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PADDLE YOUR OWN CANOE.

CANOEING? Oh yes, we might enjoy it if we could go to the Adirondacks, Lake George, or Mount Desert, and could afford a guide and all that sort of thing, and camp out; but a woman can't pull an oar or get what you men call an 'outing' anywhere nearer New York," I think I hear the fair reader say.

"And why not, pray?" I ask you.

Canoeing is enjoyed by ladies right here within the city limits of New York; and if in New York, then why not in many of the large cities of the country?—for surely there is water enough near most of them, and the smaller cities too, for that matter.

Within less than a mile of any point in this city there is water, deep and wide—the Hudson, East River, and Harlem. Yet how few of the million and over who live or make their living here, get any aquatic recreation, ever! To be sure, there are boat-clubs on the Harlem, and along the shores of the Hudson above Sixtieth Street. There are yacht-clubs at Bay Ridge, on Staten Island, and over in New Jersey. But yachting is expensive, and comparatively few enjoy its pleasures. Only men do boating about New York,—that is rowing,—except for a spasmodic effort now and then at organizing a ladies' crew for the barge in one of the Staten Island rowing-clubs. Small sail-boats are dangerous toys—especially when ladies go as passengers—on the waters of the bay or lower Hudson, on account of the numerous steamers, large and small, scurrying about continually. What is left? Only the canoe, I answer; and there is a quiet nook where it can be kept and paddled with pleasure and in safety,—on the Hudson, along the shore of Washington Heights, a pretty place, and, in the words of the bard, "truly rural."

Below Fort Washington Point—known in old Knickerbocker days as Corlaer's Hook—there is a quiet bay comparatively little affected by the tides that attain a speed of nearly three miles an hour in midchannel. Steamers do not come near the shore on their way up and down the river, and therefore this sheet of water is eminently suitable for canoeing. Under the Palisades opposite, there is also quiet water; and along the shore above the point on the bay side, as far as Spuyten Duyvil, where the creek makes in,

and winds about, under two bridges, till it finally joins the Harlem, and thus forms the northern boundary line of Manhattan Island. This stretch of river and creek affords a splendid chance for the canoeist, and gives him a variety of waterways near home—for his home is on the shores of the bay before mentioned.

At the lower end of the bay, just north of the iron-works—at the foot of 152d Street, which is one of the few streets yet cut through—there is a pier, but little used now. At its shore end there is a boat-house, with a bridge from its river door reaching out to a broad float that rises and falls with the tide.

It is a bright September day, and a strong breeze is blowing. On the float stands a group of ladies and gentlemen,—no, they are boys and girls, if one may judge from their actions and enthusiastic conversation; and yet a few gray hairs are seen, and as the wind whisks off a hat, a man's bald head comes plainly into view. What are they up to? Evidently launching some sort of a savage craft. It is a boat; but who ever saw anything like it before?—no oars, no sail, no seats even, and it is partly decked over!

"Jack, lend a hand here, and get this canoe into the water, or, by Jove, we never will get started."

Oh! It is a canoe, then! And these fellows in knickerbockers, flannels and "tams," are canoeists, to be sure; and the girls have come down to see them off, of course!

"Here Jenny, hand me that cushion, please,"—this from the fellow who is in the canoe, standing up, as sure as you live, and putting things away under the deck,—baskets, blankets, shawls, dishes, and all sorts of queer things. "Now, jump in, face forward. Hold on till I fix this backrest. Are you comfortable? Is the cushion high enough? Here's your paddle. Wait a second till I get settled. Here, Tom, hand me that paddle. All right, let her go now. Give way!" And off they go, two in a canoe, both paddling with long double-blade paddles, a stroke on one side, then one on the other, keeping perfect time. Soon they round the pier and are lost to view. That girl has handled a paddle before, evidently; and yet we are in New York City.



A PASSENGER.

PART OF THE FLEET.

