

Editor's Drawer

Botts's Beautifier

BY WILBUR D. NESBIT

I T was fully six months after the episode of the vibration disintegrator that my friend P. Tetherington Botts, the inventor, came to see me again.

I knew all the time why he was keeping shy of me. He realized that in backing that invention as I did I lost some money. Naturally, like all men who think in a rut, he believed the sinking of that money would make me feel unhappy when I saw him. After we had greeted each other with some formality, we drifted into a general talk on business. I noted that Botts was wearing his usual long frock coat, that his trousers were frayed and mud-spattered as usual at the bottom, and that his silk hat as usual had marks showing where his fingers had brushed the nap the wrong way.

"The trouble with you, Botts," I said, "is that, while you are a great inventor, you never invent anything that everybody wants.

"My inventions," Botts said, stiffening up, "are an art to me."

"Yes," I said, brutally. "They are an Art, with a capital A—and that's just the trouble. They appeal to curiosity and the higher thought. What you want to do is to invent something that appeals to vanity, to human nature, or to—to—"

"That's what I have invented," he interrupted. "And at the same time, if I may say it, I have preserved the dignity of my profession."

Dignity of his profession! Did you ever hear the inventor of a patent corn-shucker talking about dignity and profession after he had sold out for a million?

"What is it this time?" I asked, wearily. "A wireless photograph camera?"

"It is a beautifier," Botts informed me.

I laughed long and merrily.

"A beautifier!" I cried. "Cold-cream? Glycerine and rose-water? Freckle bleach? Peroxide and perfume? Something to remove hair from the face, neck, and arms overnight. Magic cold-cream that fills hollow cheeks? Do you give trading-stamps?"

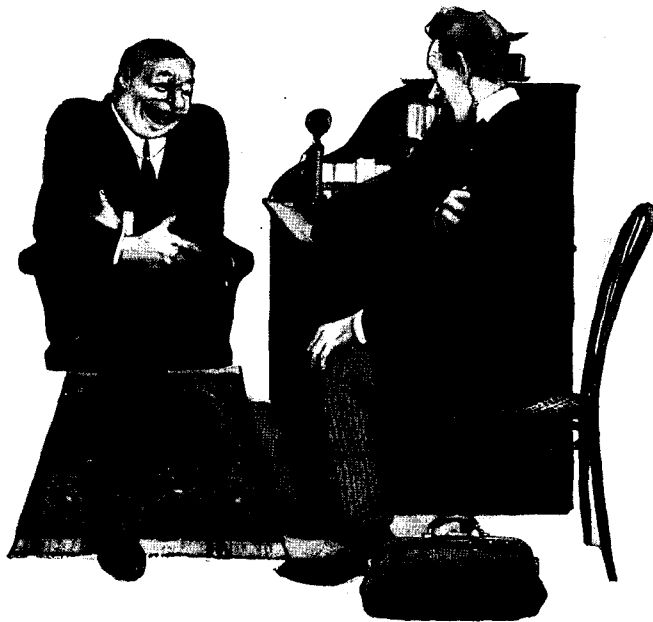
Botts looked at me with a pained expression on his face. Your true idealist cannot understand badinage.

"Wait a minute, Miller," Botts said. "Do you know what you see when you look at anything or anybody? Do you know what it is that enables you to see?"

"My eyes, of course," I answered.

"True, in part. They are the means of sight, through their concentration of the rays of light, impinging them in a reflection upon the retina, from which the impression is conveyed to the brain along the delicate nerves composing the optic trunk."

I lit a cigar and smiled gently. Botts's face wore the rapt expression it always takes on when he is fifty thousand miles



I LAUGHED LONG AND MERRILY

from nowhere and going some mentally. He continued:

"You can't see after night, can you?"

"Sometimes I can, sometimes I can't."

"I mean, that when all is pitch dark you see nothing."

"When I see nothing, I see nothing."

"All well and good. Now, when we see an object we really see the reflection of the rays of light which strike upon it. These rays are thrown back to our eyes and we see it."

"We catch them on the first bounce," I agreed.

"To put it crudely, yes. Now, then. The reason we do not see when all is pitch dark is that no rays of light are reflected to us. Do you gather that?"

"Exactly."

"Now, then," Botts leaned over and tapped my knee with one long, bony finger. "Coat the back of a pane of glass with quicksilver and we have a mirror that throws the rays of light to us, do we not?"

"We do, Botts, we do."

"Now, then. Scrape some of that coating off and the mirror no longer reflects, does it?"

"It don't, Botts, it don't."

"Now, then. Suppose we coat an object, or part of an object, with a substance that will annihilate the reflection of the rays of light. We will not see that object, will we?"

"I suppose not."

"Now, then. One moment."

Botts opened the little grip he was carrying and took therefrom a bottle filled with a colorless liquid.

"I am not what you would call a handsome man, am I?" he inquired. "My nose is too long and there is a mole on my left ear. Aside from these defects, I am passable as to face?"

"Yes."

"Now, then." He pulled the cork of the bottle and I saw that it had attached to it a wire on the end of which was a sponge. (I found this out afterward. I didn't see either wire or sponge at that time. I am saying that I saw this merely figuratively.) He went to a mirror over the wash-stand and softly touched the end of his nose and the mole on his ear with the sponge. Then he turned to me.

His nose was just the right length it should be and the mole on his ear was gone!

"You see—" he began.

"I see I don't see," I answered, bewilderedly.

"Of course. I have discovered this liquid which annihilates the rays of light; stops them in their course, so to speak. It absolutely destroys the reflecting properties of any surface to which it is applied. Any facial blemish is, to all intents and purposes, immediately eradicated when this is applied, for if it is not seen it may as well not exist. Do you grasp that?"

I nodded.

"My name will resound through the ages!" he exclaimed, happily.

"What is the stuff?" I asked.

