CHAPTER VII

"YOU HAVE A DISEASE THAT WILL KILL YOU."

Adversity's cold frosts will soon be over. Hemans.

Man, proud man

Drest in a little brief authority,

Most ignorant of what he's most assured,

His glassy essence, like an angry ape,

Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven

As makes the angels weep. Shakespeare.

Borne swiftly as steam could take me from the scenes of my recent exploits, I thought with wonder of the almost miraculous events that had lately occurred to me. Of my escape from perpetual darkness I thought with gratitude and awe; and of the kind friends who had so generously and ungrudgingly come forward to assist me in my hour of sore distress I thought with a variety of feelings impossible to describe. It seemed to me now, in the light of recent occurrences, that I had not in the past been sufficiently grateful for the few blessings that had been left me, and I resolved that in the future, so long as the inestimable boon of sight were spared me, I should look upon myself as being a favorite of fortune. Thus do great misfortunes, and the loss of that which we, so long as we possessed it, lightly
prized, make us understand and appreciate and be thankful for the few gifts that remain.

I stopped first at the town of Beaumont, in the neighboring State of Texas. This town was situated not far from the coast, in the midst of an extensive belt of long-leaf pines. Hence lumber-making is the principal industry. I had a brother here, younger than myself, whom I wished to see. I need hardly say that I approached him very circumspectly, as I did not know whether, actuated by mistaken kindness, he might not attempt to communicate with the asylum authorities with the purpose of having me sent back to the hospital. This fear, as the reader has no doubt learned, had become, so to speak, the nightmare of my existence, and it continued to be so for some time to come. Indeed, until I reached the Pacific coast, the names I used, and gave as my own, were pseudonyms always.

With these feelings uppermost in my mind, I put my brother under vows of secrecy before making known my purposes or destination. This done, we conversed very freely, and I remained with him for some days. On parting from him I went immediately to San Antonio in order to get the benefit of the celebrated Dr. Herf’s treatment and advice.

Down on Commerce Street there was a hostelry which went under the name (let us say) of the Cleveland House. It was at this place that I stopped. A Mrs. Hanna (we shall call her thus, though it was not her name) was the ostensible or nominal proprietress. Her husband, Mr. Hanna, was the real
owner. But Mr. Hanna was also the proprietor of a café near the "Sunset" depot, and passed most of his time there. He came over to the Cleveland House almost every day (never at night) and made things unpleasant for a few hours, for he was not a genial man. As soon as I had completed arrangements with Mrs. Hanna I called at the offices of Dr. Herf.

On the occasion of my first visit he interrogated me closely, and examined me with great care, and to the question which had been burning on my tongue for I know not how long, "What do you think is the matter with me?" he did not answer directly, but told me to come back at that hour on the following day.

"It is impossible," he said, by way of explanation, as I turned to depart, "for reasons which you will no doubt understand, for me to give you a positive opinion now, and any other kind of opinion would be worth nothing to you."

My eagerness to hear his diagnosis of my case was so great that on the day following, at the same hour, I was knocking at his door. As soon as I found myself in his presence I put my question for the second time, but more eagerly, if possible, than before. This time he answered me with a question of his own.

"Have you a family, Mr. Nall?"

This interrogatory, while it surprised and even alarmed me, I answered in the briefest terms.

"Well," said he, when he had heard my reply, "you had better go to them."

Greatly surprised and alarmed, as much from his
manner and tone as from his words, I asked:

“What do you mean?”

“I mean,” he responded, in a kind tone, “that you ought to be with your family because of the nature of your disease, which, not to keep you in suspense, is Diabetes Mellitus in an aggravated form.”

This was a disease I had never heard of, and knew nothing about, hence I did not know whether to be frightened or not. Before I could put my thoughts into words, Dr. Herf continued:

“I speak thus plainly,” said he, “because I believe that you have too much manhood and courage to want me to delude you with false hopes, or misrepresent your true condition.”

“Is this disease, then,” said I, “so serious as that?”

He hesitated a moment (for though he was too sincere a man to mislead me, even in trifles, yet he had little of that brutal frankness so common among some physicians) and replied:

“I regret that my duty compels me to say to you that it is incurable, and that sooner or later it will kill you.”

