THE DEAD FEAST OF THE KOL-FOLK.

CHOTA NAGOOR.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

We have opened the door,
Once, twice, thrice!
We have swept the floor,
We have boiled the rice
Come hither, come hither!
Come from the far lands,
Come from the star lands,
Come as before!
We lived long together,
We loved one another;
Come back to our life.
Come father, come mother,
Come sister and brother,
Child, husband, and wife.
For you we are sighing,
Come take your old places,
Come look in our faces,
The dead on the dying,
Come home!

We have opened the door,
Once, twice, thrice!
We have kindled the coals,
And we boil the rice
For the feast of souls.
Come hither, come hither!
Think not we fear you.
Whose hearts are so near you.
Come tenderly thought on,
Come all unforgotten,
Come from the shadow-lands,
From the dim meadow-lands,
Where the pale grasses bend
Low to our sighing.
Come father, come mother,
Come sister and brother,
Come husband and friend,
The dead to the dying,
Come home!

We have opened the door
You entered so soft;
For the feast of souls
We have kindled the coals,
And we boil the rice soft.
Come you who are dearest
To us who are nearest,
Come hither, come hither,
From out the wild weather;
The storm clouds are flying,
The peepul is sighing,
Come in from the rain.
Come father, come mother,
Come sister and brother,
Come husband and lover,
Beneath our roof cover.
Look on us again.
The dead and the dying,
Come home!

We have opened the door!
For the feast of souls
We have kindled the coals
We may kindle no more!
Shake, fever and famine,
The curse of the Brahmin;
The sun and the dew,
They burn us, they bite us,
They waste us and smite us,
Our days are but few!
In strange lands far yonder
To wonder and wander
We hasten to you.

List then to the sighing,
While yet we are here?
Nor seeing nor hearing,
We wait without fearing,
To feel you draw near.
O dead to the dying
Come home!

The Eves of Two Christmas Numbers

[CONCLUDED.]

My dreams were even still more trying. One in particular absolutely shattered me; and when I awoke after it, I lay trembling, sleepless, amazed with terror for hours.

In this dream I was sitting with my children and my wife, in the shade of a fine sycamore-tree that stood at the top of a low hill. My wife was standing in front of me, all smiles and happiness; my little ones romping about in the grass. Suddenly the expression of my wife's countenance changed. Her face became distorted with a hideous dread, her eyes fixed on a spot behind my back. I could not move, I could not turn my head, I could not see the spectacle which fascinated her horror; but I knew what it was, and I suffered the pains of a thousand deaths in my helplessness to move, my inability to see the monster, and the unspeakable agony of sympathy in my wife's unredeemable fear. Would not some blessed messenger of kindly fate kill her, and put her out of this awful unrealized certainty?

Meanwhile I heard him crawling up behind me. I knew he was only a few feet off. He drew nearer, and I could feel the stirring of the grass I sat on as his feet went through it. I could feel his warm breath upon my neck, and yet he did not strike. I looked at my wife, and felt an aching between my shoulders for that blow. Great Heavens! why did he not strike me, strike her—anything at all to shatter this hideous spell, and take me out of this bitterness of looking at that face so frozen and so dear! Kill us, O Death! Wither us, O Heaven, and deliver us from this suspended rending of the spirit!

Suddenly the cloudless sky of noon grew dark and became convulsed, the thunders rent it open, and, looking up, I saw the vault of heaven formed of prodigious black jagged rocks that swung and whirled towards the west, while a sound as of ten thousand thunderstorms shouted above the prodigious ruin.

In the tumult the muscles of my limbs were loosed. I sprang up and turned upon him, wrenched the knife from his clutch, and drove it home into his heart.

Presently the ruin of the heavens was complete, and all became still. A colourless void stretched above me, and in the middle of this void hung a broad green moon, the light of which was a plague of reproaches to the soul. This great broad moon hung motionless in space. This light and this moon wore the expression of eternal wrath, and I was destined to dwell for ever beneath that loathsome luminary, bathed in that corroding light!

I looked at my feet. Not a man! Whom had I slain, that my fate should be so incommunicably terrible?

The light of the moon grew stronger, and by it now I saw half of the knife rising out of the bosom of—my wife!

I had slain my wife, and for ever and for ever I was to sit under that obscene moon, contaminated by that degrading light, and gaze upon the death agony of my slaughtered innocent! God of all mercies, is not this too much!

And with yells I awoke, to rush about the room and jabber like a fool, and find rest in no attitude but on my knees.

