

## "A PORTRAIT"

BY THOMAS SULLY

THERE are few painters who matured so quickly, maintained their powers so evenly for at least a score of years, and then lost the firm grip they so unmistakably had, as did Thomas Sully, who, born in England, came to this country when a boy, began to paint seriously at twenty-five, and, leading a perfectly regular life, commenced running down-hill in his profession before half a century of his ninety years had rolled past. The truth of this becomes apparent whenever some work previously unknown is brought to one's attention, and unhesitatingly and, I may add, unerringly, you place it either before or after the period named without any actual knowledge of its painting date.

The portrait of Sarah Bringham Dunant (Mrs. John Stull Williams) falls within the period of Sully's best work. It goes without saying that the painter had a most attractive sitter in this young girl just budding out of childhood into the radiant glory of womanhood, in 1812, the year of her marriage. She appealed to Sully as youth and beautiful femininity always did, for he was particularly sensitive to the subtle ideality of the opposite sex, and he has fixed these evanescent qualities with a strength of handling quite notable, and enveloped them in an atmosphere of very high art, without losing any of the delicacy requisite to preserve the charm of line and of expression of the dainty original.

The color scheme, which is admirably translated on the wood, is very simple. Over her white-muslin gown she wears a crimson-velvet pelisse, faced with yellow satin which shows here and there not to be obtrusive, and her arm rests on the round top of a green-upholstered chair. The figure is relieved by a curtain of the same color as the coat, but lighter in tone, with a glimpse of cloud-flecked sky and landscape in the left distance. This, then, is one of Sully's great accomplishments and well worthy of being preserved by Mr. Wolf's rare craftsmanship.

CHARLES HENRY HART.

# LUCK

BY WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

“LUCK!” Without looking at the others, or at the beef-grower, who had pushed his chair back and got up noisily, Jennison removed one cupped hand from the heap of bank-notes and began to edge them off with a dampened thumb, counting under his breath. The smoky light in the back room of the mountain store showed him still more unlovely in his diligence, deepening the purplish cast of his pain-ridden face and accentuating the twist of his wry-neck.

“Luck!” he repeated for the third time, in the same dry tone.

The others fidgeted, coughed, and fooled with the soiled, scattered cards, keeping uneasy eyes on Yaard. The beef-grower had turned back from the doorway, his arms struggling with the armholes of his wine-colored mackinaw. He was a big, young, blond fellow, good-looking, full-blooded, easy-going. But now the stale light showed his face blotched with red.

“Luck!” he cried. “Luck, eh?”

Peters, the storekeeper and peace-maker, got up with an unnecessary clatter and came around the table, bearing a half-empty bottle.

“Yaard, old fellow, have just one before you go, that’s the man. It’ll be cold going over the mountain. Just a small one—to help the sun up? Eh?”

“To hell with that stuff!” The beef-grower ran the back of a wrist over his lips with an unconscious gesture. “I’m looking at that man there!”

Jennison, counting, “Seven hundred and five, seven hundred and fifty-five—” did not raise his eyes. His studied pre-occupation struck deeper into the other’s anger. Leaning over a chair-back, Yaard

brought his fist down on the table-top.

“I’ll be damned if that four queens over four tens was *luck*. And here’s another thing. Take it from me and put it in your pipes and smoke it up, the whole lot of you. There’s no such thing in the world as *luck*, and the man’s a damned fool that thinks there is. . . . Good night!”

Turning his back on them, he went out, and they heard him blundering through the littered darkness in the front part of the store. Peters, anxious for his goods, followed, catching up a pile of burlap from a barrel beside the door. They heard him calling:

“Oh, Yaard, take care for them apri-cot-cases right in the way there. Wait a second! You forgot your grain-bags. Wait a second!”

“God-a-mighty!” he complained, when he came back. “I never can tell if that fellow’s had too much or not.” His mouth was sour with the night, and he made a face. “And now what’s wrong with *you*, Ed?”

Boler, the sawmill man, shook a sad, comical head. “You heard that? ‘No such thing as luck’? Yaard! Will Yaard! And him the luckiest fool devil that ever drew breath! Luck? Good Mother o’ mine! *Luck!*”

The recurrence of the word put them in mind of the one remaining, the silent, wry-necked winner bent over his calculations, and they stopped talking. The awkward silence in the room merged with the wide hush of the mountain night; through it they heard the infinitesimal flaws that made it only the more complete—the fall of a lone pine cone on the crust, the whine of a dog asleep