When he had thus spoken my doom, in these brief words, a dead silence fell upon us, and neither of us cared to break it.

“But, doctor,” said I at length, “if I prefer to remain here in the city, instead of returning to my home, the very idea of which is repugnant to me for many reasons, will you take charge of my case and do what you can for me?”

“Yes,” he answered, “I will.”
I did remain for some time, and went regularly to the offices of the distinguished physician, and although he had warned me at the outset that he could not cure the disease with which I was afflicted, yet his treatment benefited me very greatly and no doubt kept me from taking to my bed (from which I should never have risen).

I continued thus for something more than a month, at the end of which time my slender stock of money gave entirely out. In the meantime, having written to my brother, Mr. James B. Fleming, at Beaumont, I learned that he was dead—had died suddenly of a malignant attack of pneumonia within a few days after I had left him. Thus, having neither money nor the means of earning it, I entered into an agreement with my landlady to perform certain duties for her house, in return for which I was to receive board and lodging for another month. Thus I got along very well.

One afternoon shortly after I had thus begun I was standing upon the platform of one of the city depots when I observed a muscular-looking mulatto negro gazing at me in a very fixed and significant manner. This small circumstance made me somewhat uneasy, laboring, as I constantly did, under the fear of detection and apprehension. Hence I avoided old acquaintances as much as possible, and had a morbid dread of being recognized by anyone. The negro just mentioned was large and muscular. From his towering height I judged that he must have stood more than six feet in his shoes. His complexion was rather dark for a mulatto, and his hair long and very
woolly. No sooner had I observed this fixed gaze at me than I drew my hat further down over my eyes, and shrank back into the shadow as much as possible. This manoeuvre, however, did not have the desired effect. On the contrary it served only to increase the suspicion with which the black already regarded me. He did not therefore cease or mitigate his annoying espionage, but changed his position from time to time, and I think surveyed me from every point of the compass. Presently, with a broad grin of delight upon his face—which, though it was a homely, was an honest one—he crossed over to where I stood, and still grinning, said:

"Am dat Mr. Flunggins?"

"No," I replied, firmly, "my name is Nall."

A shade of disappointment, mingled with regret and doubt, crossed his face. He stepped back, but still gazed at me.

I could see that he wished to question me, but I had determined to give him no encouragement. On the contrary I resolved to adopt a different course. Finding such surveillance anything but agreeable, and seeing, too, that I had not entirely deceived him, I stepped forward, threw back my hat, and told him fiercely to go about his business, and leave off his impertinent stare, or I should chastise him upon the spot. At this he fell back to his former position without making any reply; but I saw that he knew me, and I resolved to return to my hotel by the most circuitous route I could think of. I thereupon started hastily up the street. The negro followed me imme-
diately, but made no further attempt to speak. It was only, however, the fear of personal violence which kept him at a distance, and fearing that in his blind affection he would cause me annoyance in the future, I paused before going many blocks and permitted him to come up with me. When he saw that I had paused, he appeared to hardly know whether to advance or not, as he had evidently not forgotten my threat. I called out to him encouragingly, and he came up to me without any sign of fear.

"Mr. Flunggins," said this persistent black, as he came up grinning, "da'ts you—I knows dat's you. You aint no Nall. No, sah," he continued, shaking his head knowingly, "you caint fool dis nigger."

"Possibly I resemble someone you have known," said I.

"No, sah, Mahse Mac, I knows dat ar vois—dis yere nigger knows yer. Doan' you know me? Doan' you ricerlic Dick—yo' ole nigger Dick?"

"Yes, Dick," I answered, giving him the hand he had been so longing to grasp, "I do remember you," and the negro, delighted, cut so many antics and capers about the street that the passers-by gazed at us curiously.