I wonder I did not go mad. The brains of many men have been turned by less. After that memorable Thursday night I often debated with myself whether I should take any steps against the man who had so terrified me. But in reality he had neither done anything to me nor threatened me. I made inquiries, and found that his name was William Dee; that he had been in a lunatic asylum for three years, during which time his wife and two children died; and that about a year ago he had been discharged as cured. He was regarded as "odd," "strange," "touched;" but every one to whom I spoke looked on him as perfectly harmless.

The form of his craze was peculiar, almost unique; he was mad about madness itself. Any allusion to insanity threw his mind at once off its balance. He had first shown symptoms of insanity about five years before. Its earliest form was a delusion that every dwelling-house he entered had a madhouse attached to it, in which were confined members of the family afflicted with mental malady. The aggravated form of this delusion followed; and then he fancied that not only had every private house its own private madhouse, but that the inmates of the latter were cruelly and basely ill-treated. Then he commenced to preach a crusade against these private lunatic asylums. He failed to attract any followers. He essayed the deliverance of the captives himself, and selected for the first attempt the house of Mr. John Kempston of Long Acre. Mr. Kempston called in the police, and handed William Dee over to them. The police sent him to the parish, and the parish to Colney Hatch. His belief that Mr. Kempston stopped him at the outset of his great career, and that Mr. Kempston was personally the whole cause of his having been locked up, made him in his moments of excitement swear undying hatred and thirst of revenge against that man, who, however, was quite beyond the reach of Dee's anger, as he had emigrated to New Zealand soon after the unhappy Dee was first confined. It was only in the great pressure of business in the week before Christmas that Dee got employment at our printing-office. The week after Christmas he was gone, so that my chance of any more trouble from him was slight indeed.

In December next year the *Illustrated Social Review* changed publication office and printing-office. The printing-office was now in Deerhound-court, Fleet-street. As Christmas approached, the Christmas of 1877, I was too busy to give much thought to my health. Several friends had remarked that I looked thin and worn. But I explained this to myself and them by saying I was greatly overworked; for not only had I then the ordinary work of our own paper, and the preparation of the Christmas number, but I had been employed to edit and write a good deal for a trade annual, and I was greatly worn down altogether. It is a strange thing that, although I then looked upon myself as completely recovered from the effect of the events of the Thursday night preceding Christmas 1876, I never ran low physically from any cause without more or less suffering a relapse into the wretched state of nervous timidity which followed immediately upon the shock a year ago.

As in the former printing-office, we had an editorial room in the new one. It was, however, situated differently. In the old office it had been on the first floor. Here it was on the third, being the highest but the attic. It was a long, narrow room. At one end a window looked into the silent deserted court. At the other end was the stair to the upper floor, not partitioned off from the room. My table stood in the window, and about twenty feet from the head of the staircase leading down through the stairwell, also not partitioned off. Although I call this, the editorial room, of course we had another and much better room at the publishing-office; but the one at the printing-office was the real one for hard work, and all the night-work had to be done here, in order that I might be handy to the printers. The proprietors of the *Review* had signed a twelve months' contract with our new printer, and the use of this room was part of the contract. Indeed, we could get no other room in the house; and high and bleak as it was we were glad to secure it.

The floor below was the printer's counting-house, shut up for the night; the floor above, an attic lumber-room.

We were much more forward with the work this year than we had been last. On Thursday night before Christmas week 1877, the editor went away at ten o'clock, leaving me in charge. "You'll be able to get off at about twelve," said he, as he tied his muffler round his neck at the top of the unprotected stair-well. While he was descending I heard a clock strike ten. I shouted to him to send up the foreman. He answered, "All right!" and for the first time I was alone by night in the new office.

The room was in strong contrast, to the surroundings in stronger contrast, to the room and surroundings of that day twelve months. The chamber was long and bleak, and an oppressive silence filled the court. In the basement of this house the machines groaned and muttered; but the sound was deadened and afar off; it seemed to desire to conceal itself from notice. I felt I should like to have had a dog or a child with me. It was very lonely up there; very dreary and lonely up there, away from every one.

At last I heard a foot ascending the stairs, and in a few moments the hard features of the foreman rose above the level of the floor.

He came in, and we had a short chat about the work. As he was going, he said, with a grin, while he wiped his hands in his apron.

"You're quiet enough up here, sir. There's not more row here now than under the dome of St. Paul's at this moment."

"When shall I have the proofs of the pages up?" I asked.

"I'll send you up two or three in half an hour," said the foreman, as he disappeared down the stairs.