He explained it, but technically. As nearly as I could gather, it was pure water through which had been sent at high voltage four or five different kinds of electric waves, impulses, and currents.

"What do you call it?" I asked.

"The Reflection Annihilator."

"That won't do. No man or woman will walk into a drug-store and ask for a bottle of Reflection Annihilator. That's too technical."

My commercial mind was beginning to hum. Possibilities! I saw millions! It was the first time P. Titherington Botts had stumbled upon anything worth while—and I would bet ten dollars that he did it accidentally. But just the same, it was a case of striking oil.

"We will call it Botts's Beautifier," I decided. Botts protested weakly. I argued that it would link his name tangibly with his invention; I told him the alliterative title was not only easy to pronounce, but that it was self-explanatory and good advertising in a business sense. Finally he agreed with me.

The details of financing the proposition were soon arranged, as I had to do that thinking. Botts informed me he could manufacture the stuff cheaply; I was to attend to the bottling and distributing. I telephoned to my friend Mayne, the advertising expert, to come over and formulate a campaign. Over the phone I explained to Mayne what I had in mind, and to save time he brought with him his chief copywriter on complexion specialties—a woman.

Miss Martha Samworth was the complexion specialty copy-writer. I would not for anything be disrespectful to a lady, but Miss Martha Samworth was the homeliest woman I ever saw. Mayne knew what he was doing when he retained her. I felt relieved. Hitherto the trouble had always been that we had engaged a really beautiful woman to assist us in our work, Botts had fallen in love with her, and things had gone to smash when she rejected him.

We went over the idea with Mayne and Miss Samworth. Miss Samworth grew interested in it when Botts illustrated the effect of the beautifier upon me by rubbing some of it on the place where my nose humps. I looked in the mirror, too, and you couldn't see the hump.

"Now, then," Botts said, "if Miss Samworth will allow me, I will demonstrate on her, although"—here for the first time in his life he showed the craft of a diplomat—"although it will be like trying to improve the tinting of a rose."

Miss Samworth looked homelier than ever as she smiled her pleasure. Botts rubbed the stuff on her cheeks and brow, going at it very deftly and carefully, putting on just the right amount. I can't tell you what a transformation there was. I can only say that if you were suddenly to see a cabbage turn into a lily you would have an idea of the Miss Samworth who came into my

office and the Miss Samworth who sat before us. She peeped once into the mirror and instantly began fluffing her hair and jerking at her neck ruching. Then she dived into her hand-bag for her powder-puff, but Botts stopped her.

"Don't!" he begged. "You will never need that again!"

Confound it! He was smashed right then and there. Miss Samworth had him tied hand and foot, ready to write sonnets to her eyebrows! But, unkind as it may sound, he had no chance. I was in the field. I, too, had seen Miss Samworth.

You remember the advertising campaign of Botts's Beautifier. I put just exactly one hundred and two thousand large iron dollars into the newspapers within two months, to say nothing of the sampling and demonstrating we did. Demonstrating was easy. We did not have to hunt for pretty girls to show the advantage of using the beautifier—we made the girls pretty. We had leased an old carbonated water factory, Botts installed his apparatus—and insisted that Miss Samworth be made advertising manager with an office in the factory, so that she could be right in the atmosphere.

I set up a desk there, too. I wanted the same atmosphere.

Botts and I almost had a little friction over Miss Samworth. First he would raise her salary as advertising manager and then I would give it another boost. And maybe she wasn't enjoying the rivalry between Botts and myself! We didn't allow it to interrupt our attention to our work, however. Business is business. But when I would go to call on her, Botts would either be there or he would come in right after me. And then the two of us would sit and glare at each other and Botts would keep right on telling Miss Samworth how beautiful she was.

Did I ever tell her anything like that? Only once or twice—just enough for politeness' sake. Botts couldn't realize, as I could, that when you mentioned her beauty you made her understand that you remembered how she looked before she got acquainted with the beautifier.

Nevertheless, Botts gave me a little worry. You take a homely man, and an awkward man, and a pessimistic man (all inventors are pes-

simists) and let him fall deeply in love with a woman, and for the time being he can make Romeo's rope-climbing act go into the supper show. I know. I had Botts for a rival.

One evening I tucked a box of American Beauties under my arm, stuck a box of imported bonbons in my coat pocket, concealed a ring in my vest pocket, and went to call on Miss Samworth. Never mind what my intentions were.

Botts was there. In spite of his use of his beautifier, his face was so long that his chin rubbed his shirt front. I did not need to be told what had happened, but I was told.

"Miller," Botts said, "I am the unhappiest man in the world. Miss Samworth loves another."

"I wouldn't let a little thing like that bother me," I smiled. I thought I knew pretty well who Mr. Other was.

I presented the American Beauties and the bonbons, but retained the ring. Two proposals in one evening is too rapid for even an extraordinary young woman to comprehend.

"I will see you to-morrow, Miss Samworth?" Botts mourned.

"Why, certainly, Mr. Botts; I shall be at the office as usual," she replied. "I hope you will not allow this incident—to break up our friendly relations which I so much enjoy."

"Not at all," Botts sighed, "not at all. Besides, I must apply the beautifier to-morrow. It is the regular day, you know."



VERY DEFTLY AND CAREFULLY PUTTING ON THE RIGHT AMOUNT



SHE HAD NO FACE!

Out of sheer commiseration for Botts, I walked home with him.

"I wouldn't mind it so much," he told me, "if she hadn't referred to it as an incident!"

But next morning he was on deck as usual, and when Miss Samworth arrived he waited in the demonstration-room for her and personally applied the beautifier to her face. Afterward she came into my office. That was my opportunity. I was just about to say something when Botts came in for a moment. He held out his hand to me.

"Good-by for the present, Miller," he said. "I—I must get away for a little rest."

