

“I do understand,” I cried. “I understand that there’s too much for you to do, and that you’re straining too hard to get it done. Are you so bound on the wheel that you cannot ease up a little, both working and thinking? You are going too fast. You are too aware. And you are ill. Something will snap if you don’t pull up. You are tired, perilously tired, tired almost to death. What shall we do? We can’t go on this way!”

The green shade was well down over his face, and I could not see his eyes. But the corners of his mouth drooped pathetically. Poor lad, my poor boy — he was, in deed, tired to death.

We lay there for perhaps an hour, he resting, sometimes sighing, saying little except by an exchange of sympathetic pressures which were our wont. How thankfully I remember an old vow that never, under any provocation, would I ignore caress of his! A few sentences of that Hour are too sacred and too personal to be repeated, and yet

they were the frequent expressions of our daily round — in the last analysis they were an expression of the ever-narrowing values of life, working the changes upon his "bribe for living."

All at once, turning slightly, he put his arms around my neck.

"I'm so worn for lack of sleep. I'm going to turn in." Rising, he gave voice to that which so startled me.

"Thank God, you're not afraid of anything!"

Never shall I know why it came from him unless it was he knew the unthinkable was upon him, that I would very shortly lose his dear comradeship, and felt that I would be gallant to cope with that disaster.

When in the days to follow Jack's holographic will was read, first in the family circle, next by Judge T. C. Denny, in court, and tacit responsibilities were made known, I could not help reverting to that fervent exclamation. Or was it an entreaty, a supplication? If a prayer, at least he had answered it by his own passive action in neglecting, during the half-decade the Will had lain in deposit, to alter a line of it. In effect it is a love letter, written by a wise man who knew our metal, and he named Eliza Shepard and my cousin Willard L. Growall, as executors. But Jack gave loophole for discontent and criticism in that, beyond trifling provision for various beneficiaries, he stipulated:

"Whatever additional may be given them shall be a benefaction and a kindness from Charmian K. London and shall arise out of Charmian K. London's goodness and desire.

Having not forfeited his trust, I am proud to append his closing paragraph:

"The reason that I give all my estate to Charmian K. London, with exceptions noted, is as follows: Charmian K. London, by her personal fortune, and, far more, by her personal aid to me in my literary work, and still vastly far more, by the love, and comfort, and joy, and happiness she has given me, is the only person in this world who has any claim or merit earned upon my estate. This merit and claim she has absolutely earned, and I hereby earnestly, sincerely, and gratefully accord it."

After he had gone to his room, I thought to cool my distressed head by a stroll in the blue starlight. The burden of my thought was that matters could not go on in this way, that I must make an effort to shake Jack into recognizing that he would have to change his physical habits.

When I reëntered the house at about nine, it was on tiptoe. Jack's light was burning. Peeping across from my own quarters, I saw that his head had fallen upon his chest, the eyeshade down. As I looked, he made a slight movement, as if settling to sleep; and knowing his sore need of repose, I did not venture a chance of disturbing his first slumber. The last work in which he read that night, was a small, rusty, calf volume, "Around Cape Horn, Maine to California in 1852, Ship James W. Paige. Myself half-exhausted from emotion and lack of rest, I went to bed, read a few moments in "The Wayside Lute," by Lizette Woodworth Reese, and fell asleep for the first unbroken eight hours I had known in weeks — thereby shat-tering any latent faith I may ever

have entertained in the sweet code of telepathy between those close in sympathy. As if to me a prophesy, one of the poems on which I went to sleep was this:

"House, how still you are;
Hearth, how cold!
He was vital as a star,
As the April mold.
Friend and singer, lad and knight,
Very dear; —
Hearts, how bare the dark, the light,
Since he is not here!"

But the last lines I scanned, and which keep impinging now upon memory, were these:

"Loose me from tears, and make me see aright
How each hath back what once he stayed to weep;
Homer his sight, David his little lad!"

When, at ten minutes past eight the next morning, my eyes opened upon Eliza standing by my bed, with Sekinè, our Japanese boy, in the background, I said, "Yes, what is it?" knowing well that only the gravest urgency brought them there. And just as quietly Eliza replied:

"Sekinè could not wake Jack, so came right to me. I think you'd better come in and see what you can do."