Once more I was alone in that long narrow room. I had nothing to do for half an hour.

"As quiet as under the dome of St. Paul's at this moment," I thought, adopting the notion of the foreman. "The grave is not so quiet as the vast chill concave of that dome now," I followed on, indulging my imagination.

There was only one gas-jet in the room, and that was on my table, so that the end of the room near the stair-well was in comparative darkness. I stared down into the dimness, and continued, following up the idea the foreman had started:

"What silence, what abysses of silence, there are in that great chasm of darkness, the inexplorable dome! For no earthly consideration would I sit on one of those chairs now, with my back to all the echoing voices and ghastly tomb-encrusted walls."

I felt myself shiver, and cast down my eyes for a while to steady my thought. I strove to drive the idea from me, but it had seized firm hold of my imagination and would not go.

"For no prospect of all this world's happiness would I go into that awful Whispering Gallery at this awful hour. Fancy sitting with your ear to that cold vocal wall, and gathering the insinuated murmur of words too terrible for daylight, too tremendous for human lips. Fancy half hearing and half losing the sounds of such words, and half gaining and half missing their prodigious meaning. Fancy one's poor dumb, crushed-up soul clinging to those portentous walls, and trembling upon the brink of a revelation so overwhelming that the systems of the suns could not hear it uttered, and endure."

The cold sweat now fell down my forehead.

I raised my eyes and saw ascending by the stairway through the ceiling the legs of a man.

At that sight the last resources of my physical powers failed. I could not stir, to save my life. I had no desire to stir. I felt numbed and deadened, and sustained in consciousness by one desire, a supreme curiosity. What was going to happen? Who had gone through the ceiling? What would he do presently? Would there be a fierce explosion suddenly, a rending of the accursed house from roof to cellar, and a wild dispersion of its rotting beams and mouldered bricks? Or would a thin ribbon of smoke fall slowly from that square space of darkness above, and wriggle along the ceiling towards me, towards nothing, to be followed and devoured by a hissing snake of flame?

I heard a scratching sound; then the blank darkness fell away from the head of the stairs like a veil, and I could see up, could see the hideous unplastered rafters and the loathsome sly cobwebs, and upon the rafters and among the cobwebs the distorted shadow of a man.

If the chair on which I sat had begun slowly rising towards the ceiling, and my only chance of avoiding being crushed to death was to stand up off that chair, I could not have done it. To save my life I could not take my eyes off that awful opening and the unintelligible motions of the appalling shadow; for if once I took my eyes off that place, that chasm of stifling vacuity, how could I turn my eyes back on it again, how could I dare to uplift my eyes to that gaping mouth of horrors? If I did so look away and so look up, what should I see? What supreme spectacle would be revealed to me? Or, worse than that, worse than anything else, perhaps all would be dark again, as though the blind darkness, the voracious maw of slimy quietness, had absorbed him who ventured within the suffocating breath of its noisome depths.

I do not know how long I remained thus spellbound, but it must have been more than a quarter of an hour. All that time the shadow of the man was ceaselessly moving hither and thither, up and down. Now the arms seemed bare and full of vigour, now clad and limp and helpless. Now the reflection, broken by the rafters and distorted by the cobwebs, was that of a pair of naked legs, now of legs loosely robed and supple.

At last it became plain that there were two figures in the loft.

I could now make out that the partly nude figure had on nothing but a shirt; this was the active figure. The other lay apparently on the ground close by the candle, and never stirred save when moved by the other. What could all this mean? There was no sound of struggle. There had been no sound of a struggle. Had the corpse—yes, there was no use in disguising the matter from my fears—had the corpse been in that loft before that figure had disappeared up that ladder, or had the body been borne through this room on shoulders belonging to the legs I had seen? Was that body now cold with the revolting coldness of a death-stab a month old, or warm with the smile of life still upon its lips, the bloom of life still upon its cheeks?

Just then the stillness of this upper place was broken by a yell of enraptured rage. I saw a flash of keen cool light dash among the rafters, and then I saw the shadow of the naked arm spring aloft with something long and sharp-pointed in the hand. Presently this swept down to the accompaniment of a scream of hate. I heard the blade tear through and through, and bite deep into the plank. I watched to see the first red trickle through the cracked ceiling; for now the body was that of no dead man, but of one drugged, or stunned by other means.

I had lost all thought of my personality now. I may say I had no longer any feeling of being present at this scene. I was no more than a pair of eyes that could not turn away from this square opening, and an intelligence swallowed up in the passionless contemplation of what the eyes revealed.