He looked wan. His nose was its old-time length and the mole on his ear was once more on duty. Evidently he was the victim of the most utter dejection. He took Miss Samworth's hand and held it tenderly while he bade her farewell. Then we saw him go to the cashier's cage and get a package of bank-notes. Then he walked on out.

"Too bad," murmured Miss Samworth. "Mr. Botts is such a lovely character."

"Botts is a fine fellow," I said, warmly.

"I am so sorry he takes my rejection of his hand so much to heart," she said, gently.

"But you couldn't help that," I answered. "Your affections, if I may be so bold, are given to another?"

"They are," she whispered, shyly.

I turned and looked out of the window while she straightened up the pages of the advertising copy. Quietly I slipped my thumb and finger into my vest pocket and secured the ring I had put there the night before. Calming and composing myself, I turned about to continue my remarks to her, and I got the greatest shock I ever had in all my life.

She had no face!

It was gone! Invisible! I realized in an instant what had happened. Botts had craftily applied a solution about a hundred times as strong as was necessary, with the result that he had utterly annihilated every ray of light that otherwise would have been reflected from her countenance.

From the position of her top hair I could see that she was looking down. From that empty space between her hair and her collar I heard:

"Yes, Mr. Miller, my affections are placed elsewhere. I am going to be married to Mr. Egbert Ponsonby the first of next month."

"May you have every happiness," I wished her. I couldn't say anything more. I couldn't see any expression of her face; consequently, I did not know whether she realized what a blow I had received. She took up her papers and walked out to her desk. I saw her turn to peep into her mirror and then she shrieked!

Four hours later we had succeeded in allaying her hysterics, but, as the physicians said, it is no easy task to treat a faceless patient. There was a note from Botts, saying that her face would return in two weeks.

There was also a note for me, in his usual broken-hearted vein, saying that he would feel himself the most guilty wretch on earth if he exposed other men to the crushing sorrow that had been his, and for that reason he had burned the formula of the beautifier, pulled the plugs of the reserve tanks, and wished the business to end. He might see me again, he did not know. At present all he could say was that there were wounds that even time could not heal.

The Dinner at Grampa's

WHEN Christmas was—w'y, we all went
To gramma's house, 'cause grampa, he
Is got a leg 'at's stiff an' bent
'Ith no *joint-water* in his knee.
But he don't care! He say some folks
Is *scurce* o' legs—not got a *pair*!
My grampa cracks a lot o' jokes—
An' we et Christmas dinner there.

My gramma—all her hair is white
Like *snow* is, but it isn't *cold*.
An' gramma say 'at my hair might
Be white, too, when I'm just as old.
My papa say we must be nice,
But gramma call my papa "John,"
An' say we don't need *his* ad-vice
To put our comp'ny manners on.

I like my gramma 'most th' same
As I do *mama*, Cousin Lou
An' Cousin Fred an' Cousin Mame
An' all th' others—they do, too.
My gramma's hi-erd girl, she cooked
Whole lots o' mincemeat pie, an' make
More jelly! My, how good it looked!
An' four-five dif'runt kinds o' cake!

Nen all of us we all sit still
While grampa look down at his plate
An' talk about th' he've'ly will—
An' it is pretty hard to wait!

He help us childern first, an' fill
Our plates 'ith turkey stuffin', too,
An' gravy, till it almost spill
Off of th' plate on Cousin Lou!

Nen we all laugh—an' *ever* one
They laugh 'most nearly all th' time,
Bu'cause they're all a-havin' fun.
Nen papa say 'at it's a crime
To let 'at turkey go to waste
Bu'fore us able-bodied men,
'At he ain't hardly had a *taste*—
So grampa help our plates again.

So we had sody biscuits—*hot*!—
An' cider 'at my grampa keep
Down in a bar'l 'at he is got—
It taste just like your foot's asleep.
An' pickles, an' more turkey! Yes,
An' quince puh'serves, an' lots o' jam
An' currant jelly—an' I guess
I didn't know how full I am.

Oh yes! We had *plum-puddin'*, made
O' lots o' things, an' set on fire!
But ain't nobody is afraid
To eat it. An' we all ad-mire
Th' puddin', 'cause my gramma keep
It 'most a year to have it there—
An' nen, w'y, I'm gone sound asleep
Right at th' table in my chair!

W. D. N.



“Revenge”



The Baby.

The Doctor.

The Nurse.

The Mother.

The Father.

Showing their relative Importance

Up To Them

AFTER collection in a certain colored church in Georgia it was the custom of the minister to deposit the offerings in a box which he turned over to the sexton. The two would then hide the box, together with its key, in a place known only to themselves.

Despite these precautions, it was found that small sums of money were being regularly extracted. So one day there was a conference between the two.

"Joseph," said the minister, sternly, "some one is taking church money from the box, and you know that no one has access to it but you and myself."

The sexton was unmoved. "Well, minister," said he, "it's like this: if there's a deficiency, it's between you and me to make it up and say nothing about it."

Changes Contemplated

AMONG the reports handed in to the Navy Department recently was one recommending certain changes to be made in the uniform shirt for the enlisted men. As a matter of briefness it was headed: "Commander-in-chief desires to change shirt."

Not In It

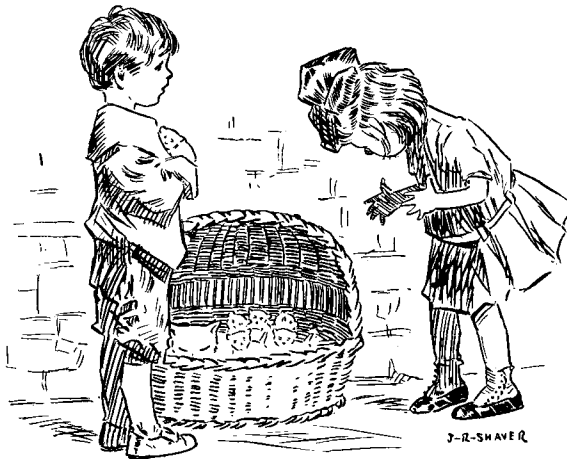
AN old darky named Mose White, in one of the Southern States, walked down the main street one morning in his best black broadcloth suit, with a white rose in his buttonhole and cotton gloves on his large hands.