What will the next pair do?—for two more are about to start. This time there is no “jump in!” The man stoops over the edge of the float, one foot on the gunwale of the canoe to keep it from coming up, and a hand on it to keep it from going down, and he has the other hand free to help the lady in. How gingerly she moves, and how very carefully she steps in and tries to sit down very quickly; but she has difficulty. She is very prettily dressed in a neat street costume of the day. She seems to have great trouble in settling herself and—did you bear a slight titter from the other girls, and two words that sounded like “steels,” “bustle?” What can they mean? But the gentleman is very kind. The girl sits with her back toward the bow of the boat, and her shoulders rest against cushions cleverly placed on deck. A light gossamer is thrown over her lap to keep any drops of spray from spotting the dress. The crew—for so we must call the paddler to distinguish him from the other individual, who is evidently a passenger only—takes his place aft, facing the bow and his fair charge, and “gives way” with a will, for he has the work of two to do if he is to keep up.

How easy it is to pick out the knowing ones among the girls. Those who have come to paddle—and they mean to get all the good there is in the exercise—are dressed in tennis costumes (quiet in color so as not to show salt-water spots), even to the “tams” and rubber-soled shoes,—if the observations of a mere man—the writer—are to be believed.

They exhibit a freedom of movement impossible to the fashionably dressed young ladies, who are this day to get

their first taste of canoeing, as passengers. What the difference is of course it is impossible for a man to know; but simply to look at them (the passengers), one knows at once that the handling of a paddle is impossible. Even the comfortable, half-sitting, half-reclining position one naturally takes in the canoe, does not seem comfortable to them. Something is the matter, and far be it from a man to give reasons. Even the material of which the dresses are made seems to count. The girl who first started off actually shouted with glee as the canoe plunged into a big wave at the end of the pier, and the wind sent the spray flying into her face and over her dress; but she did not seem to mind. The passengers seem to be very much afraid of even a drop of water getting on their dresses, and some of them actually completely envelop themselves, even to the head, with gossamer and hood.

So they go, one canoe after another, till the whole fleet of ten or twelve are on the move up river. Several of the men go alone, each in his own canoe. One tandem canoe is manned (if the expression is allowable) by two girls, each wielding a paddle. Last of all comes the big family canoe,—a boat made of wood on the exact model of a birch used by the Indians. The canoe is entirely open,—that is there is no deck,—eighteen feet long and perhaps three feet wide, and really holds a big family, as can be seen in the illustration, which was drawn directly from an instantaneous photograph. The single-blade paddle, only, is used in the big canoe—several of them. This single-blade is almost universally used in Canada, where few canoes are built with decks, and where ladies go canoeing quite as much if not more than New

Yorkers go horseback riding. It is *the* recreation there, in many of the river towns and villages.

What a pretty sight it is from the pier-end, this fleet of tiny boats! Very soon the passenger boats are left hopelessly astern. Those tandem canoes do go bowling along over the waves, their varnished white cedar planking reflecting the sunlight from the dripping sides, and looking for all the world like a school of porpoises rolling over the waves for sheer pleasure. The jolly party is off for a picnic. They will paddle up river to the creek, and then turn into its winding channel, run under King's and Farmer's bridges with the tide, and land on what is known as "The Island," in the upper Harlem, away from civilization. Here they will dine under the trees,—the men brewing coffee and cooking eggs over an open fire,—and late in the afternoon, when the tide has turned, home they will paddle, perhaps by moonlight.

The passengers, how think you will they look? Somewhat bedraggled, you may rest assured. All day the first thought in the mind of each one will have been "my dress." And the other girls, the ones arrayed in common-sense costumes, do you think they will mind the sitting on the grass and spearing olives out of a bottle with a sharp stick, or giving a hand now and then at spreading the table, also on the ground? Not a bit of it. Their dresses "will wash," and are "all-wool."

This is a special occasion, of course, the girls going canoeing! Let us ask the janitor of the club-house.