I talked with the faithful old black for some hours, and gave him a brief account of many of the incidents related in these pages. Many years before he had been a servant in our family, and had remembered us all with gratitude and affection. At my request he wrote certain letters, an account of which is given in Chapter III.
After which I saw him quite frequently during the time I remained in San Antonio. He had a small restaurant down on some by-street, and at his urgent and oft-repeated request I went there occasionally. As to the work I performed for the landlady of the Cleveland House, she expressed herself as being well pleased. But on one evil day I brought in a guest—a nicely-dressed stranger claiming to be from Sedalia, who was destined to do me much harm—indeed, to be the means of starting me again on my wanderings. A gentleman he appeared to be, and he had a pleasing way that took well with all, especially with the ladies. He walked with me from the depot to the house I represented, in the most condescending manner, and as soon as we reached the office, he expressed a desire to speak with the landlady privately. In this conversation, as I afterwards ascertained, he spoke to her about as follows:

"My object, madam, in thus speaking to you is because I wish to deal frankly with you. In this spirit I will therefore say to you that at present I am entirely out of money. I have written home for a supply, but until this comes I must have some place at which to stay. If you will give me accommodations here you may be sure that when the money for which I have sent arrives I will pay your bill without question."

Some further conversation ensued, and Mrs. Hanna, finding him so persuasive, soft, gentle, and kindly-spoken, and courteous, that, unluckily for me, she took him in, gave him the best room in the house,
and treated him in every way with distinguished consideration. Nay, more; carried away by the soft flattery which he every day poured into her willing ears, she discharged a servant whom she suspected of having neglected to attend immediately to some trivial order which her artful guest had given. He remained with us for about ten days, and during that time was toasted, feted, flattered and wined and dined to his heart's content. Mrs. Hanna could not do enough for him, and made a complete fool of herself as long as he remained. But all of this came to an abrupt end in a manner which astonished none of us but the landlady herself. One night when we all slumbered and slept, our stranger gathered together his worldly possessions, stealthily raised his bed-room window, and we never saw him more.

When Mrs. Hanna learned that he had thus abruptly departed, and that he had not stopped nor stayed even to bid her good-bye, she fell into a great rage. Perhaps the consciousness that she had made an entire fool of herself added fuel to her fury in no small degree. At any rate the more she reflected upon the incidents of the past week or so, the more terrible grew her wrath. And woman-like, the angrier she became, the more unreasonable, unjust, and unreasoning she showed herself to be. As ill fortune would have it, no one but myself was present when her paroxysm reached its height, and she turned upon me and poured out upon my head all the vials of her wrath. The more I endeavored to reason with her the more enraged and unreasonable she be-
came. Finally, after hurling at me every expletive or epithet of which she was mistress, or could coin for the occasion, she accused me of being in collusion with her departed guest.

"Why, madam," said I, determined to make some attempt at least to vindicate myself, "it was not I who made the arrangement with the gentleman—not I who took him in. I never saw him in all my life before, and had no means of knowing whether he had one dollar or a thousand. You took him in knowing he had no money."

"But you brought him here!" she shrieked, "You brought him here, and what did you do it for, if it was not to cheat me out of my hard-earned money? For aught I know you helped him to sneak away in the night like a thief. You may have raised the window for him! I do not know but what you are a greater scoundrel than he is! And you can get out from here! You can leave here!"

"I am quite well aware, madam," returned I, angered at her unjust and unreasonable treatment of me, "that I can leave here. I can, I suppose, leave at any moment; but the question is, will I?"

With that I turned away and left her, and went up to my room, leaving her standing in the middle of the floor staring after me, fairly petrified with astonishment and indignation, and glaring with impotent rage. Presently I heard her walk hurriedly across the room and give a violent ring at the telephone bell. I paused on the stairway long enough to ascertain that the enraged woman was sending for her
husband, and then I went on up to my room. The only baggage I had consisted of two large valises. I packed my small belongings into them, and locked them carefully. I then brushed my hair and started to return to the office. On the way down I overtook an Irishman who was a regular guest at the house, and with whom I had formed a pleasant acquaintance from the first hour of my arrival. I never knew his name. Everyone called him "Jim," and I called him Jim. If he had any other name I never knew it. He was a man in the prime of life, very jolly, and very impulsive and warm-hearted. By some lucky stroke in the railroad business he had accumulated a modest fortune, and with this had retired from active business life. I had liked him from the first, and we had formed quite a friendship. He often came to my room of evenings, and we would smoke and pass the time in conversation and storytelling until midnight. As I overtook him now on the stairway, he smiled and said:

"What's the row?"

