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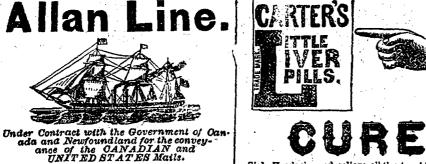
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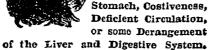


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"Why, indeed, thin I'm jist thinkin', Sir THE QUEEN'S SECRET Geoffrey, that ye'll have to quit the place," replied Beddy.

"What! abandon Brockton ?" "Well, yis, to be sure, av coorse," as-

sented Beddy, hardly knowing what he said, in the confusion of mind which the anticipation of Sir Geoffrey's approaching trial had caused him. "Yer not the first that the fear of persecution forced to leave.

"Ho, ho! It's yerseli's in it," sold B:dy... "Arrah, then might I be so bowld as to az ye" home, I suppose." "No," said the knight, "I'm not the first : but what of that? Those thou alludest to had odd pounds, deductin' one thousand for fishes, friends or relatives to fly to, or some one to live for-sons mayhap, or a-or-hem 1"

" Daughters," added Beddy. "Ay, or daughters-loving daughters I ing down his gray hair, and glanoing timidly mean-who would oling to them, and oherish them in their old age. Ab, that indeed present, Reddy, with any degree of certainty." would be something to live for i Would it

not. Beddy?" "Sartini," replied Reddy; "an haven't ye yerself the most lovin', an beautiful, an kindest-hearted child in the whole world?"

"Truly," replied theold man, sitting cown on his easy chair, and unconsciously opening a pook that lay on the table, "I had one; but she hath forsaken me." "Forsaken ye?"

" Ay, without leaving a word or a line that I could think of, or look at, in her absence." "Don't say that, Sir Geoffrey; it's a mortal sin to say that of Mistress Alice."

" Nay, bath she not deserted me?" " O, God pardon ye for that thought! " ex-

claimed Beddy. "And where is she, then ?" sold the knight;

as if the fact of her being away from his sight was a proof of her abandoning him "rever. "She's safe an' sound with Nel: Gower, at

Whinstone Hollow, where ye ough' to be yerself, an' where she'll be brackin' her heart expectin' ye."

"Ay, sy, so the pilgrim saith, whom thou hast just seen in the chapel. And, indeed, I foolishly pledged him my word to go see her once more; but since I searched her ream and found nothing there, not even one word or s bit of paper, as a token of her loving remembrance, I changed my mind."

"O, master, master, don't speak so could of her, that way, or ye'll kill me entirely." "Why, Beddy, I suppose she don't want to

have anything more to do with me, and that's the reason she left me as she did." "Piltell ye what it is, Sir Geoffrey and there's no use in palaverin' about it " said Beddy, walking up and down the room an resolute menner; "ye'll have to lave the place afore daylight " morrow." "Ay, faith, have to ! nye it ? Gramercy for

thy baves and thy shads. Thon speakest to me with as much boldness as if thou wert my master. And pray who shall compel me to

"The queen's pursuivants."

"What I didut not tell me thou hadst carried the party off, and left the leader a priv oner in the cellar?'

"He was a prisoner when I car ? "ay; but he's gons now, an he'll 1010-1 afore twelve o'clock the morrow, with another party at his back. So the sooner we lave the better; that's if ye doa't wish to have the test oath proposed. If ye wait till they come, ye'll have yer choice iv swearin' to the queen's shupremacy or goin' a prisoner to

London." " I'll do neither," replied Sir Geoffrey.

"What else will ye do?" "I'll summon the servants, and defond the

house," cried the knight resolutely, pitcling the book on the table.

"Ough! bad scram to the sarvint ye have to raise a finger for ye."

