

see nothing to cause so terrible a catastrophe." "My foot slipped," says Vera, lightly; "so silly of me, wasn't it? But there are moments when I am the silliest thing alive."

"There is never a moment when you are not the loveliest thing alive," says Sir Watkyn, with an elaborate bow.

"No! no! no! you must not say pretty things like that to me," says Vera, with a smiling frown, and, unfurling her fan she taps his withered cheek with childlike coquetry. "You will turn my head. That is what Dody says."

"I wish I could turn your heart," says the old beau.

"What! Away from you!" a delicate incitement in her tone. "No! not another word. Such an unkind little speech cannot be condoned."

"You know I was far from meaning that," says Vera, then? Ah! hypocrite! That would be impossible, because—well, never mind the because!"

Her manner is a distinct admission that her heart has been already so turned. Sir Watkyn is in a seventh heaven of delight—a very fool's paradise, into which, however, the serpent of jealousy entering, mars in a degree his satisfaction.

"What was Burke saying to you just before you made that unfortunate movement?" he asks, referring again to the scene on board "The Cloud."

"I think," says Vera, with a charming downcast glance, that makes the absence of a blush sink into insignificance, "he was asking me not to go on that little expedition up the cliffs with—with you! and I was refusing to listen to his absurd demand."

"If I am anything," says Miss Costello at this instant, "I am strictly truthful!" And so indeed she always is, when it does not interfere with her comfort so to be!

This last speech is, of course, cakes and ale to the elderly suitor. His ancient blood grows almost tepid as he tells himself this lovely, shy (?), embarrassed girl ignominiously refused for his sake, to listen to the request of a man so much his junior.

"But you mustn't be conceited about all this," says Beauty, with a tremulous sauciness. "I only insisted on going with you because—because I wanted to see the perfect view from those hills. You understand?" She leans toward him, and the subtle perfume of violets that always seems to belong to her wafts from her to him. "You know it was only that!" she asks, with a slow smile that challenges a contradiction.

"No; I will not know that," says Sir Watkyn, growing bold. Never before has she given such open encouragement.

"Well, know what you will," she says, with a little youthful shrug of her soft rounded shoulders. "At all events, I wanted to go with you; and then came my false step, and then Gerald, springing forward to save me, got a bad—bad—wetting himself, poor fellow!"

"Lucky fellow, I think. I wish I could have been in his place," says Sir Watkyn, meaning to be gallant, and succeeding nobly in being unutterably foolish.

"I wish indeed you had been," says Vera, with the utmost sincerity. And again she speaks the exact truth. If Sir Watkyn had been her companion at that luckless moment, there would have been no passionate abandonment to despair, no *eslandre*, no spoiled gown, no curly hair hopelessly disarranged.

"But don't let us talk any more about it," says Vera, clapping her hands with childish vivacity. "It is a gruesome subject; let us forget it. Let us talk of something happy. You would like me to be happy, wouldn't you?"—raising and coming closer to him.

"What a question!" says Sir Watkyn,

with extreme fervor, looking up with a faded smile at the dazzling fair-like vision standing before him.

"Then promise me something," says the fairy softly, coming nearer still.

"You have but to speak," says the old man.

"But it is a great, great favor I ask," says Vera, and then suddenly, with one of her wild graceful movements, she seats herself on the arm of his chair, and lets one of her bare white arms fall across his shoulders. It may be only the careless action of a thoughtless child. It may—be something more.

"What is there I could refuse you? What need is there for you to doubt my reply?" says Sir Watkyn, amorously.

"Dance the first quadrille with me, then," whispers the siren, bending over him.

The pretty anxiety she betrays to obtain her simple desire would be flattering to any man. In the dilapidated specimen of manhood beside her it produces something akin to intoxication that displays itself in hysterical mirth.

"On! Eh! He, ha, ha!" cackles he, with foolish delight. "I—I really, you know—I—er—pon my word, I never dance, you know. Against my principles,"—with an attempt at a feeble joke. Alas! what a poor attempt even at that!

"But you will with me," says Vera, fresh and fair, with childish persistence. "You can't refuse me when I ask you, can you? Do you know,"—confidentially—"I have set my mind upon stirring you up a bit. Nerves and rheumatism are all nonsense until one is quite old! You will grow 'quite old' before your time" (ye gods!) "If you let yourself dream away your life any longer. Come, I ask you to dance with me, and"—coaxingly—"I will tell you a secret: nobody ever says 'No' to me."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

#### Much Creaking about Marriage.

The average society journal devotes about one column per week to the discussion of the so-called marriage problem. In this the tendency toward celibacy is again and again repeated and every remedy which could possibly be thought of is invented at some time and place. In nine cases out of ten, while some responsibility is attributed to men, the blame for the fall-off in marriages is placed upon women. They are accused of being vain, extravagant, incompetent, and frivolous, and utterly without qualification for any sterner work than flirting or idling away whole days over sensational novels. The merits of the young man who minds his own business and doesn't get married are lauded to the skies; those of a girl who does exactly the same thing are never mentioned.

Of course, the young men are not to blame for the falling off in the number of marriages. Who ever heard of a young man who was lacking in any single or double respect? As a rule, they never smoke, drink, or idle their time away, but are busy day after day developing their mental qualities by industrious study, and saving their hard-earned wages for the purpose of getting married at a later day. Girls frequent beer saloons, play pool, and organize expensive clubs, but the young man has no time for such frivolous entertainment. If he did he would fall quite to the level of his sister, and such a fate must be escaped at all hazards.

