A BOTTLE OF OIL.

Wishing to take the night train at the small station of B ——, and having nothing to employ my attention about the village, I went early to the station, and was ushered into the waiting-room by the watchman, a stout, good-natured looking man in the prime of life, who wore, pinned across his breast, an empty sleeve

As I had an hour or more of leisure before my train would arrive, I passed the time chatting with the watchman, and he told me the story of the adventure in which he lost his arm. I repeat his narrative as nearly as possible in his own words.

Before I was intrusted with the night duties of this station I formed one of a crew of three sectionmen, who had in charge seven miles of track upon our road, some three hundred miles west of here, in the roughest and most lawless part of the Territory.

Our duties were to keep in thorough order the track upon our section, and we were held responsible to the company for any thing that would endanger or delay the trains while upon it.

Our section began at Summit Station, and ran east seven miles. Thence to Brewster's, the next station east of Summit, and fifteen miles distant from it, was another section eight miles long.

The night duty of a section-hand is not pleasant. In rain or shine, snow or sleet, the section must be patrolled by one man—who employs in good weather a light hand-car for the purpose—ahead of our Overland Pullman train. This train passed over our section at midnight, and our departure was timed so as to inspect the track immediately ahead of it.

So, taking turns at that duty, we started from Summit at ten o'clock sharp, and usually arrived at the "half-way house" about ten minutes ahead of the train. Here we met one of the men from the section east of us, who had started about the same time and for the same purpose. You see the precaution taken by all well-managed roads for the safety of its patrons.

How many of the passengers on the Overland to-night know, or knowing, give a thought to the men who, since darkness settled upon them, have been plunging through the snow,—for hand cars are useless in such weather as this,—swinging their lanterns from side to side, examining carefully every cut for fear of falling rocks, every bridge for broken rails, thus enabling them to ride in safety.

As I said before, the men from each section having patrolled fifteen miles of track, meet at a little shanty situated beside the track, just large enough to hold a small stove and a few necessary supplies, and allow the men to enter. Here they stay until the train comes in sight, then outside, and display their two whitelights, that the engineer may know all is well. Failure to do this would result in a report to headquarters, and possibly in discharge from the service.

One night it came my turn to run the section. Before starting, it occurred to me that our supply of lantern oil at the half-way house was low, so I procured and filled a quart bottle of lard oil, the kind which is used for the purpose, put it into the inside pocket of my heavy coat, buttoned it snugly about me, and started.

It was a stormy summer's night, as black as ink. My car ran smoothly over the rails, and soon I had travelled about half the distance and arrived at a bridge crossing Snake River. Here I dismounted from the car, and pushing it ahead of me as I passed, I gave the structure a careful examination, found everything all right, and was about mounting my car again, when I received a violent blow upon the head which stretched me senseless upon the rails.

Recovering consciousness after a few moments, I found myself bound, gagged and lying but a few feet from a gang of masked men, whom I saw, as well as the darkness would permit, at work with bars removing one of the rails just at the entrance of the bridge.

Train wreckers! I had heard a great deal about the desperate character of these ruffians, but was now making my first acquaintance with them.

As they worked, they discussed the situation and how they should dispose of me.

"I tell yer, Sam!" one big fellow exclaimed. "Best way is to tie him across the rails, and let 'em finish him."

"Yes, that's so!" echoed the party. "Dead men tell no tales, and he may have seen our faces."

"Ho! ho! ho! I won't listen to such a plan," said one who seemed to exercise some influence over them. "We shall have enough to answer for before this job is finished without killing him. How this nail sticks!" he added with an oath. "The man who drove these spikes must have meant 'em to stay. Come, mates! He is safe enough, and if we mean business, we must be lively. The train will be here in twenty minutes, and we have no time to lose," and at the rail they all sprang with a will.

Twenty minutes! What could I hope to do to save the train in my condition, with so short a time?

The thought of the terrible wreck which must result if the derailed train struck the bridge made me desperate. Straining at the cords which bound my wrists, I fancied they gave way a little. I remembered the trick of the necromancers who free themselves from their bonds by alternately contracting and expanding their muscles, and I lay in silence, working in a perfect frenzy of excitement until I was able to free my hands. In an instant my knife out of my pocket, and my feet free.