"Mrs. Hanna has become enraged at me because her impecunious guest has departed without bidding her good-bye," I replied; "and she wishes to lay the blame of the whole affair upon me."

"Just like a woman," he growled, oracularly. (He was an old bachelor, and like most old bachelors, he understood, or thought he understood, all the little weaknesses of the gentle sex.) "I heard her shrieking and howling a bit ago, and feared you were in trouble with the old skinflint. Satan himself couldn't
get along with that woman. No, nor Christ, neither."

By this time we had reached the office and found it deserted. We sat down by the stove and continued our conversation. I kept my eye, however, upon the street door, as I did not know what moment Hanna might step in. I saw by the clock which ticked upon the wall near at hand that it was about four o'clock.

"I think, Jim," I said, "that madam has sent for her husband. At any rate I heard her at the telephone, and caught enough of what she said to be pretty sure that she has sent for him. She ordered me to leave, and I gave her a pretty broad hint that I would not do so. You see she agreed in the beginning to board me for one month, and that time has not yet elapsed."

"Well, Mr. Nall," said my friend, "you remain in the office here with me, until old Hanna comes, which I guess he'll do pretty soon, and if he insults you, why d— him, knock him down, and I'll stand by you."

As I thanked him for this impulsive mark of friendship, Hanna, followed by his wife, entered the room, and we could say no more. We saw at a glance that Hanna was very angry, and I had no means of knowing what his wife had told him. Judging by his angry looks, however, it must have been such a story as to discompose him very much. I felt sure that she had poured into his ears a woful and terrible tale of insults, injuries, etc. She looked at me with an expression of vindictive triumph as her lord strode
angrily up to me, and extending his right arm towards me threateningly, exclaimed, in a harsh, angry, and imperious tone:

"You get out of this house, you scoundrel!"

I sat perfectly still, without making any reply, or appearing to notice him at all. Hanna rolled his angry eyes about the office for a moment, as if in search of something he did not see, and then turning to his wife, he told her to go up stairs and bring down "Nall's things."

She departed with alacrity, after giving me a mocking and insolent glance.

"You're a nice specimen of humanity!" said Hanna to me, in a coarse, brutal, and sneering tone, and my own anger rose so high that I curbed it with difficulty, and repressed the retort that rose to my lips. Then, as though satisfied with this, he said no more for the moment. I afterwards knew, however, that he took my silence at the moment as a clear sign of physical cowardice, or want of that personal or physical courage—the Anglo-Saxon fighting instinct—so greatly admired by most Texans, and so generally possessed by them. He waited a few moments and then returned to the attack with great volubility and energy.

I thereupon endeavored to reason with him, but everything I said merely served to throw fuel upon the flame of his wrath. He became even more unreasonable than his wife had been, and he had evidently tried and condemned me in his own mind without waiting or wishing to hear my statement of
the case. It may have been, too, that his desire to show his small authority, and, shielded by the law, to browbeat and domineer, was greater than his feeble faculties could resist. He told me very loftily, several times over, that I need not open my mouth, or say a word, as he “knew me,” and would not listen to anything I said.

Presently his wife came slowly down the stairway with my valises in her hand; and, panting with the vigor of her exertions, but triumphant still, she placed them upon the floor near her husband. As soon as this was done, she stepped to one side, and stood looking expectantly on. I judged from her manner, as she stood there, gazing at me with a species of gloating triumph, that she quite expected to see her husband throw me bodily into the street, or thrash me within an inch of my life. For either of these results she was prepared; but for the result which actually followed I cannot think she was quite so well prepared. Hanna, too, was entirely convinced that he could heap all manner of insults upon me, or strike or kick me with the greatest impunity, and he determined to use his power to the utmost.

“No, sir,” he said to me in a loud and insulting tone, “take your stuff and get out of here.”