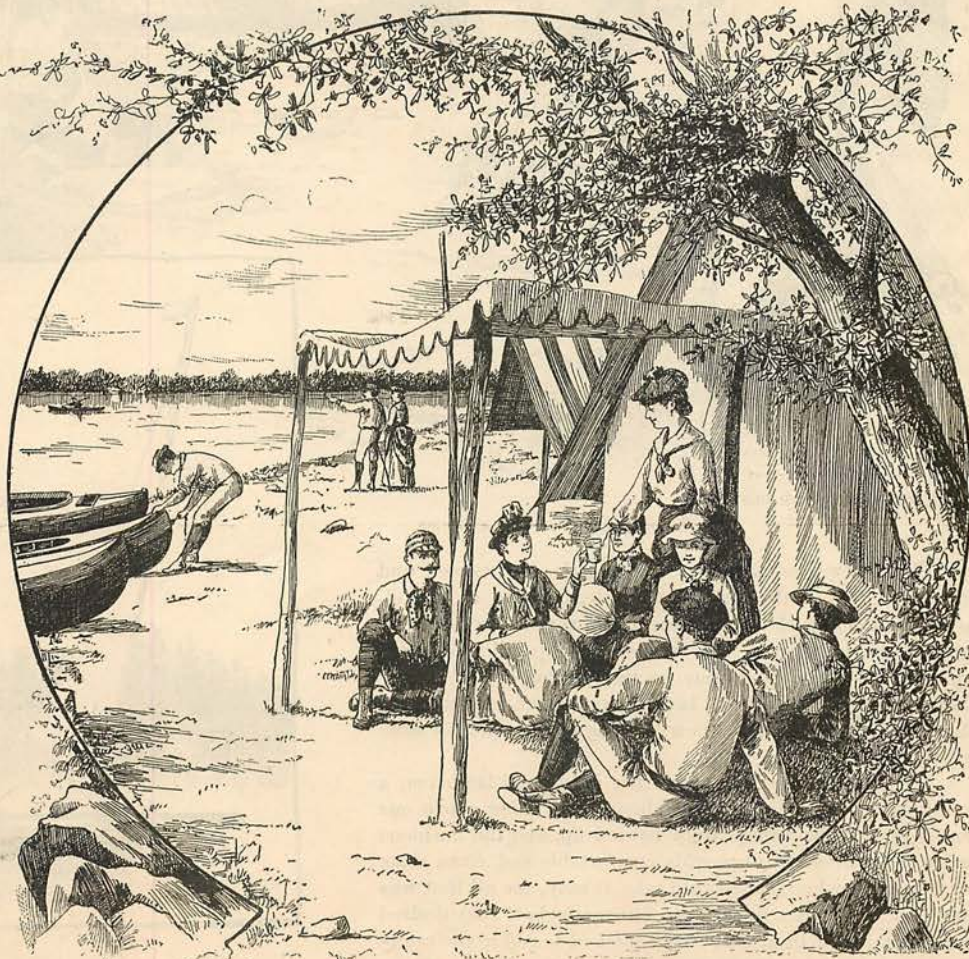
"Bless you! there are some of them down here every pleasant afternoon. See that little open canoe up there on the top rack—the short one? That's Miss Marks's. She and her brother are down here often. They sometimes go sailing together in his racing canoe. She can swim, though. I have seen her get into a canoe from the water. She often goes it alone, too, and is mighty pert about being helped. The boat don't weigh above twenty pound, and she just totes it round herself. She was off with a party up North last summer, and I heard tell that she camped out with the rest and 'paddled her own canoe.' But one of the photographs she brought home—took on the trip—showed her in one of the gentlemen's canoes, and her own boat towing behind with the baggage aboard of it. I guess that's the way she got over most of the ground. Well, up at them canoe meets at Champlain last summer, to which many of my club's men go, they have a great big camp for ladies, too; and a lot of the families goes

there and lives for a week or two weeks, in tents. That photograph tacked on the door there shows you how the camp looks, tents, canoes and things. Some of this club's members' wives goes with them to camp in the summer, and sometimes they goes on cruises down the rivers and on Long Island Sound; and they do come here to the club house, now and again.