Without waiting to free myself from the gag, I sprang to my feet, and, at the top of my speed, started down the track in the direction of the approaching train. With a yell which told me I was discovered, the whole gang started in pursuit; but I had some little start of them, and bounded along the ties, bent upon stopping the train at any cost.

In the inky blackness of the night pursuit was difficult. Soon pop! pop! pop! from the revolvers of the gang. They were firing down the track, in the hope of stopping me with a bullet.

As the gag, which I had not removed, hindered my breathing, I was forced to stop for a moment to cut it away. While so engaged, there came a second volley, this time more successful. I was struck in the left arm midway between wrist and elbow. I should have fainted from the shock, together with the rough usage I had previously undergone, but for my determination to keep up.

"Brace up!" I called, as if addressing a companion. "No time for such foolishness now, Tom. Remember the train!"

This I said aloud to myself, for the solitary work of my nightly rounds had given me the habit of talking to myself, for want of another companion.

Setting my teeth hard, I overcame the faintness, staggered to my feet and ran on. I soon noticed that the pursuit had ceased. Either the train-robbers thought I was done for, or they had returned to their unfinished work, trusting I should be unable to stop the train.

And now it flashed upon my mind for the first time, How could I accomplish it? Light I had none—my lantern was with the wreckers.

While I was thus deliberating, still running on as fast as my condition would permit, instinctively I felt in my pocket for matches. Ah, the oil! Why had I not thought of that before? Of course!

"Of course the oil will stop them, Tom. Spread it on the rails. Their old seventy-ton locomotive can get no grip on that iron. Smear it thick, cover it well, rub it on with your palm, so—both rails, don't neglect an inch of either. For life, Tom! for life. Think of the men, women and little children upon the train!"

I worked with the desperation of a drowning man. Upon my knees, the bottle under my disabled arm, pouring the oil, by an inclination of my body, into my right hand, and spreading it upon the rails.

In ten minutes the quart of oil was exhausted, and as a result I had both rails for quite a distance very well covered with it.

I had started backward from the approaching train, and now rose to my feet at the end of my labor and at the terminus of the greased rails.

The train was coming.

Already the rails were singing with vibration as the heavy train approached. Here they come. How awful the sight of a big locomotive, coming straight toward one upon a dark midnight! The great, round eye of the head light streaming out into the darkness, the roar of the exhaust, the hiss of the steam through the cylinders, together with the rush and roar of the train, make up a terrifying, though magnificent sight.

I stood upon the track, waving my hands, far enough away to spring from it before he train could reach me, but so that the headlight would shine upon me and I could be seen by the engineer. "Now for it," I thought. She strikes the oil—the big, seven-foot driving-wheels spin round as though the engine had been lifted in the air.

Friction, the propelling influence, is gone now. She slackens speed. I could see the engineer plainly.

In my excitement I screamed as loud as possible, in vain protest to the engineer, who was pulling the little lever which sands the rails.

Shouting is of no avail, they could not hear me.

Had there been sufficient upgrade there the oil would have stopped them quite. As it was, the inertia of the cars composing the train was able to push the engine over, sliding the wheels.

But one resource was left, and I thought of it just in time. I stepped as close to the rails as I dared, and with all my strength hurled the empty bottle at the head-light. It struck the glass and shattered it to splinters, and the light instantly went out.

Then came the welcome signal from the whistle for brakes, and I sank down unconscious.

When I recovered, a moment sufficed to tell the story, and, proceeding slowly, we soon came to the scene of the trouble. The rail had been removed and was lying beside the track; but, of course, the would-be wreckers had seen by our careful approach that their plan was spoiled and had decamped.

With the tools always carried upon a train for such purposes, we soon replaced the rail and proceeded.

I was carried to the company's hospital at S——, where skillful surgeons did the best they could for me, but it was found necessary to remove my arm, as you see. And the company thought it best, to avoid my meeting with possible harm from the gang I had foiled, to transfer me to this point.