"Why, Mose," said the proprietor of a large store that he was passing, "are you taking a holiday?"

"Dish yere," said the old man, in a stately voice, "am mah golden weddin', sah. Ah'm sallybratin' hit."

"But your wife," said the storekeeper, "is working as usual. I saw her at the tub as I passed this morning. Why isn't she celebrating, too?"

"Her?" said Mose, angrily. "She hain't got nuffin' to do with hit. She am mah fouth."



Valuable

LUCY. "Oh! won't you give me a kitten?"

TOMMY. "I can't. There's only half a dozen, and we don't want to break the set."

Domestic

"NAME the domestic animals?" asked the teacher one afternoon, when she was giving her small pupils a quiz.

Philip frowned, sucked his pencil, and then manfully did as he was told.

"The cat, the dog, and the hired girl," he wrote in his big, round hand.

How It Was

AGAINST an old Georgia negro, charged with stealing a pig, the evidence was absolutely conclusive, and the judge, who knew the old darky well, said, reproachfully:

"Now, Uncle, why did you steal that pig?"

"Bekase mah pooh family wuz starvin', yo' honnoh," whimpered the old man.

"Family starvin'!" cried the judge. "But they told me you keep five dogs. How is that, Uncle?"

"Why, yo' honnoh," said Uncle, reprovingly, "you wouldn't 'spect mah family to eat dem dogs!"

It Was Excusable

A PROMINENT Boston attorney tells of an American tourist hailing from the West who was out sightseeing in London. They took him aboard the old battleship *Victory*, which was Lord Nelson's flag-ship in several of his most famous naval triumphs. An English sailor escorted the American over the vessel, and, coming to a raised brass tablet on the deck, he said, as he reverently raised his hat:

"Ere, sir, is the spot where Lord Nelson fell."

"Oh, is it?" replied the Westerner, blankly. "Well, that ain't nothin': I nearly tripped on the blame thing myself."

A Native Interpretation

"TELL me," requested the foreign sociologist, "what is the significance of the eagle that is shown on American money?"

"It is," responded the Son of Liberty, "an emblem of its swift flight."



Infallible

NURSIE says that by the pool
Where the great big willow grows,
Is the place all dark and cool
Where the fairies live, she knows.

And she said if we were good,
And should creep on tippy-toes,
All alone, right through the wood,
We should see them—and she knows!

Wish they'd come, because we've stayed
Pretty late, but I suppose
I'm too big to be afraid.

Nursie says so—and she knows!

MARGUERITE DOWNING.

Appropriate

A PHILADELPHIA clergyman tells the following story: "A few years ago I with some of my neighbors was invited to the wedding of a favorite negro cook. During the ceremony the white guests were ranged on one side of the room and the colored guests, in greater number, on the opposite side. After the rites had been performed the colored friends, by request, joined in the singing of:

"Lead, Kindly Light,
Amid the encircling gloom,' etc."



MR. CAT (patriot). "I regret that I have only nine lives to give to my country."