Here the light in the loft went out. But I heard other blows struck in the dark. At last the blows ceased, and I heard a sound as of some body dragged across the floor.

Two legs fell partly down through the trap-door—legs wanting the feet! Then the body and the limp, powerless arms.

My eyes never moved, no sound escaped me even when the acme of horror was reached, and I saw a bare left arm buried in the bosom of the figure, and a bare right arm whirled aloft and strike the bosom with a knife, and then, as the two figures rolled down the stairs into the room, saw that the trunk was headless!

The semi-nude man sprang to his feet, once more raised the blade above his head, and stepping back a pace from the prostrate figure, yelled, "Take your death of me, John Kempston!" As he uttered the last word he tripped in something, staggered back, and—disappeared. I heard him strike the balustrade, and fall to the flagged bottom of the stair-well. Then all was still.

When they took up the dead body of William Dee from the flags at the bottom of the stairs, they found nothing on it but a shirt. The rest of his clothes he had formed into an effigy upon which to wreak the vengeance he nourished against John Kempston. As in the last year in the old office, so in the present year at the new, he had got a job as extra proof-reader with permission to sleep in the loft. His work was done, and he received a little money at nine o'clock. It was supposed he drank, and that the drink overcame his slight stock of reason, and betrayed him into the violence which led to his death.

They found me insensible, with my head bowed on the table. I have not even yet recovered fully. I have been asked to write a story for the Christmas Number of *London Society*, and I thought that I might well recount my strange experience of the Eves of Two Christmas Numbers.

THE END.]

A French Criminal Case.

The Story of Louise Debalt's Early Passion—A Lover Persecuting a Husband Driven to Madness, the Fatal Blow is Struck.

(From Le Gaulois.)

Fifteen years ago Louise Debalt, a young peasant girl of the Department of Gers, arrived in Paris. You know the fatal charm of the great capital. * * * She formed the acquaintance of one Goldery, a lounger on the streets, but a mason by trade when he saw fit to work.

At the end of some months Louise returned to her native place and soon after gave birth to a child, which, for lack of resources, she was compelled to abandon. The Asylum of Auch received the unnamed child. The fault of the young girl was carefully concealed, and in the village where she dwelt with her mother the sad truth was unknown.

Time passed on, and chance threw together Louise Debalt and Thomas Roch, who lived on a little farm some miles from the village. He was seven or eight years older than Louise. He loved her. Had she not brought back with her from Paris a kind of non-provincial elegance? Roch had been a soldier. He was one of that regiment of dragoons which charged Bismarck's White Cuirassiers at Gravelotte. History will preserve the remembrance of that terrible shock, after which the Crown Prince wrote to the Queen of Prussia that the White Cuirassier regiment had been annihilated! Carried into captivity, Roch was attacked by typhus fever and became blind for the time being. He returned from the shores of the Baltic to Gers, dragging himself along slowly, and clinging to the cloak of a fellow-countryman, a brigadier of gendarmes.

Roch had recovered his sight, and now he, ignorant of her past, married Louise Debalt. The two came to Paris, and for three years—from 1874 to 1877—they were happy. He worked in a piano factory; Louise embroidered and had many customers. They lived in the Rue de la Nation. One day Louise was sitting near the window. Across the street a mason was working on the wall. This man turned around, his look became fixed, he descended from the scaffolding and spoke to the janitress of the house where Louise lived.

"Is not that woman Mademoiselle Debalt?" the mason, who was Goldery, her early lover, asked. "No," was the answer. "And yet I cannot be mistaken," he thought. He made inquiries, and some days later, having arranged matters with the janitress, he was introduced into the house of the Roch family under pretext of making some repairs.

Then took place a scene which can be imagined. Threatened by her former lover, who wished to regain his mistress, and sought thereby both pleasure and profit, the old fetters were recast. Goldery installed himself as a friend of the family. But he was dissipated and mendacious, and Roch forbade his wife to receive his attentions. Goldery, however, came in the hours when the honest Roch was at his work. One evening Mme. Roch came home from the theatre with a scratch on her hand. The husband forced her to explain it. She threw herself down on her knees and confessed. She did not tell, however, of the present, but only of the past. The scratch had been inflicted by Goldery, who had sought to carry her off by force because she had had a child by him before her marriage. She said that since their first meeting Goldery had recognized the child, and that she herself had admitted it to be hers.