Now it is time for me to light up the station, for your train will soon be here. A pleasant journey to you, sir, and no mishaps. Good-night.

Burman's Indifference to Death.

Three Burmans were led out to suffer death by being shot. They were perfectly apathetic, not seeming to care a bit, judging by the way they laughed and talked and smoked the never absent cigar. One of them having been tied up, the other two squatted down and watched the sentence being carried out with intense interest. The volley was fired, and so true had gone the bullets that the top of the Burman's head was riddled with five of them. Turning away in disgust, what was my horror and surprise to see the remaining two prisoners rolling on the ground, convulsed with laughter at the effect of the Sepoys' rifles. It was some time before they recovered sufficiently to be taken up for punishment, and when they were, one of them was smoking a cigar and the other burst out laughing just as the order for firing was given.

The Burman, it will be seen from this, is apathetic, apparently indifferent to death. In spite of this quality, he is a coward in action and rarely fights in the open or stands his ground when attacked. They are not a tall race, and in many respects resemble the Chinese; having flat faces and small eyes. They wear their hair long like a woman, and the greatest insult they can receive is to have it cut. In daily life they are lazy, making the women do everything; thieves and liars, and not to be trusted in any business transaction.—Neville Morris in New York Star.

A Romance of Compressed Air.

A gentleman who, by the way, is quite a celebrated organist himself, was wandering through the organ loft of St. Andrew's Church in New York when he slipped and fell into the diapason pipe of the huge instrument. He went down feet foremost into the cone of the pipe until he was firmly wedged.

The more he struggled the tighter he wedged himself, and being about twelve feet from the top of the pipe, the air soon began to give out, and he became frightened at the idea of dying in the prison where accident had lodged him. His frantic shouts for help did no good.

After spending a night in this dangerous and dismal hole, and having in his struggles stripped off his coat, he wound it about his waist, so that no air could escape from below. Soon he heard the sonorous tones of the organ, and ascended the pipe until he could reach the top with his hands. Then he knew that air had been pumped in below him, and that by gradual compression of the air, he had been forced up as through a pneumatic tube. As he drew himself out of the pipe, he gave one hearty and fervent shout of "Saved!" which rang above the tones of the organ, and nearly frightened the organist to death.

Navigability of Hudson's Straits.

OTTAWA, May 23.—The following extract from the private report to the Government by Captain Martham, who accompanied the expedition sent to Hudson's Bay to inquire into the navigability of the straits, was received here to-day from Ottawa:—"There it certainly navigation every year for at least five months. Very often the straits are likely to be navigable the entire twelve months, and the ice is not heavy, being of the honeycombed character, which can be easily resisted by steamers built for navigating these waters." The report indicates that the testimony of the men who were placed at stations along the shore is quite worthless, as they never could tell from their position how the water was flowing in the open channel. In fact they could not see.

A score of years ago the exploits of the *Monitor*, an experimental warcraft designed and built in the United States, drew the attention of the maritime world, and did much to inaugurate the revolution which has since been wrought in the construction and equipment of navies. Another experimental vessel, the *Vesuvius*, was launched the other day from the American Navy Yard, which bids fair to attract no less attention, and, should opportunity occur, to outdo the feats of its short-lived predecessor. The two chief novelties in regard to the *Vesuvius* are the high rate of speed anticipated, twenty knots an hour, and the unique character of her offensive armament. The latter is to consist of three guns, each fifty-four feet in length, and adapted to throw a dynamite shell of two hundred pounds weight a distance of one mile with precision. If this can be accomplished, and the dynamite cartridge made to explode on striking, it is evident that no ironclad could withstand the shock. Whether, however, the long range guns, now so much in vogue in naval warfare, would leave the little slumbering volcano many chances of coming within striking range of its intended victim is one of the uncertainties of the experiment.

Sudden joys are apt to be followed by moments of weakness. In the reaction from the delight occasioned by the freedom from flood this year, a Montreal paper says: "Spring poems are in order in Montreal at present, the season having behaved so well. Ask any devel-headed business man of Montreal, even with a warehouse near the river, and he would welcome a flood to escape the poetry.