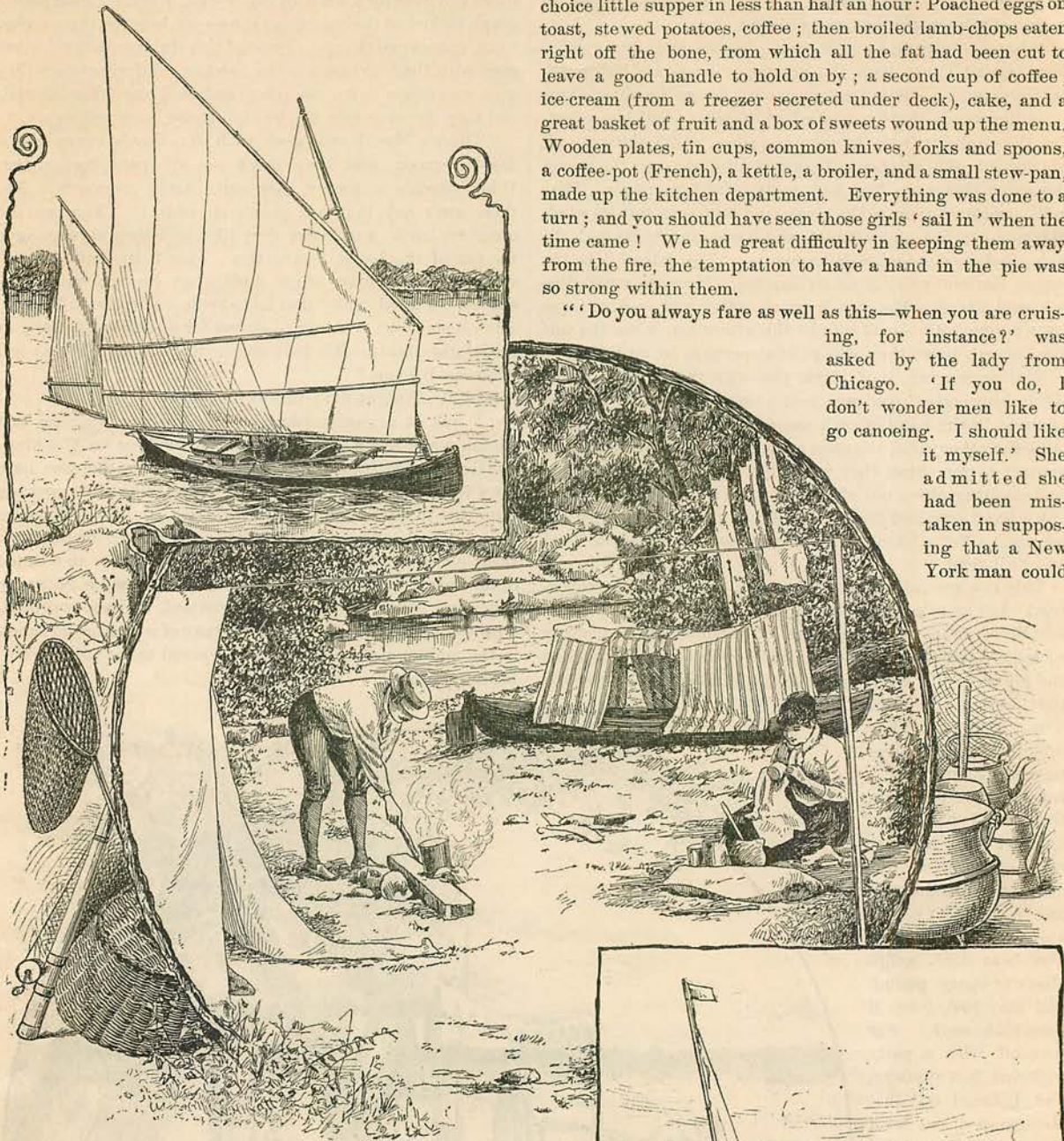
"There's Mrs. Fowls goes with Mr. Fowls every Saturday afternoon, and they don't do all paddling, either. When there's a breeze they sail. Lady members? No, there ain't any that are members—exactly. You see the members invite any ladies they like, and they always have the run of the house downstairs. This is the ladies' room, where they can leave shore duds when they go out in the canoes. A good many that lives near, up on the hill there, often come down evenings to go out for a paddle, specially of moonlight nights. But here comes Mr. Knight; he can tell you more'n I can."

And Mr. Knight did; this is his story:

"I was at a garden-party on the hill, one evening last summer, and met a girl who used to live here on Washington Heights, but who now lives in Chicago. She was here for a few weeks, visiting a friend. The subject of cooking came up in the course of conversation, and she seemed to be very much amused at the idea of a man knowing anything about it. So I there and then invited her to a canoe camp supper under the Palisades the following Saturday evening. A party was at once organized, and she accepted, with the threat that she would partake of a good solid lunch in the middle of the day and be prepared to fast till the following morning.



IN CAMP.



"WHEN THE WIND BLOWS."