Roch saw all his happiness crumbling away! He had been frightfully deceived, still he forgave. But he wished to avoid scandal, and that at any cost. So he gave up his work, and, fleeing from the seducer, he established himself as a wine merchant in another part of the city, in the Rue de Chignancourt. Goldery followed him. In the very home of Roch he gave way to disgraceful exhibitions of violence. One day he struck Roch. On another occasion he stole from him 100 francs, and Roch, who had been so brave on the battle field, restrained himself before this scoundrel. He invoked the protection of the police, but he was regarded by them as a booby. Goldery, who went about from house to house avowing himself to be the lover of Mme. Roch, said that he would oblige her husband to sell out his establishment. Again Roch yielded. He sold out his business and sought for employment at the Exposition. He took refuge with his wife in Rue Kleber, only chance of avoiding being crushed to death was to stand up off that chair, I could not have done it. To save my life I could not take my eyes off that awful opening and the unintelligible motions of the appalling shadow; for if once I took my eyes off that place, that chasm of stifling vacuity, how could I turn my eyes back on it again, how could I dare to uplift my eyes to that gaping mouth of horrors? If I did so look away and so look up, what should I see? What supreme spectacle would be revealed to me? Or, worse than that, worse than anything else, perhaps all would be dark again, as though the blind darkness, the voracious maw of slimy quietness, had absorbed him who ventured within the suffocating breath of its noisome depths.

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One reason for striving to get to heaven is that there is neither skating nor curling in the place known as "elsewhere."

A sweet little girl at Mill Point kicks the beam at 332 lbs.; they do not give the odd ounces, but that doesn't matter much.

Mourning costume in Philadelphia includes a black ribbon in the button-hole; in this free and easy land of ours shepherd's plaid trousers are quite in order.

["A coloured penitentiary bird . . . was charged with hanging round the waiting-room of the G. W. R.—London *Free Press*.] Possibly a scare crow.

Glimpses of Rocky Mountain Scenery.

One who has seen some of the glories of the Rocky Mountain country, never wearies of their repeated pourtrayal. The scenes, which pass in quick succession as the traveller on the Pacific Railway courses through valleys, over rivers, on the verge of seeming precipices, through tunnels and canyons, and over peaks which now and then command wide reaches of varied prospect, impress themselves deeply upon the memory of the lover of nature, and in after-time an allusion or a print will bring to his mental view with vivid freshness the more striking of his experiences in that region. Among the foothills and in the lofty Sierras appear to be accumulated the greatest variety of grand, terrific, and gorgeous effects which it were possible for groupings of rock, tree, and water to produce. It is not strange that some of the best of landscape painters have spent years among the Rocky Mountains engrossed in the labour of putting upon canvas the frowning peak, the roaring cataract, the snow-clad summit, with their accompaniments of sky and tree, bush and flower. Mr. Bierstadt has brought to the East some glimpses of Nature's pencilling upon mountain and valley, which have done much toward instructing us, who have not the time to travel, with regard to the wonderful character of those mountain fastnesses. So, too, Mr. F. A. Church and Mr. Moran have exhibited power and discrimination in their accurate renderings of the American Highlands.

When about eight hundred miles west of Omaha, on the Pacific Railroad, the traveller or tourist begins to encounter the "foothill" country with its peculiar scenic attractions. The rock formations especially attract his attention. Crowning lofty bluffs or knolls, hanging over dizzy heights, in a thousand strange and fantastic shapes they throng the way. Here and there immense masses loom upon the view like surviving pillars of some colossal temple of the past. Green River has many such formations standing along its course; ancient sentinels they seem, challenging the passer-by. Known as Castle Rock, it crowns a bluff six hundred and twenty-five feet above the river level. Imagination readily invests it with associations of warrior bold and combat fierce; while science calmly points to it as an instance of the wearing, fashioning power of water and sand.

Away on toward the "Golden Gate," and in the Sierras, magnificent views are met on every hand. Ten miles or so from Truckee, at an elevation of 7,000 feet above the level of the sea, one of the most beautiful of lake scenes fascinates the eye. We allude to Lake Angeline. It is in the Summit region, the part of the mountain range where the waters divide, some to flow eastward, and be absorbed by desert sand; others to flow westward and mingle with the streams of the Sacramento valley. Here both Bierstadt and Moran have sketched, for there are a thousand charms of light and shadow in the vast heights and depths and forest growths. The mind, illumined with a high æsthetic faculty, here finds exalted gratification in the contrasts of tint and formation in the play of morning or evening twilight, in the mists clinging to distant peaks or hanging over yawning canyons, in the gloom of the woodland and in the brightness of the sunlit or moonlit lake.

