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side of eighty—that is, if he is rich, he may buy himself a wife; but this egregious friend of mine expects, at this late day, to get a wife for love."

"Purr-r-r-r," from Mrs. Dorne.

"Of course he is a lovable character," Miss Jarrall replied; "but that will not prevent his falling a victim, one day, to some mercenary woman."

Mrs. Dorne purred again, in a way that chilled my blood, and again Miss Jarrall translated the cautious dame's remark by her reply.

"No; I don't allude to Jennie Eade; that little simpleton will only marry for love."

My heart gave so joyful a bound that I did not know Mrs. Dorne had purred again, until Miss Jarrall's indignant rejoinder apprised me that this anxious schemer had insinuated something to my disadvantage.

"Indeed, you are much mistaken!" said my champion, sharply; "he's not trifling with Jennie Eade. I've known Lawrence Sevier ever since he stood at the foot of his class" (there was always a saving clause in Miss Jarrall's commendation that preserved one from inordinate vanity); "he is a man of scrupulous honor and the tenderest heart—"

But I am not so base as to listen surreptitiously to my own praises. I had heard unmoved the contumely Miss Jarrall heaped upon me; but her praise, uttered in those sincere tones that we do hear, now and then, in the course of our pilgrimage, was too much for me, and I retreated.

In the seclusion of my room I communed with my wildly-throbbing heart, and beguiled the laggard hours by composing an eloquent declaration of my affections, which, of course, I never delivered. I will venture to assert that no successful lover ever confessed his attachment in the carefully-studied phrases of his solitude.

[CONCLUSION NEXT WEEK.]

## A VOYAGE TO THE UNKNOWN RIVER.

"BUT Hamerton has a copyright to part of that title," objects the Kaiser.

"First, there is no international copyright law, so he has not; secondly, his river had cities upon it, had battles upon it, and 'Turner loved it,' so it was not 'unknown' at all; and, thirdly, I don't care."

"Very well," replies the Kaiser, and lights a fresh pipe. But he looks uneasy, notwithstanding. Such is man!

Nine o'clock, a bright February morning in Florida, thermometer seventy, with a fresh breeze; lying in the shadow of the bold seawall, where the stone steps go down into the water, is the Argo, a boat like nothing but herself, and it is in this craft that we are to journey to the unknown river. The Argo is fourteen feet long by four and a half broad, as sharply pointed as an arrow, entirely decked over more than half her length with a narrow deck around the other half, so that there is only a little bowl aft (which I call the cabin), where the crew can sit, like the pictures of the Greenlanders going out after

walrus in the old geographies. The Argo carries a slender mast, made of a young cedar, and a sprit-sail; but the mast can be unstepped in a moment, and behold a row-boat, whose edge, within five inches of the water, and whose invisible-brown color, seem to mingle with and belong to the element like some fast-gliding marine creature. Stowed away under the deck is a basket of provisions, the Kaiser's old haversack, a battered tin coffee-pot (also the Kaiser's), filled with fresh water, Channing's "Life of Thoreau," a field-glass, a large white umbrella, and various extra wraps; in the cabin, which is carpeted with India-rubber cloth, and cushioned with shawls, sits Gentleman Waife, a yellow dog of fox-like aspect, who goes out as passenger. The Kaiser is captain, and I am the crew. All hands having come on board, we weigh anchor and sail away. The wind and the tide are with us, the Argo's sharp bow cuts the water like a knife, and away we go toward the south, on one side the quaint little city, with its ancient fort and gray watch-towers, on the other the outlying island, with its old light-house, built by the Spaniards several centuries ago. The town soon fades away, but the light-house shines out like a white beacon over the green grass wastes; whichever way we turn there it is again, coming from every direction.

"What a strange life!" I say, in a musing tone. "For a home, a light-house on this far, lonely island. The keeper is probably some old Spaniard, who dreams away the warm days indolently, lying at ease on the silvery beach."