Having thus spoken, he waited for me to obey his insulting behest, but his manner showed that he had some doubts as to whether I would do so or not. For my part I realized the utter uselessness of attempting to reason further with him, and I determined to set my valises behind the office counter, and ask that
they might be allowed to remain there until the morrow, or until such time as I could find another lodging-place. With this purpose in view I left my chair and advanced to take up the valises. I was hardly conscious at the time—though I have thought of it since—of the look of exultation that leaped into Hanna's eyes as I advanced. He thought (I know now) that, craven, like, I intended to take my baggage and slink away, and he probably thereupon determined to give me something to remember him by.

As I bent slowly and with difficulty over, for my body was stiff from long illness, Hanna gave me a violent kick from behind. This cowardly and unprovoked assault was so violent, as well as unexpected, that I was taken wholly by surprise, and fell heavily forward upon my face. The kick and the fall together caused me very severe pain, and, indeed, came near crippling me. I soon scrambled to my feet, and my anger was past all control. I forgot my age, my weakness, my diseased frame. All the vigor of early manhood returned in that moment—every fibre within me quivered and shook with a mighty indignation.

Hanna, not dreaming that I would return his blow after the usual Texas fashion—with interest and upon the spot, stood near at hand, flushed and triumphant.

"Hanna," said I, "I will break every bone in your craven body for this!" and he stepped hastily back, with his hands thrown out, and with an expression of sickly terror upon his face. Without more ado, I rushed upon him and struck him with such fury
and address that I felled him to the floor at the first blow. My Irish friend, who had looked on in silence up to this time, now sprang excitedly from his chair and cried out:

"Give 'im h—, Nall; give 'im h—!"

Mrs. Hanna ran across the room, sprang upon a chair and screamed lustily. But my appetite for revenge had not been appeased, and I meant to take ample and speedy vengeance. Mounting, therefore, upon the writhing body of my foe ere he could struggle to a sitting posture, I proceeded to punish him severely. The Irishman danced about the room in a high state of excitement, and called out encouragingly to me from time to time. But it chanced that very little encouragement was needed to make me pummell my foe severely. He yelled manfully, and his wife, no doubt believing him to be in his last gasp, ran shrieking from the house, calling "Police!" at the top of her shrill voice at every leap. Hanna howled louder than she, and between them, they raised such a concert of hideous sounds as seldom falls to mortal lot to hear. Hanna soon left off his mad shrieks of terror and roared lustily for mercy. By this time a crowd was rapidly collecting and, I saw that the whole house would soon be filled with them, hence I released my noisy foe and permitted him to get up. I then sat down near the Irishman. As soon as Hanna once more found himself master of his own movements, he struggled hastily to his feet and ran behind the counter. As he now appeared, no one, save a Stoic, could behold him with-
out smiling. His back was covered with the dust of the floor on which he had wallowed, his face was red and swollen, his fair frowzed, his collar awry, his necktie torn partly off, and his vest and shirt were both rent. He made no effort to come out from behind his counter, but remained there until a policeman came, glowering at me from time to time with an expression of mingled hate, malice and fear—a look which I returned, though neither of us said a word. Indeed, as our blood—speaking for myself at least—had been heated by the contest, and the characteristic Anglo-American fighting instinct thoroughly aroused, one word would have brought about a renewal of the struggle.

My enthusiastic Irish friend was congratulating me upon my victory, when a policeman entered, followed by Mrs. Hanna. Her face was flushed, her hair disheveled, and she bore visible marks of perturbation and excitement. She gazed at me fearfully, and did not come anywhere near me. Hanna started joyfully when his restless eye fell upon the blue-coated form of the policeman, and his eye lighted up with vindictive pleasure. It was some moments, however, before he ventured to come from behind his counter, and then only when the officer had come well within the room.

"Which is the man?" said the policeman, pausing and looking about the office.

Mrs. Hanna pointed to me.

"That is the man, she said.

The officer advanced and placed his hand upon my arm.
You'll have to come with me," he said.

"Very well, I am ready. But are you going to arrest me and no one else?"

"Certainly I shall not arrest anyone else. You raised the row and did the fighting, and now you want me to arrest some one else."

I said no more, knowing that Mrs. Hanna had prejudiced the officer against me by her account of the affair, but went out into the street with him.