THE WEEK'S NEWS.

CANADIAN.

There will be no grant for a Dominion Exhibition this year.

The Toronto City Council at its meeting Tuesday night passed a by-law for the early closing of retail stores.

In the test case against the Salvation Army in Quebec, indicated as a public nuisance, the jury yesterday morning returned a verdict of guilty.

The population of the city of Quebec is placed at 56,000 Catholics and 6,000 Protestants, and shows an increase over last year of about 1,500.

The bill permitting the Canadian Pacific railway to obtain an independent entrance into Toronto was passed through the railway Committee.

Premier Thorburn, of Newfoundland, states that the time for the departure of the delegates for Ottawa to discuss admission to Confederation has not been fixed yet.

At the Wellington Assizes at Guelph, the grand jury returned a true bill against the county on the indictment preferred by Mr. Justice Rose for a nuisance in connection with the courthouse.

Senator Howlan has offered to form a company to construct a subway between Prince Edward Island and the mainland, and to connect the Island railway system with the Intercolonial, upon receiving from the Government $250,000 a year.

Hughes Bros., wholesale dry goods merchants, Toronto, have suspended payment. The Bank of Commerce holds $250,000 of the firm's paper, of which one-half is secured, and the other liabilities of the firm amount to about $150,000.

Plans for the proposed new bridge across the St. Lawrence from Longueuil to Point St. Charles have been forwarded to Ottawa, and a joint stock company will be formed to construct the bridge, which is estimated to cost two million dollars.

The Missiquoi Indians claim from the Dominion Government the Muskoka territory, comprising 18,950 square miles, and Deputy VanKoughnet recommends that this claim be compromised by the Dominion paying $196,822 and the Ontario Government an annual sum of $4,900.

A resolution was adopted by the Montreal Board of Trade urging the Government, in consequence of the lowness of the water in the Cornwall Canal, to withdraw the mill privileges along the canal unless there is sufficient water to allow vessels drawing nine feet to pass through safely.

The doctrinal difference between the Reformed Church of England, presided over by Bishop Ussher, and the Reformed Episcopal Church have been amicably settled at the meeting of the Synod in Ottawa just closed, and the two bodies will again unite under a new bishop, to be elected in September.

The Montreal harbour commissioners will continue the work of deepening the ship channel until it is assumed by the Dominion Government and the dredging fleet has been ordered out. The channel is expected to be completed by midsummer to a depth of 27½ feet throughout at low water, except half a mile at Cap la Roche, where the rock will take longer to dredge out.

Messrs. Lacoste, Macdougall, B. B. Osler, Blake and MacMaster, the eminent Q. C.'s, have been asked at the instance of the bucket-shop keepers for their opinions on Mr. Abbott's bill for the suppression of those institutions, and are stated to be unanimous that the provisions of the bill will stop a great part of the business of the Stock and Corn Exchanges in the Dominion, affect stock transactions on incorporated exchanges, and prevent all speculation on margin.

UNITED STATES.

Buffalo expects to gather $600,000 into the city treasury under high license.

Orange trees to the number of half a million were set out in California during the past year.

Smallpox is raging violently in Camargo, Mexico, opposite Rio Grande, Texas, and people are dying at the rate of ten a day.

The New York Fire Department spent $2,700 for sleighs on which to transport the trucks and engines during the three days of the blizzard.

Alfred Barnes died in Mexico County, Mo., on Sunday, aged 98. He is said to have been the oldest member of the Masonic order in the world.

Resolutions condemning the proposed Detroit River bridge were adopted by a meeting of Detroit vessel owners and ordered to be forwarded to Washington.

One American publisher, who uses 5,000,000 envelopes a year, has sailed for Germany after 20,000,000 envelopes, with which he proposes to crush the envelope monopoly.

The Philadelphia syndicate which now controls the street car lines of Chicago has ordered that all conductors must wear "boiled shirts." The conductors are indignant

This is leap year and matters matrimonial are being reversed. In a breach of promise suit in Brooklyn the man, and not the woman brings the suit, and he wants $10,000 damages.