"The keeper is a Maine Yankee, with a reddish beard, a very clever fellow," replies the Kaiser. "He has a numerous family and one or two assistants, but I don't remember having seen any of them reclining on the silvery beach lately."

The beach is silvery, however, in spite of the Kaiser's sarcasm. It stretches on toward the south, one hundred feet broad, hard as a floor, dotted with beautiful shells and scarlet sea-weeds, jelly-fish, urchins, and singular forms of life, some blue and glassy, the "Portuguese man-of-war," and others crimson and pulpy, with great, gaping mouths. A creek flows down from some inland pond; there is a little cabin on its bank in a grove of palmettoes. A man comes out as we sail by, and halloo to us that he has just shot a fine alligator. He makes a trumpet of his hands, and tells us this gratuitously, apparently for the mere desire for sympathy; we nod, and he goes back satisfied.

The wind freshens, and the Kaiser orders down the centre-board. I cannot find the stick; I take my parasol and poke.

"Is it down?" asks the Kaiser.

My back is toward him.

"Yes," I reply briskly, "it is, and so is my parasol!"

"Whatever you do, don't let the stick get fast," says the Kaiser, manœuvring mysteriously with the rope and rudder. I jerk in vain; there is evidently danger connected with a stick in the centre-board; that obstinate parasol will probably sink the boat. I brace myself, and give a last desperate pull. It comes out at length like a boomerang, its

whalebones crippled, its silk dripping; but the centre-board is down! I eat a mandarin-orange to refresh myself, and we sail gayly on.

On a low sand-bar out at sea are thousands of birds, pelicans, gulls, the razor-bill, shearwater, and the brisk little terns, hovering, diving, circling about, a select few performing by turns, while the others sit in ranks on the bar, toeing a mark with grave propriety. Overhead flies the bald-eagle, and, two and two, the porpoises heave up their dark backs, frolicking after their unwieldy fashion. Presently the Kaiser says, "Here's a good place," and forthwith proceeds to beach the Argo, whose flat, slender length runs ashore anywhere like a plank.

"A good place for what?"

He returns no answer, but lights his pipe, takes a bag, and goes ashore, accompanied by Gentleman Waife.

"Keep the boat up with an oar," he calls back carelessly, as he follows up a little creek, whose shores are studded with grubby, muddy-looking fungi. Now, not approving of this reticence on the part of the Kaiser, I had intended to follow and see for myself why we are landed on this uninteresting shore; but now I hesitate. "Keep the boat up with an oar." Why? The boat seems to me very well up as it is. I am familiar with freshwater navigation, but on all the shores of all the great lakes there was never any necessity of keeping the boat up with an oar. Still, under the circumstances, I do not quite dare to land and follow up the departed Kaiser; so I subside down upon the floor of the cabin, under the white umbrella, with the Thoreau book for company. After a while I hear a terrific shout, and come to surface to see what is the matter. The boat is off, quietly floating out to sea, and the Kaiser, with heavily-loaded bag under one arm, and the struggling Gentleman Waife under the other, is dashing through the water, ankle-deep, knee-deep, after me.

"Oh! you'll get wet," I cry, helplessly, and, in my agitation, I drop the white umbrella overboard.

"Didn't I tell you to keep the boat up with an oar?" asks the Kaiser, when at last man, dog, and umbrella, all dripping, are on board again.

"Kaiser," I say solemnly, "if it has any thing to do with tides—"

"It has."

"Then, Kaiser, let us drop the subject. You know my feelings."

Tides are mysteries. I go out sailing; the wind is favorable, but we make next to no headway on account of the tide; the next time I go out the wind is dead ahead, but we advance, on account of the tide. I take pains to inform myself at what hour this thing is due; the very next day it fails to come up to time. People tell you it "serves" so and so; but what it serves I have not been able to discover. "H. H." may enjoy writing melodious verses about it, but her lyre won't change my opinion: the tide is not only a mystery, but a monotony; people talk about it until their conversation becomes a tide-water chant. It has got to that point that I close my ears whenever the word is men-

tioned. The Kaiser understands my feelings, and says no more.

