

hurts me—Oh, Si, it hurts me so, that you two, who are the best and noblest persons in the world, should have misunderstood each other so, and it seems as if it must be somehow my fault. Emma has been having such a hard time. I have tried to help her. But life is so uncertain, and I thought that I ought to make my will. But I know that you will value more the expression of my wishes than any legal document. And I felt I was treating you unkindly and undutifully, acting this way with the money which you have given me. So, instead, darling, will you pardon me for doing this without telling you? And I will go to Mr. Wheatly, and ask him to draw up a memorandum which I will enclose in this. We have been so happy, Silas, although we have had such sorrows; but there never has been but this one cloud on our love. I haven't been the wife I ought to have been to you; I am so silly and cowardly—not what your wife should be; but, oh, I *have* loved you! I am going to put this with my treasures. You will find it with every line that you ever wrote me from that first note, asking if you might take mamma and me to the theatre (how good, good, *good*, you were to mamma, and how often I have been grateful to you!) to your last dear letter. I do not know when you will find it; I hope you won't *need* to find it, because I mean to snuggle up to you, some evening, out on the porch, when it is dark, and whisper it all to you, and beg you to be kind and forgive. But, since I don't know what may happen, I will write

this—perhaps we shall read it together. In the little time that may—

Here the letter ended. Something had interrupted the writer, and she had pushed the sheet aside, never to finish it nor to have that one hour of confidence which should sweep every doubt away. Markham's tears were dropping fast, not for himself, but for her who had loved him, and yet had been lonely, struggling to be loyal to her old ties. Oh! if she had been lonely, then, was he not lonely now? Yet, in that moment of repentance and grief, there came to him a strange foreshadowing of comfort. Out of the grave she had explained and put him in the wrong. He went up to the picture so close that he could touch the painted cheek with his hand. The eyes looked at him, and he found in them more love than sorrow. "Dearest," he whispered, "I'll try to be good to *all* your friends. I'll try to do what you would have done."

That night he dreamed of his wife.

## THE VETERAN.

BY STEPHEN CRANE,

Author of "The Red Badge of Courage," "The Little Regiment," etc.



UT of the low window could be seen three hickory trees placed irregularly in a meadow that was resplendent in spring-time green. Farther away, the old, dismal belfry of the village church loomed over the pines. A horse meditating in the shade of one of the hickories lazily swished his tail. The warm sunshine made an oblong of vivid yellow on the floor of the grocery.

"Could you see the whites of their eyes?" said the man who was seated on a soap-box.

"Nothing of the kind," replied old Henry warmly. "Just a lot of flitting figures, and I let go at where they 'peared to be the thickest. Bang!"

"Mr. Fleming," said the grocer—his deferential voice expressed somehow the old man's exact social weight—"Mr. Fleming, you never was frightened much in them battles, was you?"

The veteran looked down and grinned. Observing his manner, the entire group tittered. "Well, I guess I was," he answered

finally. "Pretty well scared, sometimes. Why, in my first battle I thought the sky was falling down. I thought the world was coming to an end. You bet I was scared."

Every one laughed. Perhaps it seemed strange and rather wonderful to them that a man should admit the thing, and in the tone of their laughter there was probably more admiration than if old Fleming had declared that he had always been a lion. Moreover, they knew that he had ranked as an orderly sergeant, and so their opinion of his heroism was fixed. None, to be sure, knew how an orderly sergeant ranked, but then it was understood to be somewhere just shy of a major-general's stars. So when old Henry admitted that he had been frightened, there was a laugh.

"The trouble was," said the old man, "I thought they were all shooting at me. Yes, sir, I thought every man in the other army was aiming at me in particular, and only me. And it seemed so darned unreasonable, you know. I wanted to explain to 'em what an almighty good fellow

I was, because I thought then they might quit all trying to hit me. But I couldn't explain, and they kept on being unreasonable—blim!—blam!—bang! So I run!"

Two little triangles of wrinkles appeared at the corners of his eyes. Evidently he appreciated some comedy in this recital. Down near his feet, however, little Jim, his grandson, was visibly horror-stricken. His hands were clasped nervously, and his eyes were wide with astonishment at this terrible scandal, his most magnificent grandfather telling such a thing.

"That was at Chancellorsville. Of course, afterward I got kind of used to it. A man does. Lots of men, though, seem to feel all right from the start. I did, as soon as I 'got on to it,' as they say now; but at first I was pretty flustered. Now, there was young Jim Conklin, old Si Conklin's son—that used to keep the tannery—you none of you recollect him—well, he went into it from the start just as if he was born to it. But with me it was different. I had to get used to it."