Brothers

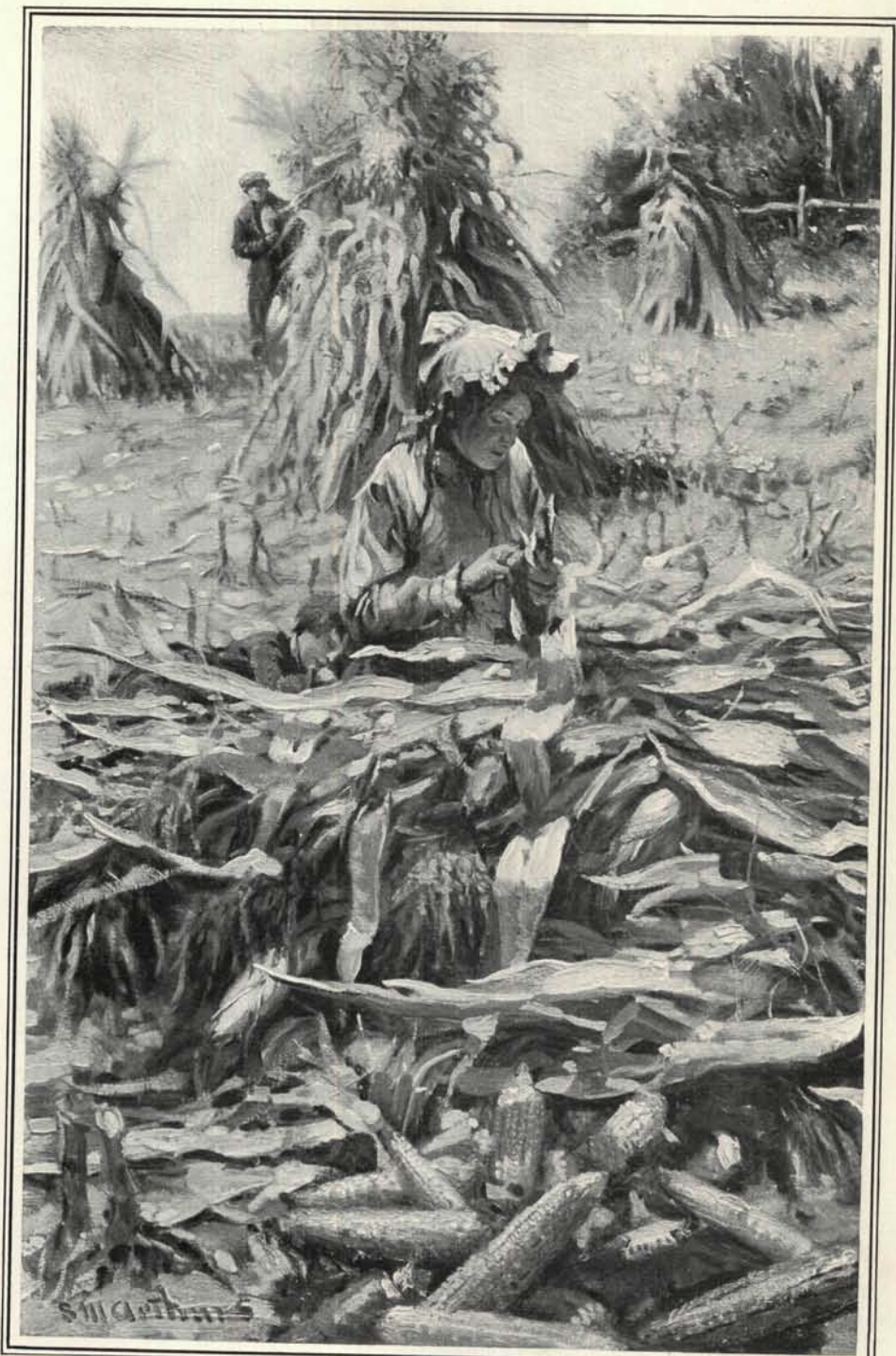
BY S. E. KISER

MY little cousin Elmer he
Has come to live with us; you see
His pa and ma are dead, and so
He had no other place to go,
And he's just six, 'n' I'm 'most eight,
And he can be my brother now;
I'm sorry for him, but it's great
To have him with us, anyhow.

My ma she takes him on her lap
And hugs 'n' pets the little chap,
And pats him on the cheeks 'n' chin,
Because his ma was my ma's twin;
The most fun 'at I ever had
Was since we got him, and there's few
Times when he isn't actin' glad
Because he's got a brother, too.