"After all, it was your fault. Why did you go ashore?" I demand, my spirits reviving as I see how hopelessly wet he is.

"Oysters," he replies, laconically, stowing away the gaping bag. I gaze; the grubby, muddy fungi are within! These, then, are oysters upon their native heath!

"I have found two ridiculous sentences in your Thoreau book," I remark, when we are off again.

"Let us have them."

"Here is one: 'And then, the rain beginning to come down, so came his two friends down the mountain as well, their outer integuments decimated with their tramps in the scrub.' Why couldn't he say plainly that their clothes were torn? And here is another even worse. Speaking of the wood-tortoise, he writes: 'He patiently speculates upon its shingled, pectinately-engraved roof or back, and its perennial secrets in that indelible hieroglyph.' Absurd!"

"Yes. But all that is the charming part of the book—the alloy that holds together the Thoreau gold.—Put down the centre-board, please."

I have another contest with the parasol, which comes out this time with *all* its ribs broken; either for shade or centre-board, it is evidently useless hereafter.

We meet a fisherman in a dugout; he looks like the last man.

"What luck?" calls out the Kaiser. The last man holds up a horrible sea-creature, with wings, and a whip-like tail, six feet long.

"Is it a devil-fish?" I ask.

"The whiperec, a smaller species of Victor Hugo's monster," replies the Kaiser.

The last man drops the squirming creature down carelessly upon his bare feet, takes off his old palmetto hat, bows gravely to me, and then paddles away in his dugout.

"I wonder if he lives down here?"

"Oh, no," replies the Kaiser. "He lives beyond the city-gates; he probably started out before dawn to get fish for the hotels."

We sweep on for another hour; all signs of human habitation disappear from the shore; we are alone with Florida. The land is green, a peculiar dark green, never seen at the North; the waving marsh-grass comes down to the beach, and behind stretch the boundless pine-barrens, that look to our eyes like deserted fields run to waste, so free are they from underbrush. Here and there are hammocks of rich vegetation, and in places the saw-palmettoes come up in platoons and kneel down in the sunshine; not for prayers do they come, these ill-tempered outlaws that log over half of Florida; they hold their glistening knives ready, and converse with all comers, but their wit is sharp, their sarcasms cutting.

"How green and beautiful it is," says the Kaiser, looking shoreward. "It is like the skin of a pard, the great mother leopard that Nature is, where she lies at length exposing her flanks to the sun. I feel as if I could land to kiss and stroke the very sward, it is so fair."

"Why, Kaiser you are poetical!"

"Thoreau," he answers.

After five hours' of sailing, the Argo turns her pretty head shoreward, and we enter the unknown river, flowing from the west, broad and still. The water is a rich, claret color, ruby over the shoals, and black in still bays along-shore. We sail on in long, slanting tacks, but still we sail, which is very kind of the wind. I remark upon this. "It isn't the wind," explains the Kaiser; "it is the tide, which—" I refuse to hear more. Gradually, as we penetrate inland, the country rises and comes down to meet us in high banks on each side; the river narrows, and the trees hang over. Then the mast is unstepped, and the Argo, transformed into a canoe, darts along under the stroke of the paddle, her long, sharp bow pointing ahead, as if eager to explore every bend and bay. Finally, the tips of the live-oaks and magnolias meet overhead, and we journey in tropical shade, with the flickering sunshine peeping through; the long, gray moss hangs down in the water, and strange air-plants, like butterflies, swing from the branches. The red cardinals dart to and fro, and we hear the mocking-bird's song.

"There is the track of an alligator," observes the Kaiser, pausing. "That is his lair on the shore—his sunning-place. Do you see those bubbles? He's down underneath there somewhere."

"Oh, pray go on!" I entreat.