The stertorous respiration could be heard before we entered the sleeping-porch. Jack, unconscious, was doubled down sidewise, showing plain symptoms of poisoning. By means of strong coffee we had succeeded in producing some reaction before the doctors arrived and the real battle for Jack's life began, but not at any time did we succeed in coaxing the limp form to any effort. The physicians first summoned were A. M. Thompson and W. B. Hayes of Sonoma; followed by J. Wilson Shiels from San Francisco, and Jack's own surgeon, W. S. Porter. It was only by holding him up, one on a side, that Jack could be kept in a sitting posture on the edge of the bed; and when ranchmen, waiting all day at call, had him on his feet, equilibrium of the heavy and nerveless figure was maintained only by sheer strength of his supporters. Body and will could not coöperate, and but several times, in the middle of the day, was there a flicker of intelligence. Every legitimate kind of shock was resorted to. Physically he was for the most part beyond effort, but half-conscious response was obtained when we shouted alarming tidings across the abysm of coma:

"Man, man, wake up! The dam has burst! Wake, man, wake!" This caused a shudder in the congested, discolored countenance, the head jerked, the fixed and awful eyes made a superhuman effort to focus. There was a glimmer of consciousness, evanescent as the dying light along the wires in an electric bulb that has been snapped off. The awareness faded, faded. But oh, the pang of happiness even this brief acknowledgment lent us who stood by, together or by turn, in the struggle of those midday hours!

When the news of harm to his dam had been reiterated to the point of intolerable agony of rousing from so deadly lethargy, we were rewarded by observing that he protested, with the leaden vigor of one half-thralled in nightmare, by slowly beating the mattress with a loosely-clenched right fist. The left was never raised. Whereupon shaking and shouting were resumed, with a like outcome. Although on verge of tears of pure joy at this encouragement, I could but note, with a sickening sense of futility, that body and will were at sharp variance — the closer we forced cognition of our intent to resuscitate, the more rational became the opposition. He was, I see it, setting the last fleeting effort of his life, of his reasoned will, against rehabilitation of that life and will.

Then, realizing this in spirit, I desisted, inwardly at least, to fight, to hope. One thing, however, I must do: establish one last mental contact, to serve me all the deprived years that should befall. "Let me try something," I said, and they set him upright upon the edge of the bed, his helpless feet upon the fur rug.

Face to face, seizing him firmly by the shoulders, I shook him, not roughly, but decisively, and repeated:

"Mate! mate! You must come back! Mate! You've got to come back! To me! Mate! Mate!"

He came back. Of course he came back. Slowly, as something rising from the unfathomable well of eternity, full knowledge brimmed into those eyes that drew to mine in a conscious regard, and the mouth smiled, a fleeting, writhen smile. It seemed as if my unbodied soul went out to meet his in that instant. Instant it was, ineffable, brief. But it contained as great, as glorious, a meeting of two as ever took place upon this planet. Yet it was not enough. Again I sent out the call to him upon the brink — and again the smile. Was it of hail and faiewell to life as he had known it? Or of love, and the bliss of one perfect moment of understanding? Or was it of victory, that he, by lack of resistance, had beaten us all out, and thus invited "the ultimate nothingness," his passing behind the curtains into "The darkness that rounds the end of life"? Perhaps there was, too, upon the lips that smiled awry and vainly strove to speak, the twist of contempt for the dissolution that was upon him. What would we not give to know those words he could not frame!

What I love to believe, when all else is said, is that he, who gave life and death an equal supremacy in his affection, was redeeming a promise made so long ago that it is woven into the fabric of all memories of him.

"Death is sweet. Death is rest. Think of it! — to rest for ever! I promise you that whensoever and wheresoever Death comes to meet me, I shall greet Death with a smile."

How the great ones have walked arm-in-arm with Death! Thus Robert Louis Stevenson to the beloved Assassin: "I have been waiting for you these many years. Give me your hand, and welcome."