"What, afraid to take arms?" "No, but unwillin'. In one word, SI-Geoffrey, (an' upon my conscience, though they're Englishmen Heelf, am a'most ashamed to say it), they've deserted ye, ivery man I' tham, when they saw the trouble coming

"wurn't ye afeard Sir Gcoffrey id soon call acres yer doore." ye to an account iv yer doine, and knowin' "O dear me, Beddy, thou'rt not stribus; yer villany wud shurely be discovered, didn't all my own servants desert me? yo cirkilate the report through London, that "It's the truth I'm tellin'ye."

"Eh? lose on it? why - hem - let's

"Never mind; in round numbers, have ye lost the third?" "The third? Well, upon my life, now, I don't exactly remember."

January 2, 1884

"No, ye don't jist remember the exact sum -the odd shillin's and pence, ye know-av coorse not. But we'll let that all go for nothin.' An now, will ye be plastd to tell me how much Master Sewell has saved these five years, out of an income of three thousand bumbeer, beetles, grasshoppers, alms, instruments, books, cothers in cethera ?'

"Well, indeed," replied Sir Geoffrey, strok-ing down his gray hair, and glancing timidly at his questioner, " I cannot tell thee at "An can ye tell me how many horses ye

have in yer stable, or stock in yer farms ? can ye tell me whether yer in debt or out av debt ? can ye tell how yer accounts stan ? can ye tell me any thing at all at all ? IUS

" My memory's not so good as it used to of his jarkin.

"Ye know no more about yer affairs nor the child unborn," said Beddy, locking compassionately on the mild face of his old mag. ter. "God help ye, it's little business ye have in this world."

"Indeed, I suppose it's a great shame for me," replied the knight, "But with such a steward as Sewail, I feel periocily secure. I wonder that he don't come to offer me some refreshment after my journey," he added," for truly I feel somewhat hungry. Take the whistle there on the desk, Beddy, and call him."

Beddy searched for the whistle, but it was not to be found.

"That's strange," said the knight, rising and looking about for it himself; "I never once missed it from that spot these twenty vears and more."

" It was goold, an iv some value," observed Beddy.

"Ay, it cost my grandfather throsscore guineas; a fine old family relic. But go down, Beddy, and cend up Sewall; I would speak with him a moment."

Reddy promptly obeyed the order, but re-turned, after a short absence, to informed Sir Geoffrey that neither Sewall nor any other of the servants was in the house,

"Dear me," said the old man; "where can they be? surely I saw them at the door when I reached him this morning. Come, Beddy, lend me thins arm; we shall go down and seek them."

when they entered the servants' hall, sm in arm, Sir Geoffrey stopped and looked about him for an instant without speaking a word. " This place seemeth lonely and deserted, methinks," he muttered at length. "Hem ! there's a look of desertion about it which I know not how to account for. When last I came down here, my servents received me like a monarch ; new there's none to bld me welcome."

"It's the fate of many a Oatholio gentleman, these times," replied Beddy . " deserted by them that ought to be nearer and dearer 'o them than sarvints."

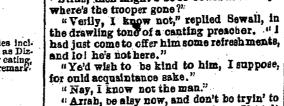
"True," said the knight; "and yet, Beddy, t endeavored to be very kind to my dependants."

We'l, an sure sir, yer goodness is not lost; if men don't roward ye, God will." "O, indeed, Reddy, I don't know that. I'm sometimes sfraid if I were kindly dis-

p ::: 3d, it sprung rather, mayhap, from Inclination than grace."

"Begorra, sir, that's the way with yealways; ye niver give yerself credit for any thing." "Moreover, contined the knight, "now

that my daughter hath left me, and age bent me towards the grave, and the thoughts of death beginning to come nearer and nearer to me day after day, why, I think I feel somewhat uneasy about those flies and fishes-a



"Ariah, be alsy now, and don't be tryin' to come over me with yer ould tricks. Jist tell me at onct why ye let him go, and where he went to." "I assure thee most truly, I know nothing

of the man." "I see yer fingar's cut, Master Sewall;

CHAPTER XXXVI-(Continued.)