But none the less do I peep over the side, hoping the monster will come up and knock against the bottom of the boat. He does not come, and I am disappointed.

"How long do you suppose he is, Kaiser?"

"Possibly eighteen feet."

I reflect that an eighteen-foot alligator knock might perhaps be rather too—impressive, and am consoled.

Flowers now begin to show themselves, and finish by pressing forward, in crowds and masses, into the very water. Carpets of wee white stars, blue violets, golden spines and bells, fleshy purple cups, the wild azalea and honeysuckle, the clambering yellow jasmine, and the solid banks of the Cherokee rose. Nothing grows so like a wall of verdure as this wild-rose of the South, and the effect is produced, too, with the most delicate, prim little leaves in the world, which rise close-set on intertwining spray-like stems, ten and fifteen feet high, with scarcely a rift between. The flower is white, starred over, the green close to the stem, and, after leaving the bud, it has a lovely way of curling together its five petals, as though too modest to open fully. Besides these, the thorns are flushed in pink; there are delicate ferns, "which Nature made for pure leaves, just to show what she could do in that line;" and the berry-bushes are all out in their spring clothes.

"Do you know on what bushes a little faith and contentment grow?" quotes the Kaiser. "Go a-berrying early and late after them."

Beyond the flower-land the river broadens out into shallows, with grassy islands and many channels; we have a broader sky-sweep, with vistas of the feathery yellow-pine outlined with peculiar softness in the tropical air. A turn of the boat brings us

suddenly in among the inhabitants of the unknown land. Floating in a little bay are eight wild-ducks, standing leg-deep in the tide; near by are two herons, one white, the other blue; in deeper water swims a loon, and overhead in a dead tree two fish-hawks have their nest, and scream shrilly as a bald-headed eagle flies in from the ocean and approaches their stronghold. But not one of these creatures notices us as we float into view; the ducks swim on placidly, the herons continue their meditations, and the loon paddles toward us as if curious to see what kind of animal we are. We float up to his very side, and even then he only flies heavily a short distance and down into the water again, much as he would make way for a floating tree. The ducks, who have come out into the tide, move aside, apparently more from politeness than fear, and follow behind as if to show off their pretty motions. Suddenly the Kaiser trails his paddle and clutches my arm: a deer has come down to the water; a little creature, graceful and fearless. It drinks from a brook flowing into the river, snuffs the air for a moment or two, and then goes back into the forest with a leisurely step—pretty, shy creature! for once safe from the near hand of man! For the Argo, although somewhat piratical in appearance, carries no munitions of war. The clean and tidy white crane sails by with his feet dangling behind him, the social coot and the water-hen keep company in the marsh. Through the trees flit the paroquets, green and orange colored, chattering gayly, and hanging on to the branches by their bills and toes, like painted circus-performers. They are lazy and luxurious, these *élégants* of Florida, but so stupid that they cannot be taught to articulate a single word.

"It is after four," says the Kaiser, at last; we cannot go any farther."

But I beg for one more half-hour; the source of the river cannot be far away. It is down on the map, therefore it must be but a creek, and we have followed it for miles. The half-hour passes; the stream is now narrow and darkened by high banks; I decide that it is growing shallow. The half-hour is up; the Kaiser pauses.

"Oh, just to that bend!" I plead; "I am sure—"

But beyond the bend that perfidious stream widens out again with more vitality than ever, and we see it gleaming in spots afar off, and then plunging into a second forest, as though bound for the Gulf of Mexico.

The Kaiser turns the boat, and we glide away down-stream.

"It comes from some inland everglade," he says. "The whole country is afloat, you know; super-aquaterreous, with marshes, lagoons, channels, creeks, and lakes—a labyrinth of waters."

"I wish we could have gone on," I say, regretfully. "Now we shall never know."

"If we know not, more's the pity, for the little shrew-mouse knoweth;

And the kite knows, and the eagle, and the glead and pye,"

quotes the Kaiser, beaching the boat.