The Boston journal's Washington correspondent relates that the Washington Humane Society has caused a member of the British legation to be fined $500 for docking the tails of two horses.

T. H. Garrett, of Baltimore, has had made for his steam yacht Gleam the smallest piano ever constructed. It is 47 inches high, 47 inches wide, and 26 inches deep. The tone is wonderfully sweet.

The triadrennial Conference of the Methodist Church in session in New York has delegates from the various States of the Union representing four million Methodists and church property valued at $44,000,000.

Two ragged Italian children, who were arrested in Chicago while gathering cigar stumps on the streets, explained that they sold the discarded weeds to a fellow countryman for 15 cents per pound and that they were "made into cigarettes."

A charter was filed at Topeka, Kansas, on Thursday for the Farmers' Federation of the Mississippi Valley. The capital stock is $20,000,000 with 2,000,000 shares at ten dollars each. The charter is signed by citizens of fourteen States and three Territories.

The South Carolina Episcopal diocesan convention has unanimously adopted a resolution looking to the absolute separation of the two races into different organizations. The colored churches cannot be compelled to accept this arrangement, but it is believed they will do so.

The great tunnel through the Cascade mountains on the Northern Pacific is completed. It is 9,900 feet long, through solid rock. In 1886, when the work was commenced, there were no roads leading into the mountains and all the heavy machinery had to be hauled in on wheels and then transferred to runners.

In a paper read by a Baltimore physician it was truly said that persons accept medical charity who would not accept it in any other form, and who are able to pay the doctor. The reason for this condition of things lies, in a great measure, in the willingness of physicians, especially young physicians who want practice, to give their services. No other profession is so charitable as the medical.

FOREIGN.

In a London lawsuit, the costs on one side have already amounted to $500,000.

Crickets are devastating Algeria, where they are entirely destroying vegetation.

The Crown Prince is said to be much more respectful to his mother since the Queen's visit to Berlin.

The bill accepting the Fishery Treaty has passed the third reading in Newfoundland Legislature.

Rev. Charles Spurgeon has returned to his duties in London from Bournemouth, much improved in health.

Mr. T. J. Condon, M. P., for offences under the Crimes Act, has been sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment.

Deputy Czernatonyi, a friend of Premier Tisza, in the *Nemsett*, a semi-official paper, declares that war is inevitable.

The Legislative Council of Victoria, Australia, has taken decided steps to prevent the importation of Chinese.

Twenty-one suicides have taken place from Clifton Suspension bridge, England, since its opening in December, 1864.

The Paris Comptoir des Comptes has failed to negotiate a loan of 500,000,000 roubles for the Russian Government.

In the grand court of the Kremlin at Moscow there is about to be erected a monument in memory of the late Czar, which will cost $650,000.

The despatches regarding Emperor Frederick's condition are even more contradictory than usual, only this time the favorable report comes last.

It is stated the Queen's visit to Berlin has worked wonders, her interviews with leading personages in Germany having left a very favorable impression.

The relations between Turkey and Greece have improved, and the two Governments have agreed not to recall their ambassadors.

Mr. Gladstone says the schism of the dissidents on the great question of Ireland has proved more disastrous than he could have anticipated.

The steamer Baltic, from Liverpool for New York, returned to Queenstown with part of her machinery broken, which will take ten hours to repair.

Cardinel Moran is reported to have said that if the Papal rescript condemns the national cause, Irishmen should disregard even the command of the Holy See.

A despatch from Berlin to the London *Standard* says that clear proofs have been received of the existence of French and Russian intrigues against Italy.

At a meeting held in Dublin on Saturday a resolution was passed respectfully but emphatically refusing to recognize the Pope's right to interfere in Irish politics.

Mr. Wm. O'Brien, charged under the Crimes Act, with advising the people in a proclaimed district to join the League, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

A memorial tablet to the memory of the six English war correspondents who fell in the Soudan, costing over $1,700, will shortly be unveiled in St. Paul's cathedral, London.

Sir James Fergusson announced in the Commons that the Government required £2,000 from private sources before advancing £10,000 for crofter emigration to Canada.