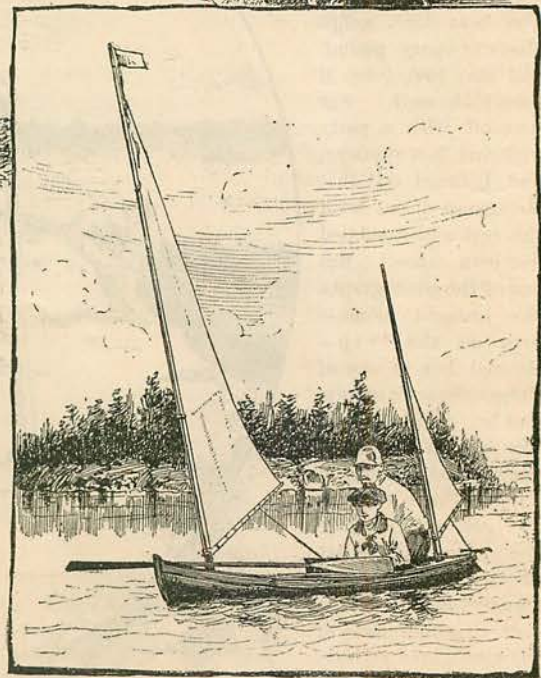
MR. AND MRS. — ON A CRUISE.

"The party was made up of four girls, four canoes, and four men, two of the girls being sisters of one of the fellows; and it is perhaps needless to add that neither of them went in the canoe with the brother. We paddled leisurely up river, starting about four, on the last tag-end of a flood-tide. The good things had been stowed in the canoes before the girls arrived, so they knew nothing of what was in store for them.

"We crossed the river above the Point, and landed on a sandy beach under the cliffs about four miles above our boat-house. The canoes were hauled up, and the cushions and wraps taken out to provide comfortable and clean seats for the girls, where they could take it easy, see all that was going on, and make remarks on our methods if they desired to. A couple of light tents were pitched to add to the camping appearance of things, and provide a shelter to stow things in. Next a fire was started of driftwood, and we served up a

choice little supper in less than half an hour: Poached eggs on toast, stewed potatoes, coffee; then broiled lamb-chops eaten right off the bone, from which all the fat had been cut to leave a good handle to hold on by; a second cup of coffee; ice-cream (from a freezer secreted under deck), cake, and a great basket of fruit and a box of sweets wound up the menu. Wooden plates, tin cups, common knives, forks and spoons, a coffee-pot (French), a kettle, a broiler, and a small stew-pan, made up the kitchen department. Everything was done to a turn; and you should have seen those girls 'sail in' when the time came! We had great difficulty in keeping them away from the fire, the temptation to have a hand in the pie was so strong within them.

"Do you always fare as well as this—when you are cruising, for instance?" was asked by the lady from Chicago. 'If you do, I don't wonder men like to go canoeing. I should like it myself.' She admitted she had been mistaken in supposing that a New York man could



BEFORE THE WIND.

not possibly, under any circumstances, know how to cook. Then we scaled the wooden plates out over the water, cleaned the knives, forks, spoons, broiler, and stew-pan, with sand—and water. General conversation made an hour fairly fly, and as the moon rose over the hill the canoes were packed, crews and passengers once more seated therein, and all four craft, lashed together, drifted with the tide down stream. An hour later we were at the club-house, having practically paddled only the width of the river on the return trip."

Is canoeing dangerous for ladies? If proper care be taken, no more so than horseback riding. Every one who goes in a canoe should know how to swim,—I say this of any kind of boating,—not that it is likely to be found necessary. The

confidence imparted by the knowledge of one's ability to swim, goes a long way toward preventing the necessity for swimming when canoeing. Many shell-boat owners do not know how to swim, and many canoeists are in the same boat, unfortunately. Very nervous people, especially if they are restless when on the water, should leave canoeing alone.

May I add a little bit of advice? Never trust yourself, my lady reader, in a canoe or boat with a man unless he thoroughly knows how to manage it and you: and never trust yourself in a canoe with sail up, unless your husband or brother has the helm, or you know how and manage the canoe yourself, and are the only one in it.

C. BOWYER VAUX.

ROANOKE.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL SKETCH.

GRAFTON, will you dine with me to-night and meet my friend Roanoke? You've heard me speak of him, I think," said Briston, one morning at the club.