I prepare to be useful, and spread out my dainties on a napkin. The Kaiser builds

a fire, buries sweet-potatoes under it, sets the coffee-pot in the middle, piles up the oyster-rocks all around, and erects a series of palmetto toasting-forks stuck in the sand, on which corn-bread and Graham rolls toast comfortably. There is absolutely nothing for me to do.

"But women do the cooking always," I remark, with some discontent.

"Not in camps," replies the Kaiser.

It ends in my eating a hot potato, three Graham rolls toasted, and several dozen oysters (small ones), all buttered and seasoned by the Kaiser, and drinking a cup of his coffee, than which nothing was ever so delicious. The Kaiser also eats. And Gentleman Waife, undisturbed, unmolested, devours the dainties spread out on the napkin—to wit, sandwiches, sponge-cake, a cup of jelly, and a fig-pie: my contributions to the feast. He then goes off for a little gentle exercise, and we hear him barking in the underbrush behind. The Kaiser is smoking a lazy pipe, but I decide to follow and see; who knows but it may be another deer? It proves to be nothing but the gentleman, standing at the edge of a thick jungle, barking furiously, with his yellow tail erect. I call him away; he will not come, but acts so strangely that I halloo for the Kaiser, who appears placidly smoking his pipe.

"Snake," he remarks, pointing to a round, smooth trail in the soft sand.

I spring backward.

"Oh, he's away in that jungle somewhere," continues my companion. "If you like, I'll go in and scare him out."

But I do not like, and we start homeward.

We fly rapidly down-stream in the sunset, gathering a boat-load of blossoms on the way. Overhead flies the whooping-crane—ridiculous bird! and, as we near the sea, we meet the osprey coming home from his fishing-excursion. A passing loon cries after us—perhaps he is saying "Good-night." No doubt he will tell his watery family how he met a strange animal at the mouth of the river; and to-morrow they will all come down to see, and find nothing. The moon is shining brilliantly, and we have been sailing northward for an hour, when suddenly a thirst seizes me. I mention it as an inconvenient but existing fact. There is nothing on board to quench it—not even an orange.

"There is a light on shore," says the Kaiser. "I did not notice any house there when we came out, but I'll run the boat in and see."

Visions of pirates, who (in books) are always concealing their "slender craft" in "lagoons;" of fugitive slaves, who are always hiding in "canebrakes;" and Indians, who "lurk" in "hammocks" (*vide* "Seminole War"), fill my mind; but the boat is beached, and the moonlight shows us only a small thatched cottage, some distance back from the shore, on the edge of the pine-barren. There is a neglected clearing behind it, and a grove of orange-trees, bearing fruit and blossoms at the same time, after their fashion. We knock; a voice says "Come in;" we enter, and find a young girl sitting alone, braiding palmetto by the light of a pine-knot set in an iron socket. She turns toward us her lus-

trous dark eyes, eyes long and almond-shaped, fringed with curling black lashes; eyes soft, dreamy, and tranquil. She asks no question, she does not rise, but goes on braiding palmetto.

"May I so far intrude upon your kindness, mademoiselle, as to ask for some drinking-water?" says the Kaiser, taking off his old felt hat, with a profound bow.

"Oh, yes; there is the cup, and the well is outside the door," replies the fair palmetto-braider, in her soft, *trainante* voice, going on with her work without a pause. That people arrive from nowhere by night, and ask for drinking-water, is naught to her. Her heavy black hair is braided fancifully around her small head, and over the left ear is a spray of yellow jasmine; her little black gown is as simple as a nun's robe, but the slipper on her slender foot, although made of untanned leather, is well fitted and trim. There is no color in her face; the heavy black hair, brows, and lashes, seem to cast a shadow over the clear olive skin; but she lifts her eyes again, and all the color and the warmth of all the tropics lie hidden within.