The Under Foreign Secretary stated in the British House of Commons that the Government had brought no influence to bear to secure the issue of the Papal rescript.

The London *Tablet* denies that the Papal rescript has any connection with politics, and says it believes the sober judgment of the nation will submit to the Papal decision.

The London and Liverpool branches of the National League have passed resolutions expressing confidence in Mr. Parnell, and declaring they will pay no attention to the rescript of the Pope.

Sir Henry Parks, Premier of New South Wales, assured a deputation that waited upon him that the Chinese who were rejected at Melbourne would not be allowed to land in New South Wales.

The Madrid Christopher Columbus committee offers a prize of $100,000 for the best work in any language on the geographical discoveries of Portuguese explorers prior to the time of Magellan.

An epidemic of duels is prevailing in Paris at present. Since M. Dupuies was killed last Sunday, eight other gentlemen have vindicated their honour under the code, and seven more *affaires d'honneur* are set down for to-morrow.

The Emperor Frederick wears a scarf-pin with a history. Remarking on one occasion that the person with whom he was conversing was observing the pin with some curiosity, he pulled it out of his scarf and said:—"This little silver coin is one of three which were unearthed in an old Roman grave in the presence of my three boys. I had the three coins mounted as pins for them as mementoes of the occasion, and when my little Waldemar died I took possession of his and have worn it ever since." Prince Waldemar, who died in March, 1879, was a singularly lovable and bright boy, 12 years old at the time, and was the favorite child of "Unser Fritz" and his wife, and they bitterly and deeply mourned his premature death.

She Got Him Home.

A woman up at St. Helen's, says the Astoria Pioneer, is the wife of a man who loves to hang around a certain grog bazar, and in so doing he sorely neglects the helpmeet who sits patiently at home. Many a time and oft has she reasoned with him in her quiet, motherly way, and tried to point out to him the disgraceful way in which he was using her, but all to no purpose. She even went so far as to request the teller in the aforesaid booze emporium that he cease selling her husband liquor. But the poison-mixer bade her go hence and exchange New Year's calls with herself; but she turned on her heel and left his hateful presence.

That evening as she sat alone she heard a racket down cellar, and upon investigation found that a skunk had got his tail in the rat-trap. Now it is a well-known fact that a skunk will hold its peace as long as his bushy tail is held, whether in a trap or the hand, and remembering that she had no fear. Suddenly a bright thought entered her head. The clock in the house was striking one and she wanted papa to come home. With a quick movement she threw a bag over the animal's head, and, after grasping its tail, opened the trap, and thus armed headed for the saloon. It was only a short distance away, and finding the door partly open, she tossed the skunk into the midst of the crowd, and swiftly stole away.

It had the desired effect and papa came home. The saloon keeper, who never took a vacation before in his life, has gone into the country to visit relatives, and the saloon is closed for repairs.

Habits of the Ostrich.

The supposition that an ostrich lays but one egg annually, and drops that carelessly in the sand, is nonsense. So also is the familiar story that the bird is in the habit of poking his head in the sand, thinking that it may thus escape the observation of its pursuer. The ostrich is no such fool. The female lays as many eggs annually as any goose or hen, and all the birds in the flock use the same nest, which is a hole dug in the sand in some secluded place where they are safe from disturbance. When there are twenty or thirty eggs the male bird hatches them, sitting upon the nest continually for thirty days, and is fed meantime by the females. During the period of incubation the male bird is in an ugly mood and attacks fiercely with his bill and feet any man or animal that approaches him. As the chicks are hatched their mothers take care of them, the brood being divided among the flock by some instinct, and the cock is free to attend to his own affairs again. Very often eggs are found on the pampas, but such have dropped in the chase or by hens that have been unable to reach the nest.

Talk.

It seems to me that talk should be,
Like water, sprinkled sparingly.
Then ground that late lay dull and dried
Smiles up at you revivified,
And flowers—of speech—touched by the dew
Put forth fresh roots and bud anew.
But I'm not sure that any flower
Would thrive beneath Niagara's shower!
So when a friend turns full on me
His verbal hose, may I not flee?
I know that I am arid ground,
But I'm not watered—Gad! I'm drowned

Thanksgiving is good, thanks living is better.