Away up in the cloud-land, among the Sierras, the vegetation is scanty, aside from the pines which skirt or fill the levels. There the snows of the long winter accumulate and provide refreshment for the thirsty land below. In the bosom of these mountains nature has hidden some of the most interesting lakes which gem the continent. Lake Esther, Lake Tahoe, Mary's and Pyramid Lakes, are among the more noteworthy. And all bear some part in storing the water which in spring and summer finds its way to the plains hundreds of miles below.

Yosemite Valley needs but its bare mention in this place. Its beauties have been celebrated far and wide by a hundred pens. But new wonders are ever and anon discovered by hunter or tourist in those wild regions. Within a few weeks a valley in the course of King's River has been brought to light, which is said to rival the famous canyon which incloses the Merced. This new acquisition for the mountain-climber and scenery-lover is said to be forty-five miles from Visalia in a right line. The valley is nine miles in length from east to west, and has an average width at the centre of about half a mile. It lies 5,000 feet above the level of the sea, and its walls are about 3,000 feet high.

The important part performed by trees in those mountain regions can scarcely be over appreciated by the tourist. Very many of the pines, cedars, and firs are very old. It is said that the cedars do not rot in the southwest territories, but die and stand erect, solid and enduring, until the wind has fairly blown them away by atoms.

THE YOUNG FOLKS.

A Boy's Service.

"Speed boldly, Jean; the safety of God's elect depends on thy fleetness and courage," said a French peasant woman, as, standing at the door of a hut perched over a gorge in the Cevennes mountains, she bade farewell to her young son. He, mounted on a small white pony, looked fearlessly out of his bright blue eyes, and, tossing back his abundant tresses of fair hair, bent to kiss the mother's hand; then descending a steep, winding path, over which his intelligent animal picked a slow, sure footing, the young rider disappeared in the dark aisles of a pine forest.

Jean Cavalier was ten years old; his cradle had been rocked to the howl of mountain storms; he was accustomed to scale heights with fearless agility, being sure-footed on paths that only the mountain-born could safely tread, and he now dauntlessly faced a hazardous ride and the peril of imprisonment to save the lives of five hundred Christian men and women. It was nearly noon; all the huts, sheep-cotes, and cottages in the lower adjoining valleys were deserted by their inhabitants, who had started at dawn for the secluded mountain at Bourges, there to seek consolation and strength in the worship of God.

This was the period of that so-called "religious" war in France, which lasted twenty years, and in which the king, Louis XIV., employed sixty thousand soldiers to exterminate three thousand Protestants, because they persisted in worshipping their Maker in their own fashion. Through the upper valleys, for some weeks previous to the time of this story, there had been found, in rock cavities and hollow trees, bits of wood carved with the words, "Manna in the desert," and with certain symbolic marks whereby all the faithful knew that the great pastor, Brousson, emerging from his secret cavern dwelling, would meet and minister to his persecuted flock on the afternoon of the first day of the year 1703, at the Bourges Mountain. Notwithstanding all precaution, news of the intended convocation had reached the town of Hais, and Captain Daiguirrier, with six hundred men, was coming up from the plain, eager to surprise and butcher the innocent congregation,—a kind of achievement not infrequent in those tragic years.

Just before noon to-day, Jean, when climbing the rock back of his father's hut in search of a missing goat, spied the red bonnets of the cavalcade, traversing a defile far below; he knew well their terrible purpose, and, hurrying down, said to his mother:

"I have seen the king's troops going up; there is none to give warning but me."

Twenty minutes later, Jean was riding alone through the dim forest, intently conning the net-work of paths so familiar to him, and one by which he could elude and outstrip the assassins. Issuing, at length, from the woods, he paused, hesitating between two routes,—one smoother, though longer,—by which, trusting to his nimble pony, he might speedily arrive, unless overtaken by the troops; the other led through ravines and over rocks into the very heart of the mountains, and was a hazardous path, even for a skillful climber. If he took the latter, he must abandon his horse and trust his own speed and agility. Finally deciding on the smoother road, he was turning toward it when he heard the sound of a conch-shell, and, on the instant, a flash of scarlet streamed around a spur of the forest. Quick-witted Jean rode at once to meet the advancing soldiers.

"Whither go you?" asked the captain.

"To the upper hills to seek my father," replied Jean.

"This is not a safe country for youngsters like you to travel in alone," said the officer.

"You shall come with me," continued the captain, suspiciously; "so fine a boy must not grow up a rebel. I shall dedicate you to the service of the king and church."