The marriage problem will doubtless solve itself in a little time, as most evils work out their own solution. At any rate, there is no reason to fear the depopulation of the country from the falling off in the

number now. Nearly every institution that the world has ever sanctioned at some time or another has passed through some species of trial. The desire for congenial feminine society is natural to every man, and will continue to be gratified in spite of high rents and extravagant markets. And while it is being gratified, just a little less of the one-sided arguments against women would be acceptable.

On the whole, women are as sensible as men,—very often more so,—and given a fair opportunity, with a husband worthy of the name, they are usually able to do their part towards keeping the wolf from the door and making home pleasant for those who share in its happiness.

#### MECHANICAL ITEMS.

Most of the private structures in Russia are built of wood, and it is estimated that the bulk of them burn down every seven or eight years. There is said to be always twenty fires, at least, in different parts of the empire.

"To clean the teeth use a mixture of emery and sweet oil, following it with plenty of kerosene." This would be queer advice, but as it is taken from a machinist's magazine, and from a chapter relating to circular saws, we have no doubt it is given in good faith.

A railroad journal gives a description of a projected locomotive and track by which a speed of three miles per minute is to be attained. A road bed with no curves less than 3,000 feet radius, the grade not to exceed twenty-seven feet to the mile, nine feet gauge, metallic ties, two trio of driving wheels twenty-four feet in diameter, are the more radically new features of this proposed devourer of time and space. The *Railway Age* thinks somebody will have to invent cast iron passengers to ride after such a contrivance.

In welding iron, as is well known, the pieces are heated to whiteness. When iron is to be welded to iron this plan answers well, but if iron is to be welded to steel the white heat often destroys the steel. To prevent this—according to a newly invented process—the surface of the metal to be welded is moistened with water, and on the wet surface there is sprinkled a compound of one pound each of pulverized calcined borax and iron filings, and four ounces pulverized prussiate of potash, intimately mixed. The two surfaces are then wired and raised to a red heat, or about 690 or 700 degrees Fah. When subsequently subjected to rolling or hammering, the joint is completed, while the steel is not sufficiently raised in temperature to be at all injured by the operation.

An Amsterdam firm is busy with the erection of a special workshop in which the cutting of the largest diamond of the world, is shortly to be commenced. This diamond, which has recently been found in South Africa, weighs 475 carats, and is said to be greatly superior in color and brilliancy to all the other famous diamonds of the world, the largest of which, the "Grand Mogul," is in the possession of the Shah of Persia, weighing, after being cut, 280 carats; next in size follows the "Orloff," of 192 carats, which adorns the point of the Emperor of Russia's sceptre; the Regalia "Kohinoor," originally weighing 116 carats. The "Regent," one of the French crown jewels, weighs 126½ carats. The time spent in cutting this last jewel was two years, during which time diamond powder to the value of \$4,500 was used. The "Star of the South," which has been cut at Amsterdam, weighs 127 7-16 carats.

#### KILLED BY HIS OWN SON.

A Quarrel in a Farm House Over a Game of Scrimer.

The county of Morris, N. J. has another murder case, which, following so closely after the killing of James Laurent by Samuel Wade, causes unusual excitement. Thomas Smith, about 45 years of age, was the farmer who managed White Meadows, the country residence of County Collector Mahlon Hoagland, about two miles from the village of Rockaway. He is very excitable and hot tempered, although not addicted to liquor drinking. He has a son named Loui, aged eighteen years. Late the other evening this boy came into the village and gave himself up to Constable Daniel Morgan, with the startling information that he had killed his father. The story of the frantico which the young man gave is as follows:

In the evening his father and mother, Bridget Nolan, the work girl, and himself sat down to play dominoes, the two former and the two latter being partners. The first game was won by the boy and girl, which so incensed the father that he swept the dominoes from the table. The second game was won by the father and mother, which put the former in a more happy mood, but in the third game the boy and girl won, and the fathers anger became uncontrollable. He again swept the dominoes from the table, and struck his wife. He also caught up from her chair a little girl who was sitting at the table, and threw her to the floor. The son fled into another room. The father followed him with a stick of wood, and declared with an oath too horrible to be repeated that he would kill him. The boy then drew a 32-calibre revolver and fired at him. The father turned and made a move to come toward him. The boy fired and a second time. Still the father came on, then the boy fired a third shot. With this shot the father fell to the floor. He lived only a short time. He uttered nothing but groans. One bullet had struck him in the left shoulder, another in the upper part of one eye, and the third went into the forehead.

The boy then started for Rockaway at once to give himself up. He expressed regret at what had occurred, and said nothing but a fear of danger to his life would have induced him to do what he did. He had always been a quiet, well-behaved boy, and was much liked in the community. The father was a war veteran. Coroner J. P. Stickler next day committed young Smith to the county jail at Morristown and proceeded to hold an inquest. During the proceedings Smith made a voluntary statement to the jury. The other members of the family corroborated his account of the homicide. The proceedings were adjourned until next Tuesday for further testimony. The son says that his father had on several other occasions abused his family and had threatened the lives of all. Some time ago they were compelled to flee from the house in the evening and they remained hid in a barn throughout the night.

"Waiter, can you bring me a nice young chicken smothered in onions?" "No, sah. We doesn't kill 'em dat way, sah. We cuts off d'er heads."

A young married couple of Salisbury have named their first boy "Neptune," because they became engaged while on a sailing voyage. There's an ocean for you!

A Berlin physician claims to have invented a machine for looking into the brain. It is probably a newfangled corkscrew, although the old kind will uncover the brain of most any man.