EUROPEAN NEWS.

A War Scare in England—Emperor Frederick's Health—Bismarck Thinks War Imminent.

LONDON, May 15.—England is becoming excited over the possibillity of war, and there is a great popular uprising in favor of strengthening the army and navy for defensive purposes. The attacks of Gen. Lord Wolseley upon the Government for its niggardly economy and inefficiency have created great uneasiness. One hundred members of Parliament have called on the Secretary of State for War with reference to the matter and numerous public meetings are to take place during the coming week on the subject.

The Emperor has again passed a good day. The baseless reports circulated that there had been a recurrence of the inflammation caused general excitement till the results of inquiries at the palace were published. The official news concerning his condition is not entirely trustworthy, as the doctors join in the concealment of the worst phases of his malady, and in making the best of any change for the better. A favorable symptom is his increasing strength. His efforts to walk about the room are now fairly successful. A week ago he could not move his limbs. Now, with slight assistance, he is able to take an occasional turn up and down the room. His fever in the morning is very slight, but increases towards night. His sleeplessness continues, though frequently broken, but he enjoys intervals of repose deep and refreshing. The Empress visits his bedroom every morning, awaits his waking, and remains until the doctors assemble for consultation, when she withdraws to meet her daughters and to go out riding.

Prince Bismarck's solicitude to prevent the public mind being lulled into a deceptive calm regarding the chances of war was shown in the promptitude with which were made the denials of the peace predictions placed in his mouth in connection with the Schurz interview. Mr. Schurz did not communicate to any person the subject of his conversation with the Chancellor. He is, therefore, not responsible for what an official note in the *North German Gazette* termed an absolute invention.

A COCKROACH LETTER CARRIER.

Trained to Help Convicts to Escape.

A common cockroach was trained to act as a letter carrier between William Rodifer and "Starlight Jack" Ryan, convicts in the Southern Indiana Penitentiary. It is probably the first instance on record, too, where there was any use found for this little creature.

Rodifer occupied a cell in the tier just above the one where Jack was confined, and for a long time they had no means of communicating with one another. Rodifer was a daring fellow, but he had not sufficient imagination to get up a plan of escape, and he relied on the bright mind of his friend "Starlight Jack" to suggest an idea.

One evening Rodifer noticed an innocent looking cockroach running about on the floor. After watching its gambolings for a time he concluded he could use it. So, writing a short note to his friend, he tied it to the cockroach's wing, and kneeling down on the floor, he put it on the wall under the iron balcony in front of his cell. He calculated that it would run into the cell underneath. And it did.

Jack noticed the paper, caught the insect and read the note. Then he answered it, and poking the little creature out on the wall from the ceiling over the door he released it. The roach went into Rodifer's cell and was caught. Then they fed and cared for it, and used it in this manner for some months. In fact it grew to understand its business.

It must have been a female cockroach, however, for one day it stopped to chat with a friend and was noticed by a warden. The note which was written in some sort of cipher, was taken off and the hospital steward, Dr. Sid C. McCure, read it. Then the beetle was put on the balcony floor, and it ran into Rodifer's cell. Thus the officials were kept posted as to the plans of the two famous gaolbreakers.

After a time Jack began to suspect that something was wrong, and added a postscript to his letter something like this: "If everything is right you will find a hair from my head in this note." The warden read it as he did the others, but dropped the hair and lost it. "Never mind it," said Capt. Craig, whose hair was red; "put one of mine in it." The answer came back, "That last whipping must have been an awful one, Jack, for it has changed the color of your hair." The scheming of these two worthies came to naught, however, and they served their terms.

Authors and Sentiments.