I used to pray at night I'd get
A little brother some time yet,
But now when I lay down to sleep
I know 'at we've got him to keep,
And so I needn't pray no more,
Not for a brother, anyway;
I hardly ever thought before
That it would pay so well to pray.

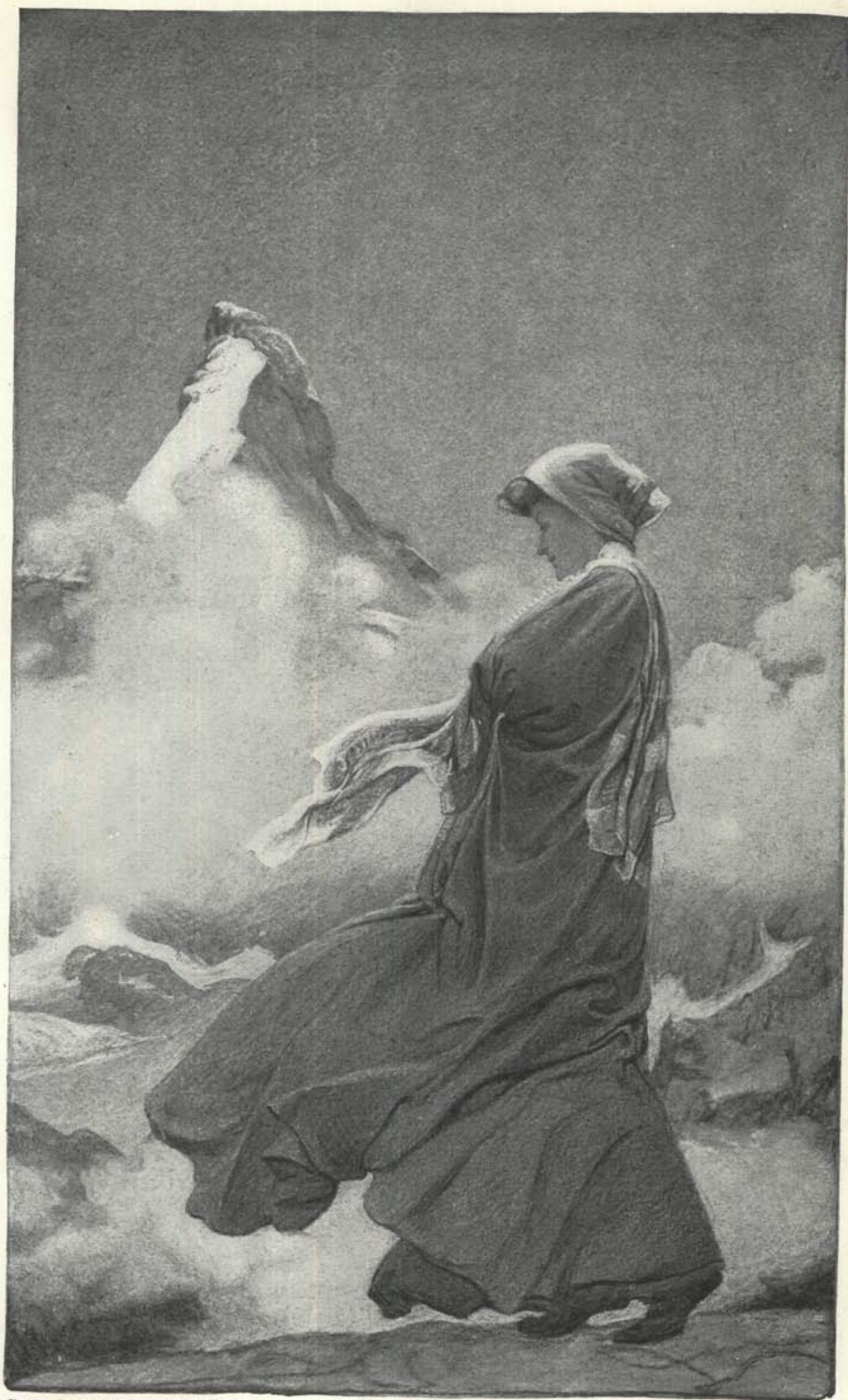
I can't see why ma cries and cries;
'Most always there's tears in her eyes,
And pa takes Elmer on one knee
And keeps the other knee for me,
And tells us stories of the time
When he was little, 'n', somehow,
It makes me proud to think that I'm
A little boy's big brother now.