My landlady followed at a safe distance, calling out to the officer when she reached the street and advising him to lock me at once in a strong dark dungeon at the very least. She then went on to tell him in a shrill, high-pitched voice, that she and her husband would "be around" in the morning to testify against me and "have me hung," that I had murdered her dear husband and she would have me sent up for life.

To this the official made no reply. Whether he was speculating as to the means by which Mrs. Hanna could accomplish such a feat in jurisprudence as to first "hang me," and afterwards "send me up for life," does not appear. But I think that the vindictive and malevolent spirit she showed upon this occasion was one of the indirect causes of turning the scale of the officer's sympathy from their side to mine. At any rate his manner toward me began to change somewhat, and he questioned me, asking me how I came to involve myself in such trouble, etc.

In reply I gave him a full account of the events that had befallen me since my arrival in the city; of
the nature of the understanding between Mrs. Hanna and myself; of the smooth stranger who had indirectly involved me in my present trouble;—and, in short, of everything that had happened to me since the beginning of my sojourn in San Antonio. He listened attentively, and at the conclusion of my story, he slapped me heartily upon the shoulder and said:

"My friend, you have done exactly right, and while I can't afford to encourage fighting, I must say that if I had been in your place I should have thrashed Hanna sooner than you did."

By this time we had reached the Recorder's office. As we entered the policeman whispered to me:

"Tell him the same story you have told me, and, my word for it, you will have nothing to fear."

Evidently, thought I, here is one partisan, at least; and I walked up the room with a more confident step. The Recorder was alone. He glanced up as we entered and said:

"What now?"

The policeman replied; giving a brief account of the occurrences at the Cleveland House, and in a manner which showed my side of the story in a very favorable light. I could see from the superior officer's manner that he was already impressed in my favor. He listened with attention, and when the policeman had concluded, he asked me what I had to say for myself. In reply I defended myself as warmly and as eloquently as I could, even relating certain parts of my history previous to my arrival in San Antonio; and when I had done, I thought that even a less in-
terested observer than myself could have detected a suspicious moisture in the Recorder's eyes.

He spoke to me very kindly, asked a few questions at points where my story had not been clear to him, and said he supposed he would have to excuse me, and I might go. It would not be easy to describe the exultation and almost boyish joy which possessed me on hearing this. Visions of narrow cells, and balls-and-chains, and a daily fare of bread and water, had been floating confusedly through my mind for an hour or more; and when these gloomy ideas, together with all prospect of punishment, were thus suddenly dispelled, my joy was great. I thanked the Recorder in the warmest terms, and having received his kindest wishes for my future welfare, uttered with evident sincerity, I took leave of him and went out upon the street. I then started to return to the Cleveland House, but had not gone more than two blocks when I heard some one loudly calling my name. I turned at once, and my heart sank within me when I beheld my friend the policeman running after me in a high state of excitement, waving his arms, and shouting my name in stentorian tones. I immediately concluded that the Recorder had changed his mind, or repented of his unusual kindness to me and had sent the officer to arrest me again. The sudden transition from the pleasant and even joyful train of thought that had occupied me, to what seemed now to be a clear prospect of imprisonment, was no less shocking than disheartening; and for one brief instant I thought of attempting to evade the coming officer by flight.
Happily, however, I made no such attempt; but, restraining the impulse by a strong effort I calmly waited for the policeman to come up with me. In a few moments he came up panting.

"Here, Mr. Nall," said he, "give me your hand. I have got something for you."

I hesitated a moment, but not knowing what else to do, I complied with his request by holding out my hand to him. He seized it with his left, and with his right placed a bright silver dollar in my palm.

"There—there," he said, hastily, as he saw that I was about to speak, "not a word—I do not wish to hear a single word!" and he turned hurriedly about and ran back faster than he came. I called after him, and he waved his hand, but did not stop. I have never seen him since, and do not to this day know to whom I am indebted for that dollar. I stood gazing after his retreating form until it was lost in the distance, and then at the dollar. Finally, however, I placed it in my pocket in a very puzzled manner, and went on down the street. The money, little as it was, was indeed a God-send, for I did not have a cent in my pocket. I believed at the time—and I have seen no reason since for changing my opinion—that the kind-hearted Recorder, whose sympathy I had touched, and whose name I do not know to this day, had sent me the money.