Jean made no answer, riding on with his captors, apparently in submissive composure; but the vigilant little fellow, quick in expedients, contrived to fall back gradually, till, when the diamounted troops, painfully climbing, were half-way up a steep ascent, Jean was among the hindmost. A brook wound round the base of the hill, and Jean knew that near the stream was one of those caverns, common in a country of volcanic formation, the entrance to which was concealed by thick, clustering bushes. Seizing an opportune moment, the active boy turned his pony, dashed down into the brook, leaped from his steed, and ran into the cavern. Some minutes elapsed before the more clumsy soldiers could descend; when they reached the stream, the pony was scrambling homeward over the rocks, and no trace of his rider was visible. Little Jean trembling crouched in his covert during their brief, vain search: but soon, eager for a larger prey, the pursuers returned to join the rest of the band. Jean ventured from his retreat and rushed on.

Not far away, some hundreds of resolute men and women were assembled on a rocky platform amid the desolate hills. Muskets stood near, ready for a sudden call to arms. Around the worshippers was a chestnut forest, through whose enormous trunks and leafless boughs the wind moaned in melancholy cadence, accompanying their psalmody and supplication. On a flat, smooth stone, at the base of a precipitous rock, stood the minister, who, while little Jean sped towards them, was thus addressing the congregation:

"What fear you? Did not God nourish his children in the wilderness? Did he not send his ravens to feed the prophet, and will he not again work miracles? Has not his Holy Spirit comforted his afflicted children? He consoles—he strengthen us. Will he not, in time of need, cause his angel to go before us?"

Concluding thus, the preacher advanced to a natural stone slab, serving as a sacramental altar, and the assembly, in reverential stillness, to which peril added a solemn awe, came forward two by two, bareheaded. A cry startled them.

"Fly! the enemy comes!" rang in shrill, childish treble from above the kneeling multitude, and looking up they saw, on the rocky summit before the pastor, a little figure, whose white goat-skin coat and locks of gold gleamed in the mellow sunset, as the rocks and caverns re-echoed his vibrating cry,

"Fly! the enemy comes!"

The throng, startled as by a messenger from Heaven, dispersed—and were saved.

GENERAL.

"I like to make spoage-cake," she said, innocently; "it makes my hands so clean."

TEN thousand dollars in bills was found sewn in the dress of a woman who died in Norton, Mass.

STATISTICS lately issued show that in Italy seventeen million people can't write. But they can play a hand organ.

No matter how good-natured a man may be, he will invariably get mad when he discovers that there is no towel in his room, and is compelled to dry his face on the bed-quilt.

STRANGE, isn't it? Smoke a good cigar, and you will never hear a word about it; but light one of those four-for-ten-cents, and everybody within a hundred yards will talk about it.

RECENT surveys by geologists are said to warrant the estimate that there is workable coal enough in the Island of Yezo—one of the Japanese group—to produce an annual yield for a thousand years equal to that of all Great Britain. The Japanese government has agreed to grant a loan of $1,500,000 for the purpose of working some of these coal-fields, which spread over an immense area. So the supply of coal is not likely to be exhausted just at present.

BOSTON'S latest tragedy, the killing by Wilson of himself and his wife, appears to have been caused by his conviction that she was his superior intellectually. Not long previously they went to a phrenologist to have their heads examined with a view to settling the troublesome question. The phrenologist told them that the wife had the best brain, and was fairly entitled to leadership in the family. Wilson was greatly agitated by this information, and weepingly declared that he had made the most serious blunder of his life in marrying a woman who knew more than he did.

"IT is not a little remarkable," says the London *Times*, "that with all these demands for electric light springing up, no large organization appears as yet to have been formed and made public with the object of promptly meeting them. Two public companies have indeed been registered—the British Electric Light Company and the Electric Light Company—with a nominal capital of $100,000 in each case; but, so far as we are aware, they are at present in no very active operation, nor do they appear in full possession, in either case, of the requisites for meeting the great public demands that exists."

"ANOTHER thing which struck me when I visited one after another of the churches here"—and he ran into twenty-eight of our temples last Sunday—said Dr. Andrew Clark of London, the physician who came over to take charge of the health of the Princess Louise, to the *World* reporter, "was the florid, rich, extravagant decorations of the interiors; velvet-cushioned pews, carpeted aisles, elaborate wood carvings, and ornamentations. I noticed also the extremely large attendance in all the churches I visited; but I wondered at the same time if the attendance had the proper effect on the attendants."