Drawn by S. M. Arthurs

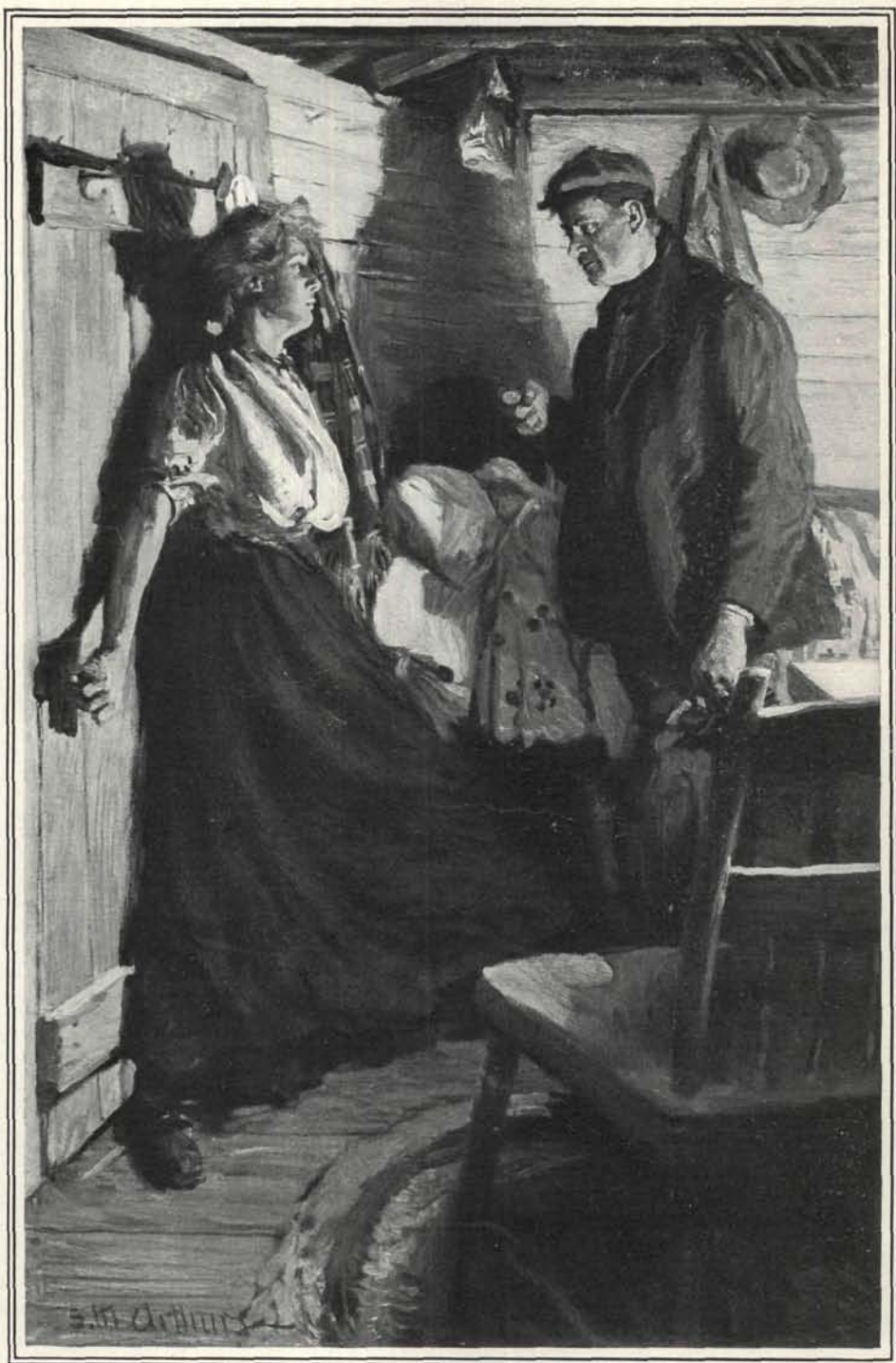
Half-tone plate engraved by C. E. Hart

HE MADE HIS WAY TO THE FIELD, APPROACHING HER FROM BEHIND



Drawn by Elizabeth Shippen Green

THE WIND BLOWING OFF THE GLACIER FLUTTERING HER GOWN



Drawn by S. M. Arthurs

SHE THREW HERSELF AGAINST THE DOOR TO BAR HIS EXIT



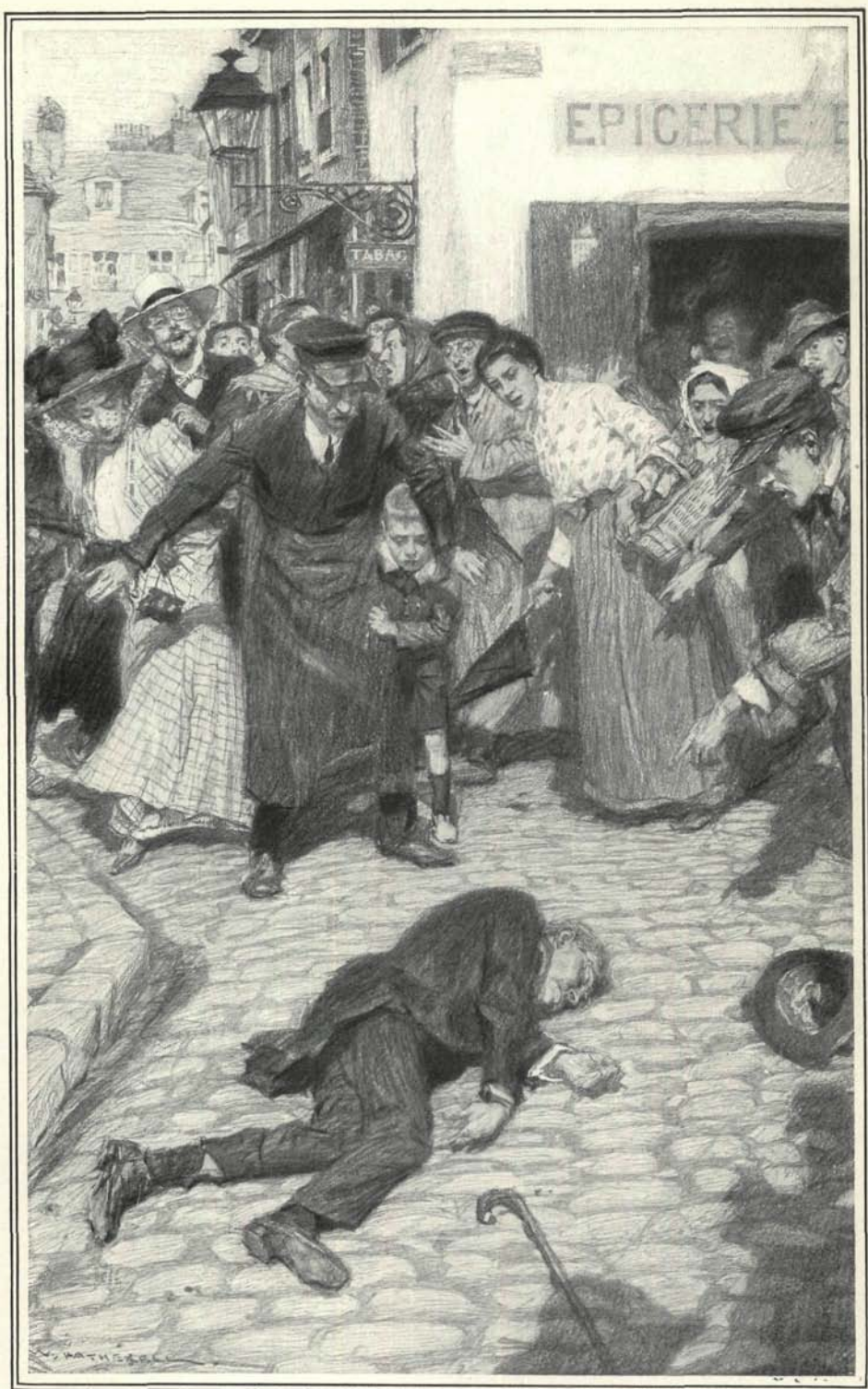
Drawn by Will Foster

"I THOUGHT YOU WOULD PASS A FEW HOURS MORE HAPPILY FOR THE POOR BOY"