I now knew that I could count upon at least two friends in the city, and this knowledge comforted me greatly. With a lighter heart I pursued my way to the Cleveland House. When I entered the office
no one was present but my Irish friend "Jim."

"Well," said he, looking up with a smile as I sat down, "it seems they didn't lock you up in the 'cooler' after all."

"No," I returned, "the Recorder 'excused' me, and here I am."

"I'm glad of that," said my friend.

A chambermaid passed through the office at that moment, and I showed her my piece of money and said to her:

"You may tell your mistress that I shall remain here until to-morrow. I have the money, as you see, and this is a public house."

A few minutes after this supper was announced, and when this meal was over, I took my valises from the office, and carried them up to Irish Jim's rooms. At his request I remained with him all night. There was an extra couch in his bed-chamber, and I occupied it. We locked our door securely, and so prepared ourselves that we might not be taken off our guard in case Hanna should make any attack upon me. I did not anticipate anything of the kind, but we thought it best to be prepared. It was my intention to leave San Antonio on the following morning en route for Wooten Wells. These wells possess great medicinal virtues, and Dr. Herf had advised me to go there if I could. We were not disturbed during the night except by dreams, and after breakfast the next morning my friend Jim gave me a letter to the conductor of one of the passenger trains on which I could travel the greater part of the distance
to Wooten Wells and thus save the price of a ticket. This was the more necessary, as I did not have it, my sole possessions in cash being limited to the sum of one dollar. For obvious reasons I shall not mention the name of the conductor, nor of the railway. When the long train, loaded with passengers, came puffing up to the depot and stopped, and its living freight began to alight, I boarded it, and went into the car just back of the "smoker."

Shortly after the train steamed out of the station the conductor began his rounds. When he came to me I handed him the letter given me by Jim. The official read it without comment; and handing it back to me when he had done so—

"I cannot take you, my friend," he said. "You will have to pay your fare or get off." And he held out his hand for the money I did not have.

I gazed at him for some moments in silence, and I then asked him if he had a pistol. He replied that he had not; and, looking at me strangely, desired to know what I wanted with a pistol.

"I want to kill myself," I replied, in tragically sepulchral tones.

The conductor stared at me with bulging eyes for a moment, the very picture of astonishment and trepidation, and then went hurriedly on, and he did not approach me again. No doubt he felt he had fallen in with a dangerous lunatic, and that he would be particularly fortunate if he escaped with his life. At any rate he was careful to avoid me, and whenever his eye fell upon me his sunburned skin turned
to a swarthy pallor. The fare amounted to several dollars, I do not remember how many.

When we reached Hearne later in the day we changed cars for Wooten Wells. At this place I bought a ticket for the latter town, at the cost, I think, of fifty-five cents, leaving me forty-five cents, and this was all I had. The reader will remember that this dollar was given me by the Recorder, otherwise I should have been entirely destitute of money, and would have been under the disagreeable necessity of either remaining in San Antonio, or of walking to my destination. That small piece of money had been worth more to me at the time than ever dollar was before. We steamed into Wooten Wells sometime after midnight, and I was the only passenger to alight. The sky had become overcast, and an obscuring mist hung over the earth. Now and then some rain had fallen. The long train rumbled on its way, its red lights gleaming like fiery eyes through the mist. The darkness was intense, and enough rain had fallen to make the roads muddy and disagreeable. There was no one in or about the depot but the station agent and a porter. No omnibus, coach, carriage, or vehicle of any kind, and the only means the traveler had of reaching any of the hotels were such as he had brought with him;—namely, his feet.

The porter informed me that it was a full mile to the nearest hotel—the Jackson House, and he further added that only an ordinary boggy country road led to it. I therefore had no recourse but to take my
valises and set off down the dark muddy roadway. This I did, slipping and floundering about in the darkness and mud, while now and then gusts of wind and light showers of rain passed over me. I thought that mile the longest I had ever traveled, and feared it would never end; but finally, tired—indeed, almost exhausted (for I had no strength), wet, footsore, covered with mud, and hungry and sleepy, I reached the Jackson House.