"Thouseemest somewhat troubled in mind,

my friend," said avoice immediately behind

Beddy instantly turned, and found him-

self in the presence of Sawail, the steward.

how comes that? and the windy here broke at the sams time, and all since 1 left ye this mornin'.' "Can it be possible thou supportest me of

liberating this man?" said the steward, look-ing up mildly in Boddy's face. "In troth, thin, I do, Master Sewall, jist

suspect ye for that same."

"I grieve to think then couldst form so poor an opinion of me," observed Sewail, with a serene and placid countenance. "Look here," cried Beddy, laying hold of

the fellow by the breast of his doublet as he turned to quit the room. "Ye expect this Houghton here this evenin' with a party to take possession of this place, under authority of the queen's warrint, don't ye? An ye know the salvints will be more bent on seourin' their own plundher than defendin' their master's property; so that ye'll have nothin' to prevent ye carryin' out yer dam.

nable scheme, sh?" "Scheme! what scheme?" demanded Sc-

w.11. "O, ye'd like to know, wud ye? Well, wait, I'll tell ye. Y 've been robbin' Sir Geoffrey these five years, day after day; ye wurn't content with chatin' him out o' the Hollybras Farm, but ye chated him ouf o' Brockdale too, for yer brother in law, Luke Davidson, that ye keep in London all the time plottin' and schemin' with yer heretic wife. Ye've conveyed away, time aither time, the horses from the stable, the oxen from the stalls, the furniture from the house,

and the very tankards from the table. Ye haven't left the ould man a single silver goblet to drink his canary out iv; nor simpence in his | leave it ?" purse to share with the poor beggars that come to seek their weekly sime. An now that ye've nothin' more to gain, ye open the house to this trooper an his followers, to rob and plundher the little that s left, so that the wreck an ruin they lave behind may cover

the proofs iv yer damnable villany." "I swear to thee, Master Beddy, I am entirely guiltless of the charge," recponded the steward, with the patient look and smile of an injured man on his smooth face.

"Ye needn't smile at me that way," said Beddy; it's iv no use, for I know ye. If the divil in hell lent ye that smile to desaive Sir Geoffrey, be content with the use ye've made of it, an don't try it on me. As for yer swearin,' ye hypocrite, I wuldn't give a thrancen for yer oath."

"Verliy, thy language is offensive, Master Connor. I can remain no longer to bandy words with thee. Fray le: me go."

"Answer me this, ye villain," cried Beddy, at last enraged at the fellow's imperturbable calmass of voice and feature, and inserting his fingers in his neckerchief he dragged him back from the door;





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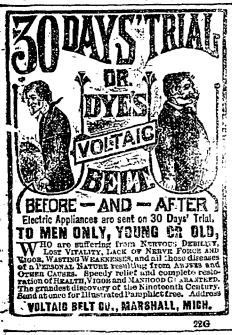
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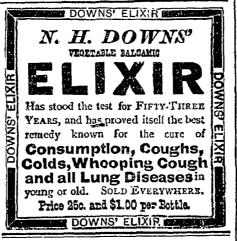
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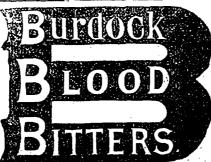
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yer master had been livin' like an ankerite, and savin' money for the last five and twenty years, till his coffers were full of goold, an all to induce some scoundrel, like Sir Thomas Plimpton, to come here with the test oath; eh? ys dog ! an on Bir Geoffrey's reinsal, to take possession of the property. and thus cloak yer pilfarin' an plunderin' from the world. Spake; acknowledge it, ye

hyporite, or I'll tear ye in inches." Unhand me," muttered Sewell, unhand me; I shall exclaim." But as the false hearted wretch attered the words, his right them." hand sought his breast, and was in the act of drawing a poniard from beneath his jerkin, when Reddy, suspecting his intention, grasped him by the arm, and held it like a vice.