When little Jim walked with his grandfather he was in the habit of skipping along on the stone pavement in front of the three stores and the hotel of the town and betting that he could avoid the cracks. But upon this day he walked soberly, with his hand gripping two of his grandfather's fingers. Sometimes he kicked abstractedly at dandelions that curved over the walk. Any one could see that he was much troubled.

"There's Sickles's colt over in the meadow, Jimmie," said the old man. "Don't you wish you owned one like him?"

"Um," said the boy, with a strange lack of interest. He continued his reflections. Then finally he ventured: "Grandpa—now—was that true what you was telling those men?"

"What?" asked the grandfather. "What was I telling them?"

"Oh, about your running."

"Why, yes, that was true enough, Jimmie. It was my first fight, and there was an awful lot of noise, you know."

Jimmie seemed dazed that this idol, of its own will, should so totter. His stout boyish idealism was injured.

Presently the grandfather said: "Sickles's colt is going for a drink. Don't you wish you owned Sickles's colt, Jimmie?"

The boy merely answered: "He ain't as nice as our'n." He lapsed then into another moody silence.

One of the hired men, a Swede, desired

to drive to the county-seat for purposes of his own. The old man loaned a horse and an unwashed buggy. It appeared later that one of the purposes of the Swede was to get drunk.

After quelling some boisterous frolic of the farm-hands and boys in the garret, the old man had that night gone peacefully to sleep, when he was aroused by clamoring at the kitchen door. He grabbed his trousers, and they waved out behind as he dashed forward. He could hear the voice of the Swede, screaming and blubbing. He pushed the wooden button, and, as the door flew open, the Swede, a maniac, stumbled inward, chattering, weeping, still screaming. "De barn fire! Fire! Fire! De barn fire! Fire! Fire! Fire!"

There was a swift and indescribable change in the old man. His face ceased instantly to be a face; it became a mask, a gray thing, with horror written about the mouth and eyes. He hoarsely shouted at the foot of the little rickety stairs, and immediately, it seemed, there came down an avalanche of men. No one knew that during this time the old lady had been standing in her night-clothes at the bedroom door, yelling: "What's th' matter? What's th' matter? What's th' matter?"

When they dashed toward the barn it presented to their eyes its usual appearance, solemn, rather mystic in the black night. The Swede's lantern was overturned at a point some yards in front of the barn doors. It contained a wild little conflagration of its own, and even in their excitement some of those who ran felt a gentle secondary vibration of the thrifty part of their minds at sight of this overturned lantern. Under ordinary circumstances it would have been a calamity.

But the cattle in the barn were trampling, trampling, trampling, and above this noise could be heard a humming like the song of innumerable bees. The old man hurled aside the great doors, and a yellow flame leaped out at one corner and sped and wavered frantically up the old gray wall. It was glad, terrible, this single flame, like the wild banner of deadly and triumphant foes.

The motley crowd from the garret had come with all the pails of the farm. They flung themselves upon the well. It was a leisurely old machine, long dwelling in indolence. It was in the habit of giving out water with a sort of reluctance. The men stormed at it, cursed it; but it continued to allow the buckets to be filled only after

the wheezy windlass had howled many protests at the mad-handed men.

With his opened knife in his hand old Fleming himself had gone headlong into the barn, where the stifling smoke swirled with the air-currents, and where could be heard in its fulness the terrible chorus of the flames, laden with tones of hate and death, a hymn of wonderful ferocity.

He flung a blanket over an old mare's head, cut the halter close to the manger, led the mare to the door, and fairly kicked her out to safety. He returned with the same blanket, and rescued one of the work-horses. He took five horses out, and then came out himself, with his clothes bravely on fire. He had no whisks, and very little hair on his head. They soused five pailfuls of water on him. His eldest son made a clean miss with the sixth pailful, because the old man had turned and was running down the decline and around to the basement of the barn, where were the stanchions of the cows. Some one noticed at the time that he ran very lamely, as if one of the frenzied horses had smashed his hip.

The cows, with their heads held in the heavy stanchions, had thrown themselves, strangled themselves, tangled themselves: done everything which the ingenuity of their exuberant fear could suggest to them.

Here, as at the well, the same thing happened to every man save one. Their hands went mad. They became incapable of everything save the power to rush into dangerous situations.