"I think I have," I responded, with an inward smile, for Briston quoted Roanoke, as "Sairey Gamp" of glorious memory did her friend "Mrs. Harris;" and as Roanoke never was seen among us in the flesh, members of the club had frequently been on the point of declaring, "I don't believe there is no such a person." "Yes, I think I have, Briston, and I'll dine with you with pleasure. What hour?"

"Seven. Be prompt, please, for Roanoke hates waiting for anything. You will be entertained with him, Grafton. There never was such a fellow! He is like nobody else."

"I shall, no doubt," I answered, feeling really considerable curiosity about the man, and also a sense of the prestige it would give me at the club to be able to say, "I have seen Roanoke" when doubts of his existence were again expressed.

Briston and I parted, and, though it was but two o'clock in the afternoon, the idea of the dinner and of Roanoke for some reason would not leave me. Through my occupations during the remainder of the day, a feeling of some important impending event was continually with me; and when I analyzed my sensations, I found they all centered about Roanoke. The man seemed to have taken possession of my imagination.

I rang Briston's bell at ten minutes of seven, and I found my friend sitting before his library fire with the stranger. Briston sprang up at once and introduced me, and as I sat down between the two men I had an opportunity to observe Roanoke.

Though he lay back in his chair in the most listless attitude, and possessed the really rare capacity for sitting absolutely still, without working his hands or moving his feet, he nevertheless seemed to me to be a man of great power and energy. This was my first impression. My second—I pride myself a little on my instinctive analysis of a character—was of a something unusual and mysterious about the man, which made him unlike all other men. And thirdly, there swept over me a sudden overmastering preoccupation in him, which made it absolutely difficult for me to sustain my part in the conversation, or to notice anything said by my friend Briston. To all Roanoke's remarks, and to his slightest motions and glances, I was intensely, morbidly alive.

What is that quality in some men which so enchains and enthalls us; which commands us in spite of reason and judgment, and draws us on, by its attraction, to an ever-increasing submission? Nameless, and dependent apparently on no outer characteristic, it is, nevertheless, the sovereign power of the world. This singular influence I met for the

first time in Roanoke, and it took possession of me as if by the working of a spell.

Throughout dinner Roanoke was very silent, and I could see that Briston tried to draw him out for my benefit, and failed. This solicitude was needless. Roanoke's near presence was quite excitement enough for me, and I did not wish him to talk until I was capable of listening critically.

After dinner we went back to the library.

"Make yourself comfortable, Grafton," said my friend. "Sit down, Roanoke," for Roanoke had wandered to the further end of the room, and was looking at the piano, which stood there closed. Roanoke opened it, and seating himself began to play.

There never was such music before nor since. Under Roanoke's magnetic fingers the inanimate ivory keys spoke the language of the soul. I have never told what the fancies were that flitted through my brain under that inspiration. Briston has said to me since, quite seriously, that he saw his first love; and I think perhaps he did.

Roanoke ceased at last, shut the piano rather abruptly, and came back to us. He leaned on the back of my chair, and looked into the fire.

"You're a magician, Roanoke," said Briston, glancing up at him. Roanoke started a little at the word.

"Magic," he replied, after a moment, "is but a more than ordinarily clear comprehension of truth. There is much in the natural world that we have a habit of ignoring when we can, and so we are startled when chance or necessity brings us into contact with it. Familiarity might breed contempt."

"And might not, too," said Briston. "Tell us what you mean, Roanoke. Are you speaking of the things that are called supernatural?"

"Yes, I was," said Roanoke. "You called me a magician, and it occurred to me how easily I might make you say that in good earnest,—of how easily, in short, I might hoax the world."

"I always knew there was something of this about you," said Briston, looking at him attentively. "What is it? Are you a spiritualist, Roanoke?"

"No. That is, I do not believe the souls of the dead come back to earth and communicate with us."

"What do you believe about them, then?"

"Nothing. They pass quite beyond us. I am not referring to them, at all. Yet there is a Something which occasionally draws near us, bringing with it a chilly air, paralyzing both to soul and body. We avoid this unknown thing in all ways, and so escape the necessity of naming it. Well enough that we do so, perhaps. Yet there it is, a fact still, in spite of us."