"Scoundreil wud ye stab me in could blood ?" he cried, looking close into his lace. Haven't ye a dacent feelin' at all in ye?" "Ney, I thought but to defend myself," gasped the steward.

"Whail so pieus a man carry such a weapon consaled in his breast !'

"I did but threaten," replied Sewall, trem-bling in every limb. "Thou knowest 1 love not blood, and thine least of all."

"Traitor, ye desarve to die," clied Beddy, twisting his neckcloth still tighter, and chucking him under the jaw as he would a sparling our.

"Mercy, mercy!" groaned the steward; "I'm not prepared to meet judgment. O, spare me, spare me, and I shall quit the place instantly.

"Spare ye, dog? an how did ye spare yer master? O, fiend iv hell," he continued, "yer robbery of that poor, innocent, good ould man will damn ye yet, as shure as there's an ever-just God above ye. Yer sin is cryin to Heaven for vengeance, and will cry forever; for it's the sin that can niver be forgiven in this world or in the world to come. But I'll not have yer dirty blood in my hands; no, no, ye mane, low-sowld wretch, ye don't decarve to die by an honest man's hands: go, go away to the rest of the traitors below there, the an herd with them till yer associate, Houghton, comes back again with his reinforcement of aposiates and renegades. Away, ye base, low, cowardly, dastardly viliain. Away " And raising bim in his powerful arms, as he would a child, he dashed him sgainst the wall with such violence that the unfortunate wretch fell back stunned and senseless on the floor.

For an instant, Beddy seemed to regret the violence he had used, and waited to see if Sewall were likely to recover without the aid of restoratives; but perceiving, after the lepse of a minute or so, he began to show signs of life, quitted the room, and made his way to the library, in quest of Sir Geodicey. When he reached that apartment, the

knight was standing in front of a book shelf, on which were ranged a number of large volumes, bound with untanned calf skin, and occupied in looking over the precious collection, lest any had been taken away during his absence. At length, having apparently satisfied himself that all were safe as he had left them, he turned slowly round, and saw Beddy behind him, leaning in a melancholy attitude against the door.

"What troubleth thee now, Beddy," said the knight, approaching him, "that thou lookest to sad ?

" It's the truth I'm tellin' ve." replied Baddy; "ye can't depend on one! them."

"What, abandon me to the fury of these merciless troopers ? I'll not believe it, sir ; I say I'll not believe a word of it." "Bedad, I heard them with my own care,"

"Heard them ?"

"Ay, faith; heard them plottin' with one another how they'd run away, an turn Protestants, an get sarvice in great houses, where they'd have good eatin' an drinkin' ivery day I' the week, an no more confessions, nor instins, nor penances, nor pilgrimages, to bother

"Reddy, this is but a scheme of thine to induce me to leave Brockton ; confess it 3 acknowledge it now, then villain, and I'li ful, altogether, as they did before. Besides, forgive thes.

"Bad cess to me, Sir Geoffrey, if there's a word lie in it. An shure I heard them whisperin' to one another how they'd take the value i' their wages with them, an how they desarved to have their earnin's first and fore. most out i' the rack that was comin' on the place.'

"But Sewall, the steward, suraly he -"O, the Judas, the Juda !' interrupted Reidy; "if there's a warm corner in hell, that fellow'll have it."

"Dear me, Reddy; thou art cutainly mistaken."

" Mistaken ?"

"Ay, truly; Sewall was ever a pious, Godfearing man, and a most careful servant." "He was a damnable hypocrite, sir; that't

what he was." " Hold thy peace, knave; I cannot listen to this vilo slander.'

"O, murdher, murdher! what's this ?" cried through the room in a fit of vexation at his master's undiminished confidence in the man letter. On examining this fragment closely, whom he had so often warned him egainst. "Liston to me, sir; will yo liston to me for a minnit, Sir Geoffrey?"