Nobody but us literary people knows how closely grows the attachment between the author and his characters. It is related of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe that when from the pages of her manuscript she read the death of little Eva, the entire family sat bathed in tears, nor could one of them speak a word, but all mournfully separated, going to their rooms as though they had just attended the funeral of a dear friend. Some friends met Thackeray on the street one day, and his countenance bore traces of intense grief. "What is the matter?" they asked. "I have just killed Colonel Newcome," he sobbed, bursting into tears as he hurried away. Charles Dickens had the same experience. So did I. Mine was even more harrowing. When I wrote my first funny story about Mr. Bilderback going up on the roof to shovel off the snow, and making an avalanche of himself and sliding down into a water barrel, I was almost heart-broken. I didn't kill Mr. Bilderback myself. Ah, indeed, I hadn't the heart to do that. The managing editor, that dear, considerate soul, saw how I felt about it, and he killed him for me. He also killed all the other dear, loving gentle characters in the sketch. And as I was leaving he remarked that he would kill me if I ever came back with any more such stuff. He meant it, too. People who saw me coming out of the office, scraping dust, and lint, and pine slivers, and gouts of paste off my back, saw at once, by my grief-stricken face, that something had happened. But I could not tell them what. My poor, bursting heart was too full.—[Bob Burdette.

The Loss of Temper.

Temper, too, there is no question, is good to keep; yet we ourselves remember occasions when we would have given all the world to have been able to lose our temper thoroughly, completely, irrevocably. Stimulated loss of temper is a great gift; but a real, genuine loss has a power of closing a controversy or putting an end to a situation where stimulated loss can effect nothing. No doubt the losing is expensive; it generally means apology or compensation of some sort; but for the moment it carries a man through a difficulty unconsciously, and, as it were, on wings. The wounds received in the excitement of battle are said at the time not to hurt, and loss of temper means an excitement where wounds given and received become almost a pleasure.—[London Spectator.

Swift Justice.

The New York *Herald* says:—Yesterday morning Charles Rickerd was a member of the police force in this city. In the evening he was a convict in Sing Sing. He was arrested at four o'clock in the act of stealing and was sent on the 2 30 train to Sing Sing. In the meantime he had been indicted by the grand jury, arraigned before Recorder Smyth and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment on a plea of guilty. That beats the record. It shows what the machinery of the law can do when handled vigorously.

"Look here, doctor, if you could pay this bill, you'd accommodate me greatly." "Can't do it, my dear sir, impossible; but come in next week, and I may be able to do something for you." "Then you expect to be in funds soon?" "Yes, I saw young Slenderlegs going by here on his bicycle to-day."

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Torn in Pieces by a Panther.

Hugh Williams had a thrilling adventure the other night while driving from Hot Springs to his country home. When half a mile from his house his horses evinced considerable uneasiness, as though they were afraid to advance further in the direction they were going.

The farmer, becoming uneasy, whistled to his large and trusty bulldog, which was but a short distance in advance of him. Just as the dog started to return, in obedience to the alarm, Mr. Williams heard a noise in the branches of a tree which stood near the roadside, and when the dog got within twenty five yards of the waggon he was pounced upon by a huge panther, which leaped from the tree upon him. A terrible fight ensued.

The farmer's team became frightened and ran home with him. As soon as he reached his home Mr. Williams tethered his team, ran into the house, picked up his Winchester rifle, and returned to the spot to take a hand in the battle. He found his faithful dog torn to pieces, but no signs of the "varmint" was visible.

African Explorers Attacked.

The *Weser Zeitung* reports that Kund's and Tappenbeck's expedition to the interior of Cameroons was recently attacked by natives, and that two officers were severely wounded.

Kund and Tappenbeck are officers in the German army who made a notable journey in the Congo basin once two years ago, during which they discovered a large new river, the Fkatta, emptying into the foot of Lake Leopold I., which Stanley discovered. After their return home the Government sent them out again with a well-equipped expedition to traverse a great region which has never yet been visited by white men. The country stretching from Cameroons to Adamawa on the north, and far toward the big northern bend of the Congo on the south, is now the largest unexplored part of Africa. It is while engaged in this important enterprise that their expedition has been attacked by the natives, whose unfriendly disposition had already been reported by travellers who had gone a little inland from Cameroons.

The way of every man is declarative of the end of every man.—[Cecil.

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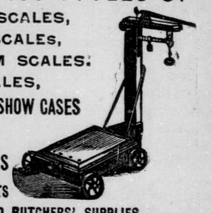

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