Where was he, our Jack, all that day we warred with his fate? What was it he so hated to forswear in order to answer our importunity? Judging reasonably enough

by the dreams of his latter years, I hazarded that he was wandering purposefully in that same land of green fields, intent, watchful, happy. It had been the same with his father during a longer period of alternate unconscious periods — the long life-desire fulfilled. This, oh, surely, is what we tortured the son from! — But with the last breath which left his body — what of the bright dream? When the splendid head, no longer instinct with resolution, ceased from its cerebration, hard it was to agree with that same cerebration that the Thing that Thinks is one with the Thing that Dies! How I should love to believe that he, liberated, opened eyes upon the range of illimitable possibilities that had hitherto been bounded by failing mortality. Yet who am I to invoke for him, who declared for perfect rest, otherwise than Ambrose Bierce's wish to a friend:

"Light lie the earth upon his dear, dead heart,

And dreams disturb him never.

Be deeper peace than Paradise his part

For ever and for ever."

Or,"the supreme beatitude of rest," as Jack's friend John Myers O'Hara has it.

Months after Jack's death I had the first and only "vision" of my experience. When a great asking comes upon me, in ungifted hours when my lamp burns low, I think of it. Rising one morning with a renewed cheerfulness that bubbled over into song, suddenly, as clearly as ever I had looked upon the man, I saw Jack stepping blithely in a green domain, the very picture of an Elysian pastoral, whistling comradely to an unmistakable friend shadowing his heel — Peggy the Beloved, our small canine Irish saint of the Southern Seas. What was it — a miscalculation of my Unconscious that let the dear dream spill over into Foreconsciousness to rejoice the day?

The sun went down upon our endeavor. They had brought him across into my glass porch, scene of so much quiet happiness, and there he died upon the couch where, a scant twenty-four hours earlier, he had cried to me: "You must understand my need! You're all I've got left!"

We watched. The good breathing that had upborne expectation of recovery began to lag, and more labored became intake and suspiration. I became aware that one of the Sonoma physicians was leading me from where I stood at Jack's head. Mechanically we sat down in my room. Minutes passed, a few, an eternity of them, it seemed. Longer were the intervals between those breaths so plainly heard, a very great interval, another, and then silence absolute, the sheerest vacuum of sound I had ever known. No one moved until Sekinè, his face an oriental mask of ivory, stepped in and bent his head to me.

I, who had never before lost any one essentially close; I, who had been protected from all outward semblances of death, half an hour later went out with my own dead and sat by the sheeted form until, with every atom of understanding I possessed, I had reckoned for all time with the hitherto unthinkable: that ultimate silence lay upon the lips of my man. Let me review that day a thousand-thousand times, there is nothing new to face. The worst had befallen; the future was plain, a horizonless expanse of ready

work in which one must in good time build out of the wreck a renewed, if different, joy of living and serving. It was good. It has worked. It has continued to work, test incontrovertible. I proclaim to these who mourn overmuch, the worth and solace of my remedy.

When, later in the evening, we crept, his true sister and I, into Jack's old sleeping-place, all was restored to order by Sekinè. The broad bed was laid and turned, the pillows piled ready for the reader, the little table set to rights, even to cigarettes, freshly-sharpened pencils, and thermos bottles of water and milk. It was incredible that the one-time tenant should be lying, cold and insensible, across the house. We looked at each other dumbly, and I sought the Japanese lad.

"We always do it in our country for those who have died," he said unsteadily. "And I thought — — " His explanation trailed into silence as he turned away. As long as he remained with the household, the bed was always in order, and we kept a single flower there and on the worktable.

Once, twice, in his later years, Jack, in chance reference to the possibility of his dying first, departed from his familiar careless injunction of Oh, if I should go, scatter my ashes to the winds, or, if you prefer, upon the bay or ocean!" Eliza and I both recalled the time, when, speaking of his love and hopes for the ranch, he remarked:

"If I should beat you to it, I wouldn't mind if you laid my ashes on the knoll where the Greenlaw children are buried. And roll over me a red boulder from the ruins of the Big House. I wouldn't want many to come. You might ask George."

But before his chosen ceremonial there were thrust in occasions which, left to his own choice, he would not have stipulated. Clothed in his favorite gray, as in gray I had first seen him sixteen years before, for a day in his work room he lay, in a gray casket that was like nothing so much as a cradle. Passing by I was touched by the smallness of it. I had thought Jack a larger man.