"No, sir; I shan't listen to thee belying my steward, sir; it's against my principles and my conscience, sir,"

"Sir Geoffrey, will ye sit down in that chair and heatken to me," said Beddy, sud-denly lowering his voice, as if he saw the inutility of loud words, and would now try to convince him by other arguments.

"Well, sir, proceed," said the knight, sitting down ; what wouldet thou say ?"

"Two months alore I came to live with ye, Sir Geoffrey, yer ould steward, Mattew Oarewell, who was born an bred on the estate, an his father afore him, died."

"Well, very well, sir."

"Yer income, that time, in clear cash, amounted to three thousand three hundred and forty-eight pounds, six shillin's and six. pence of the present coinage ; didn't it ?" "Somewhere about that," replied Sir Geof-

frey ; " I'm not particularly sure as to the odd. shillings and pence."

"Divil a doubt i , an way : an i ye'd lation. say the thousand too, yed be usarer the truth, am teinkin'. Well, ye .ad the round sum of ten thousand pounds laid by, at shat time, accordin' to Matthew Carewell's accounts." "Exactly," replied Sir Goodroy, "just ten thousand pounds; but thou'lt retiember most of that was of base coinage, which hath been called in by Elizabeth during the last five years."

lose on it ?"

sort of soruple," he added, looking timidi up at Beddy.

"The flics and fishes," repeated Reddy, casting down his eyes as if he felt a sort of delicacy in being referred to just then on the subject ; or perhaps suspected his master had got some new idea about them in his head. "Ay, they have cost me many a long night's

study." "Av coorse they did, sir."

"When I should have been better em. ployed, mayhap. Upon my word, Beddy, my mind is not so estisfied about these things as it used to be, since I saw that monk in the abbey beyond there. My theories respecting the constitution of insects don't seem so use-Reddy, thou hast often expressed some doubts about it thyself."

"About the flies, ye mane; O, well, av coorse I did, sir. But here--ye know," stammered Beddy, not knowing well how to avoid wounding the old man's sensibility, "ye had always yer own opinions about thim, an I had mine, yer honor; only ye were backed by the priest, an av coorse had no check on yer conscience in regard iv it. But any way, Sir Geoffrey, this is notime to spake of sich things. Lat's see if we can't get some refreshment for ye, after the fatigue ye suffered all day; and requesting his master's company, he gave him his arm, and proceeded to the steward's room, where he left him alone for a few minutes, whilst he hastened to consuit the buttery and cellar.

The knight seated himself before the steward's deek, and began to look over the various articles lying on it, when his eye happened to fall on the name of Sir Thomas Plimpton, Beady, coratching his head, and striding written in the steward's handwriting on a bit of paper that seemed to be a fragment of a he found it was addressed to Plimpton, dated some few days back, and had the word "private" written in large characters on the corner. Sir Gooffrey turned it up and down every way, to make sure of its being Sewall's writing ; and then, as the matter seemed no longer to admit of a doubt, leaned back in the chair, and looked up at the ceiling, full of sad and bitter reflections.

In this attitude he remained for nearly half an hour, endeavoring to reconcile his former good opinion of Sewall with the fact of this unexpected and mysterious correspondence. He tried to discover some possible way to account for the letter without prejudice to the writer's hitherto bonest and trustworthy character; but he could find none. Wearled at length by such perplexing thoughts, and impatient of Beddy's delay in bringing him the refreshment he so much needed, he rose suddenly, and left the room, with the determination of visiting the servants' apartments, and of placing the fact of his desertion beyond all further space-

The first room he entered was the kitchen. "Hos, there, Mrs. A., Mis. Cook! art thou within?' he cried, knook. ing on a table with the head of his cane "hoal there," he continued, repeating the knock on a door that opened into another apartment. "Is there none to answer? God bless me! there, the fire is out on the hearth, the doors wide open, and the rain running "And pray, Sir Geoffrey, how much did ye over the floor. Dear me; when I came down CONTINUED ON THIRD PAGE.