Drawn by Will Foster

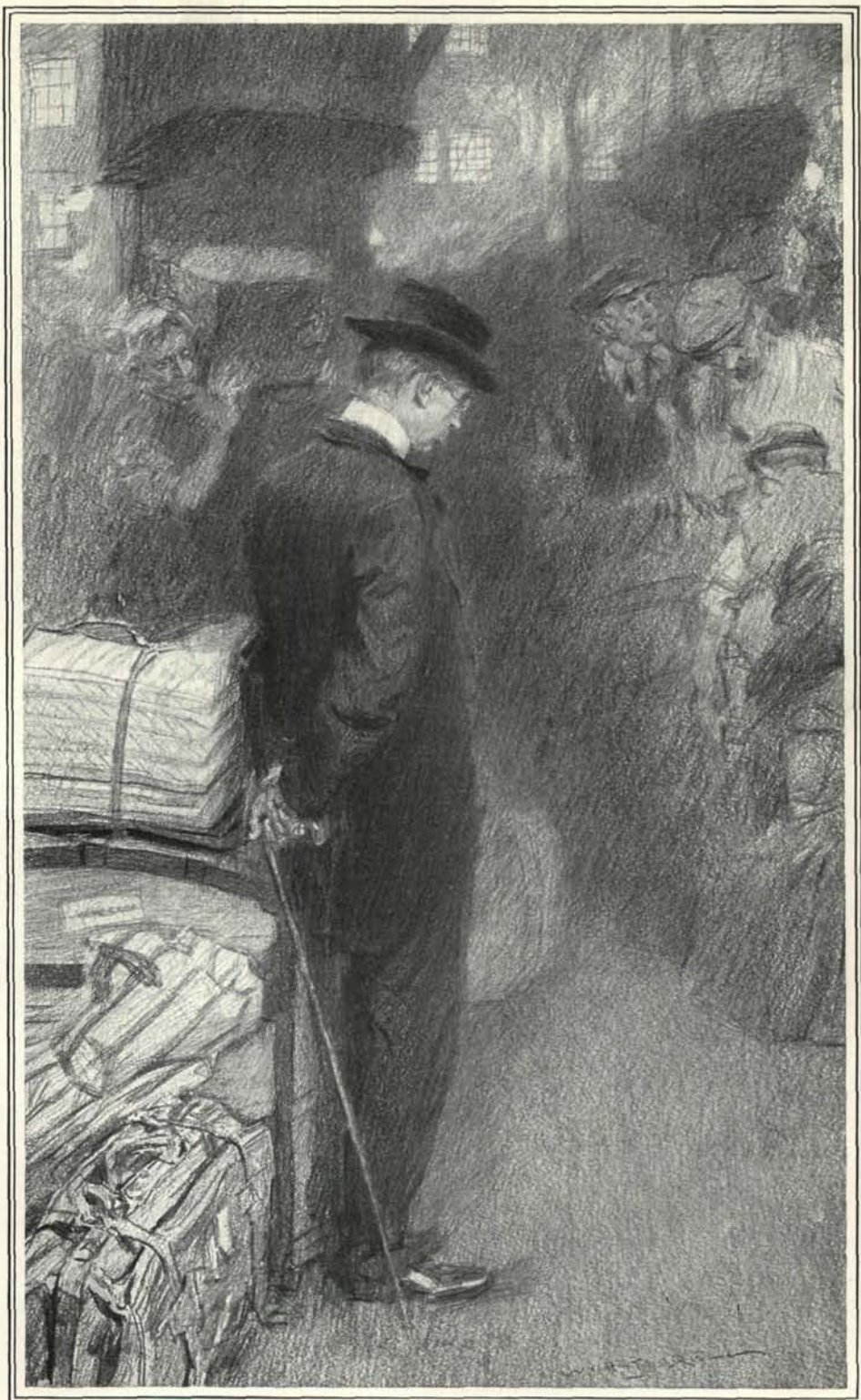
HE PRESENTED THE APPEARANCE OF AN ARCTIC EXPLORER AS HE LAY IN THE EXTREME COLD



Drawn by W. Hatherell, R.I.

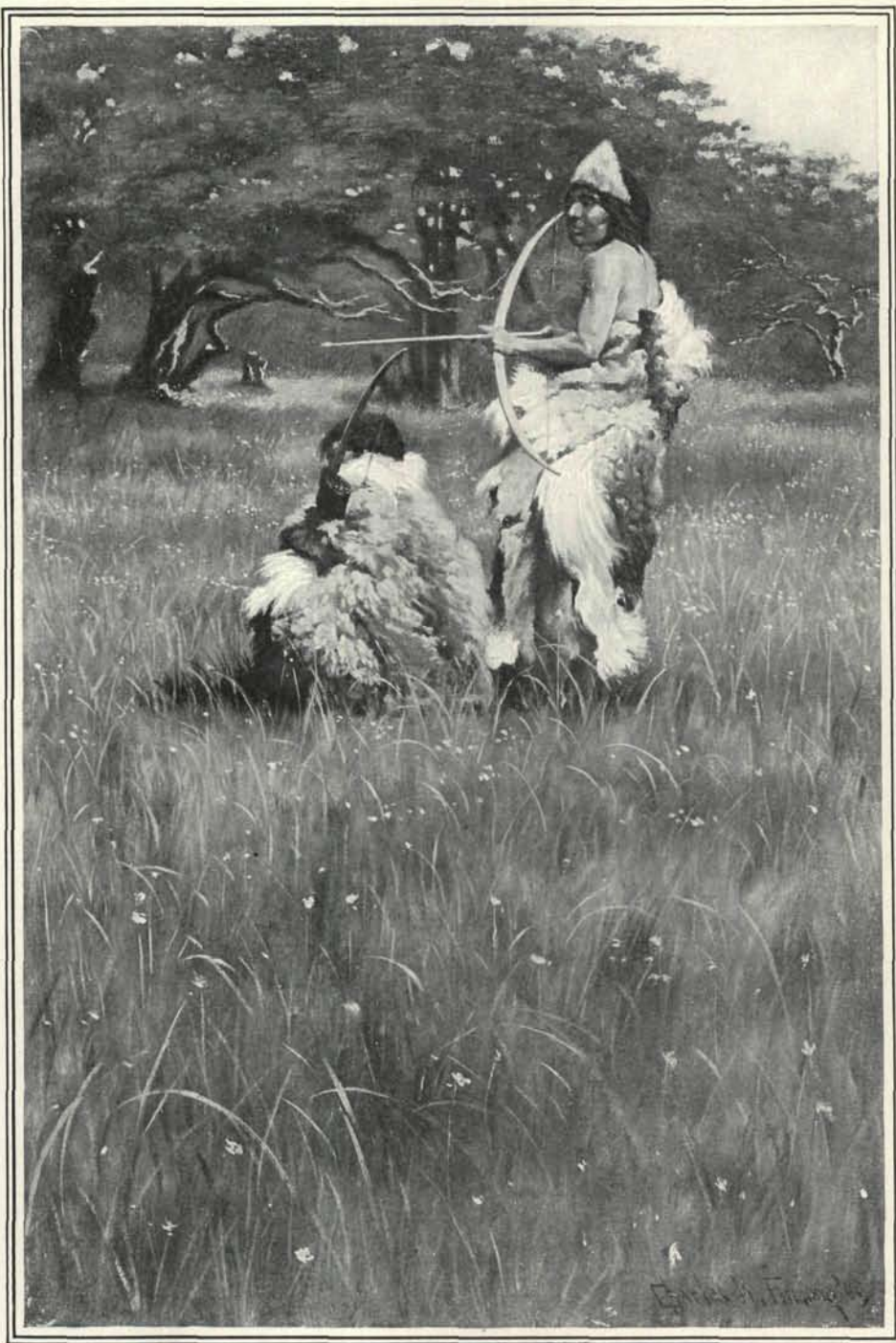
Half-tone plate engraved by F. A. Pettit

"DO NOT TOUCH HIM! HE IS AN ANARCHIST! HE IS A FOREIGNER!"



Drawn by W. Hatherell, R.I.

HIS LONELINESS WAS ALMOST UNENDURABLE NOW



Drawn by Charles W. Furlong

PRIMITIVE MEN. STILL LIVING IN THE STONE AGE



Painting by Howard Pyle

THEREAFTER SHE CLUNG CLOSE ABOUT RANDVER



Drawn by Elizabeth Shippen Green

THE FOLDS OF HER CLOAK MAKING HER SEEM LIKE A KNEELING MARBLE



Painting by Howard E. Smith

Illustration for "The Umbrella Man"

HENCEFORTH DAVID PROSPERED IN A HUMBLE WAY