The neighbors came and went, in tearful awe of the unexpected demise of the lovable friend they yet had never understood. Little as he would have approved of exhibiting the discarded shell of him, it would have been needless affront to the tribute these people were accustomed to pay to the dead. And they had loved him more than they thought. As one of them said: "I tell you, the death of Jack means a sorry day to many. He gave away a meal ticket and added to it a bit, too. His heart went out to the fellow who carried a roll of blankets — or no blankets."

On Friday, at dawn, I was awakened from fitful sleep by the rumble of the death-wagon coming up the hill. When, delaying, I slipped in to the abandoned workroom, the open window through which he had so often passed alive told of the manner in which Jack London had gone from his house.

Sekinè came to where I sat, thinking, adjusting, and held out a handful of keys, the dingy Klondike coin-sack of chamois, and a few stray notes, all taken from the ranch suit Jack had last worn. Sekinè murmured something about having put some notes in the breast-pocket of the burial clothes, together with a pencil and pad — "Just as he always had them, Missis," he whispered.

“But, Sekinè, the notes, what notes?” I asked, biting back the trembling of my lips at thought of the pitiful last service the boy had rendered, but fearful lest some latest words of Jack’s had gone beyond recall.

“Something I wrote, and sent with him — no one will know,” Sekinè explained. “I wrote,” raising his head, ‘Your Speech was silver, your Silence now is golden.’ That was all. It was my Good-by.”

My next step was to Jack’s work-table, upon which lay the unfinished manuscript of “Cherry,” just as he had laid down his pen. There, in that moment, looking at what was but an example of the myriad things he had left, in a flash it came to me:

“My life cannot be long enough to mend the broken things — to carry on the tasks that are left for me.”

Eliza did me a supreme service that morning, when she accompanied Jack’s casket from Glen Ellen to the Crematory in Oakland. One who met the little cortège in Oakland was Yoshimatsu Nakata, whom Sekinè had succeeded. No, I was not ill, as the report went out. I pre-ferred to remain away from a funeral which represented Jack’s idea so little, but which I felt should be accorded to his daughters and their mother. Several friends, including Frederick Bamford and others of the old Ruskin Club, were also there, and two or three persons who had corresponded with Jack now saw him for the first time. A short address was delivered by the Rev. Edward B. Payne, who was familiar with Jack’s unorthodox views; and a poem, which had been asked of George Sterling, was read above his friend.

As regards the manner of his disposal, Jack himself, only a few weeks before, had had this to say, in reply to a query from Dr. Hugo Erichson, writing for the Cremation Association of America, the same having been submitted to a number of persons of national prominence:

“Glen Ellen, California, October 16, 1916.

“Dear Doctor Erichson: —

“In reply to yours of recent date, undated — —

“Cremation is the only decent, right, sensible way of ridding the world of us when the world has ridden itself of us. Also, it is the only fair way, toward our children, and grandchildren, and all the generations to come after us. Why should we clutter the landscape and sweet-growing ground with our moldy memories? Besides, we have the testimony of all history that all such sad egotistic efforts have been failures. The best the Pharaohs could do with their pyramids was to preserve a few shriveled relics of themselves for our museums.

I have little connected memory of Friday and Saturday. I know there was work to do, and that I slept long night hours under the ministering hands of dear women. And I walked about the farm precincts, looking rather curiously at the young life, animal and vegetable, which Jack had fostered into being. Yet he, the biggest “mote of life between the darks” had vanished in a day! Wherever I appeared, I was conscious of some workman slipping away, or a face turned aside in a handkerchief. The half hundred

men, many of whom had never conversed with their employer, seemed unnerved by the sudden gap in their little universe.

Jack, himself, would not have believed the warmth there was toward him in the skeptical old earth. As one expressed it:

"To me it seems like having a light turned off, with too few already burning, leaving the road darker and more dismal and difficult."

It was almost as if his actual death purged the mankind who knew him and his work, of jealousy, hate, and carping criticism; put a seal upon the lips of the meanest. Even his bitterest detractors tried to be fair and charitable. If I needed corroboration of my own belief in this man of mine, I could recall the mourning of his world. It must have arisen from his usefulness, his big contribution of heart's blood to humanity. Praise of him from all quarters and in many tongues from every class of society, literally from rich man, poor man, beggar man, chief, doctor, lawyer, and the rest — aye, thief, and worse! Out of prisons has come to me a wail at his passing; for the immaterial sweetness of Jack and his code, squareness, his long-suffering charity, that patriarchal kindness, had passed in and still live behind the bars.