The old man released the cow nearest the door, and she, blind drunk with terror, crashed into the Swede. The Swede had been running to and fro babbling. He carried an empty milk-pail, to which he clung with an unconscious, fierce enthusiasm. He shrieked like one lost as he went under the cow's hoofs, and the milk-pail, rolling across the floor, made a flash of silver in the gloom.

Old Fleming took a fork, beat off the cow, and dragged the paralyzed Swede to the open air. When they had rescued all the cows save one, which had so fastened herself that she could not be moved an inch, they returned to the front of the barn and stood sadly, breathing like men who had reached the final point of human effort.

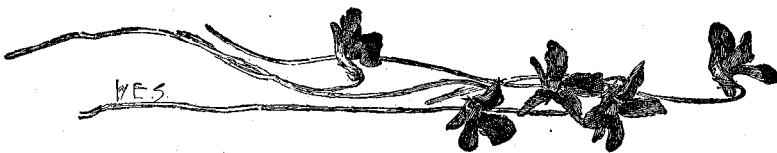
Many people had come running. Some one had even gone to the church, and now, from the distance, rang the tocsin note of the old bell. There was a long flare of crimson on the sky, which made remote people speculate as to the whereabouts of the fire.

The long flames sang their drumming chorus in voices of the heaviest bass. The wind whirled clouds of smoke and cinders into the faces of the spectators. The form of the old barn was outlined in black amid these masses of orange-hued flames.

And then came this Swede again, crying as one who is the weapon of the sinister fates. "De colts! De colts! You have forgot de colts!"

Old Fleming staggered. It was true; they had forgotten the two colts in the box-stalls at the back of the barn. "Boys," he said, "I must try to get 'em out." They clamored about him then, afraid for him, afraid of what they should see. Then they talked wildly each to each. "Why, it's sure death!" "He would never get out!" "Why, it's suicide for a man to go in there!" Old Fleming stared absent-mindedly at the open doors. "The poor little things," he said. He rushed into the barn.

When the roof fell in, a great funnel of smoke swarmed toward the sky, as if the old man's mighty spirit, released from its body—a little bottle—had swelled like the genie of fable. The smoke was tinted rose-hue from the flames, and perhaps the unutterable midnights of the universe will have no power to daunt the color of this soul.





CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS. FROM THE PAINTING BY DOMENICO MORELLI IN THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION, VENICE, 1895.

"And he was there in the wilderness forty days . . . and the angels ministered unto him."—ST. MARK i. 13.

## A CENTURY OF PAINTING.

NOTES DESCRIPTIVE AND CRITICAL.—THE PAST AND PRESENT IN ITALY.—THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL FINE ARTS EXHIBITION IN VENICE.—MORELLI A RECOGNIZED MASTER.—FRANCESCO PAOLO MICHETTI.—A FORECAST OF ITALIAN ART IN THE FUTURE.

By WILL H. LOW.



**I**TALY and art were in the past almost synonymous terms. From the pale floweret of her northern mountains to the radiant bloom in her palaces set on the sea, the growth of art was spontaneous and complete.

The seed sown in Greece and Byzantium could be traced, it is true; but the transplantation took such firm root on Italian soil that it became virtually indigenous. For the last hundred years, however, following the decadence of painting in the eighteenth century, there has been little save the survival of her ancient renown to mark Italy as a factor in art. There have been many painters; but in their country, dismembered by foreign foes, disunited by internecine quarrels, they have found little encouragement, and none have gained, nor perhaps deserved, more than limited local reputation. With the union founded by Victor Emmanuel and consolidated by his son, the present king, however, there has been an effort to gain lost prestige. No one who has the heart to appreciate the struggle of a brave and generous people striving under desperate circumstances of poverty to redeem their country and place it once

more in the first rank of nations, can refuse a meed of admiration to the efforts in many directions tending to that end of which Italy has been the theatre in the last generation. Of such effort in art, with more special reference to the exhibition in Venice in the summer of 1895, this is a partial chronicle.

In 1871, at Parma, the first national exhibition of Italian art was held; and since then, in many of the cities of the kingdom—in Naples, Florence, Milan, and Rome—there have been annual exhibitions. These have varied with the importance of the cities, and, for the most part, have been local in character; though occasionally, as in Turin in 1880, a more truly national exhibition has been achieved. The lack of national encouragement at home has driven many Italian artists to foreign countries, notably to Paris; and in 1889, at the Universal Exposition there, as at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893, the showing of Italy proved her possession of painters who, if they lacked elevation of aim, were undeniably strong in technical equipment. With the suppression of frontiers in accordance with the modern cosmopolitan ideal, it is only at an exhibition that is international that just