The Kaiser takes down the earthenware-cup reverentially, as though it was a relic; he crosses the floor with a glide, at least what *he* considers a glide; he begs "pardon" for taking the cup, for crossing the floor, for opening the door, but, at last, he does manage to bring me the water, which, filtered through the coquina-well, Florida-fashion, is pure and refreshing. The little room is bare, there is nothing in it but stools and a table; in the lean-to shed, behind, we see rude cooking utensils, and a ladder leads to the attic above; a gaudy print of the Madonna hangs on the wall, and a broken pitcher is filled with wild-honeysuckle, whose fragrance is heavy in the air.

"Many thanks, mademoiselle," says the Kaiser, replacing the cup with another bow. She just acknowledges the salute, and braids on.

There is nothing more to detain us, but still we linger.

"You do not live here alone?" I ask.

"Oh, no. The father has gone to the city; he comes by the late tide; I wait for him."

"You go sometimes to the city, I suppose?"

"Yes, on feast-days."

"You are Minorcans, are you not?" I add, fresh from Florida history.

"We are Spanish, she replies, throwing back her head, with a quaint little air of *hateur*.

"Any one can see that mademoiselle is Spanish," interposes the Kaiser, loftily. A gleaming smile flits over the fair Minorcan's face; all the Florida Minorcans are invariably "pure Spanish."

"We have been rowing up the river that comes in below here," begins the Kaiser, starting a new subject. "How far up can a small boat go?"

"I know not, señor. No river have I seen."

The Kaiser explains. But it seems that the fair Minorcan has never walked a quarter of a mile beyond her own door-way; she goes to the city on feast-days in her father's dug-

out, and that is all. She tells us this placidly, nor asks one question. Evidently we and our unknown river are nothing to her; she is not even curious, but goes on braiding palmetto. We take leave, and she gives us a tranquil "Good-evening." We sail out again on the moonlit sea, and, as we round the point, we look back toward the thatched cottage, alone on the lonely shore; we see the outline of a head through the lighted window, it is the fair Minorcan, who sits just where we left her, braiding palmetto.

It is eleven o'clock before the old Spanish fort frowns into view, and the Argo enters the silvery harbor of the ancient city. The porpoises cry out and snort behind us, the inlet seems alive with them, and we no longer disbelieve the story that they alarmed a whole garrison in the Florida War, and caused the drums to beat the alarm that the Indians were coming; even a Seminole could invent no more startling noises than these. The old coquina houses, with their overhanging balconies, shine white in the moonlight; we moor the Argo under the sea-wall, and stroll homeward through the plaza. The day has been full of pleasure; but, for all our journey, the source of the unknown river is still unknown, and its tinted waters, with all their wealth of life, animal and vegetable, are still flowing on, with stores of secrets undiscovered, hidden away in lovely, lonely Florida.

CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

## MY STORY.

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PAT'Y."

(Published from Advance-Sheets.)

### CHAPTER XVIII.

#### AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

IT seemed as if I were doomed not to explore the Cleeve. My wrist was severely sprained, and I was so sore and shaken, that I was obliged to content myself with being drawn about in Mrs. Dayrell's chair whenever I wanted to go beyond the village. Mr. Donald and Mr. Newton were very kind, but, after that first day, they came separately. This confirmed me in my theory. I am quite sure it is a mistake to talk to one man before another. A man likes to think, even if he knows better, that a woman only talks to him. I am glad, therefore, that these gentlemen come separately, for they both like to talk to me, and I am able to be equally kind to both, without any trouble. I believe I am fondest of Mr. Donald, but, for that very reason, I do not want him to know it. I am always grateful to him for having carried me home, although it was so very uncomfortable. But he is so kind; he brings me books, and reads poetry to me, but sometimes, when I look up suddenly, he is staring at me with such a sentimental look that I nearly laugh, and I believe, if I did laugh at him, he would be hurt. Mr. Newton does not bring books, but he makes me laugh; he has all sorts of amusing stories about the village people; I must go and see some of them when I am able to go