To him, so articulate in the Great Common Things: "Three common pitmen in Durham will keep his memory green while hearts are able to respond to the bounteous thought of his love," reads a letter from England. "The sweetness of his life and work can never die."

And another, no less than his trail-mate, Hargrave, wrote:

"Always I have been assaulted by doubts; and then, coincident with the message that Jack had passed the portal that bars the Unknown from the Known, those doubts (independent of mental processes) were dispelled. I gave no reason for it — the reasons of men are such vain things in the presence of the Infinite." This from one more "sour-dough": "I loved the man because because he was a man; By the Turtles of Tasman, He was a man!"

And this for the premanency of his message:

"He touched the lowly side of life with a pen horn of love and bitter experience. . . . He had lived with down and outs, and with animals. . . . And he wrote their tragic lives as no human ever wrote them before. . . . So long as there are human hearts that feel the tender touch of love, so long as there are honest souls that revolt at cruelty and oppression, so long will Jack London's books and stories live and be read."

"If Jack London had had faith, what a great preacher he would have made!" Dr. H. J. Loken, of Berkeley, exclaimed to his congregation, and went on to declare that his subject was of a deeply religious nature, pointing out that his criticisms had been of religion as found in the churches and not against Christianity itself.

One thing I do clearly recollect of those two days before Jack's ashes were placed upon the Little Hill: Eliza and I walked there alone in a wintry sunset. Hazen, who had preceded us with a spade to mark the spot, received his instructions about the red boulder. Six horses were needed to move it upon the steep knoll.

On Sunday morning, November 26, Ernest Matthews, accompanied by George Sterling, brought the urn from Oakland. We wreathed it with ferns and with yellow primroses from the sweet old garden. With the primroses, as a tribute to Jack's adopted home, Hawaii, I wound the withered rust-colored leis of ilima once given Jack in Honolulu by Frank linger and Colonel Sam Parker, now, too, both under the ground. One terrible moment was mine when, in the rain, I carried the small, light vessel to the wagon, the same in which Jack had so blithely driven his four. The urn seemed to gather weight until I thought I should be pressed to the earth, but I reached the hands that placed it upon the hight seat before it had become insupportable.

Eliza and I, together, and my people, followed the horses at a distance. When we had all gathered upon the dripping slope, Mr. G. L. Parslow, our oldest ranchman, received the urn from Ernest Matthews, and set it, with its flowers, in the tile already cemented into the ground. At that moment a great flood of sun-gold spilled upon us from a break in the leaden sky.

As the trowel relentlessly filled the space within the tile, with that curious transparency of mind in crises in which details stand out, I observed with satisfaction that was a reflection of Jack's effective sense of proportion, that exactly the right proportion of mortar had been mixed, not a trowelful too much or too little.

No word stirred the hush. No prayer, for Jack London prayed to no God but humanity. The men, uncovered, reverent, stood about among the trees, and when their senior had risen, the stone was rolled into place.

Before we turned to retrace our forlorn steps to the house, it had come to me, once and forever, that this unpretentious sepulture beneath the tall pine was but a self-chosen memorial. Death, with Jack, had not seemed like death. Nature had slipped the moorings, and he, "bold sailor of the grey-green sea," had gone out with the tide, gallant, victorious, cruising beyond the outer reef, into the West, to a paradise of green lands with an ocean of sails just over the hill. This rugged monument, by his own wish, could never be a place for mourning, a spot to sadden his sweet and happy mountainside. And, by that wish and whatever gods may be, it never has been. Beautiful, singing with birds, vocal with winds among the tree-tops, Jack's Little Hill appeals only to contemplation and tender melancholy. There is nothing better than that the pilgrim, standing above the mellow purple boulder, should say:

"By the Turtles of Tasman, he was a man!"

Charmian London
Book of Jack London
1921

Published five years following London's death, this biographical book offers much insight into the famous writer, as viewed by his second wife. Her writings about London are considered by scholars to be an important, though sometimes flawed, source of information, offering many letters from and to the great writer.

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