IRELAND has just got to the end of a Jarndyce and Jarndyce case, arising out of the game played by a clever knave, whose overreaching ambition brought him to suicide—John Sadlier, from whom Charles Lever drew his character of Davenport Dunn—with a weak, vicious fool, Lord Kingston, who owned the magnificent demesne and property of Michelstown, County Cork. It took thirty years to unravel the web which the wicked legal spider had spun. One counsel spoke for nine consecutive months, and the agent of the estate was examined four years and a half. The Tichborne case was a joke to this. Mitchelstown Castle and estates have passed into the hands of strangers.

NEAR the middle of the last century an English company began operations for working copper ore at a place which gained the name of Simsbury Mines, 16 miles northwest of Hartford, Conn. About the period of the Revolution the excavations made for these mines began to be used as a prison, and in 1790 a legislative act was passed establishing them as a State prison under the name of Newgate, suitable buildings being built over the caverns. These letter were the sleeping places of the criminals, and were reached by a trap-door leading to a ladder of sixty or seventy feet. Here were wooden berths filled with straw. The caverns were well ventilated and the prisoners' health was generally excellent. They rose at 4 and went to bed at same hour. Their diet consisted chiefly of salt beef, salt pork, and beans. This subterranean prison inspired a lively terror, and had the effect, it was said, of preventing considerably the commission of crime in Connecticut. The dread of the place was aggravated by the rumour that supernatural appearances had been seen. About 1828 the place was abandoned as a gaol.

THE case of Abe Rothschild, just convicted in Texas of murder in the first degree, is interesting. The story, as told in the evidence, begins with the arrival of Bessie Moore in Cincinnati two years ago. She was about twenty years old and had considerable money, but her most noteworthy property was a large number of diamonds for which she had a remarkable liking. She came to be known as Diamond Bess. Abe was a noted Western gambler. He fell in love with Diamond Bess, or her diamonds, or both, and proposed to marry her. She several times pawned some of her diamonds to get money for him, but always managed to redeem them. The pair were married about a year ago in Chicago. They went to Texas on a honeymoon trip, she carrying the diamonds carefully in her pocket. They arrived at the Brooks House, Marshall, on Jan. 17, and stayed two days. Quarrelling in their room was overheard, and Bess appeared to be defending her diamonds against seizure by her husband. They next went to Jefferson, where Abe registered at the hotel under an assumed name. They quarrelled in loud and angry tones nearly all night. On the following day they hired a horse and waggon, filled a basket with luncheon, and started off as though for a pleasure trip into the country. Bess acted as though afraid of her companion. She had the diamonds still in her pocket. Abe returned to the hotel at night alone, saying that the woman had gone to visit friends. He packed his baggage, burned some papers, and returned to Cincinnati, where he spent most of his time for two weeks in gambling, according to his habit. His demeanour was erratic, however, and he told his friends that somebody was following him. At length he shot himself in the head, but not fatally. About the same time the body of Bess was found in the Texas woods with a bullet-hole in her head. The fragments of the luncheon were scattered about, but the diamonds have never been found, and it is supposed that, being turned into money, they were used in the long and stubborn defence of the prisoner.

PERSONAL.

ABRAM SKIFF and Lydia B. Dean, the parties to a breach of promise suit in Taunton, Mass., are over sixty years of age. They were lovers in 1840, but broke their engagement, and each married elsewhere. Lately they met as widower and widow, and renewed their courtship. Skiff promised to not only marry Mrs. Dean, but to give her $1,000 on the wedding day. He claims that she afterwards released him, but she denies it, and wants damages.

MR. VIRCHOW, President of the Anthropological Society of Berlin, gave, at a recent meeting of the society, the results of his researches regarding blondes and brunettes in Germany. The first he found in a majority in the northern section and the latter in the southern. Blue eyes predominated in the north and brown eyes at the south. He reported that in Alsace children were sometimes born with green hair, but that the colour disappeared several months after birth.

DR. BUSCH'S reminiscences and anecdotes of Bismarck are very entertaining and widely quoted. The Prince has always been a generous liver, and believes in it. "To work well," he says, "I must feed well. I can't conclude an advantageous peace if they don't give me good things to eat and drink. That belongs to my business. We are all big eaters in our family. If there were many of our eating capacity in the country the state could not exist. I should have to emigrate."

MACAULAY sat for the Heart of Midlothian, and now Mr. Gladstone announces that he will stand for Midlothian. There is a strong Tory interest in opposition, led by the Scott family, of which the Duke of Buccleuch, by far the wealthiest of Scotch nobles, is head. He has a grand seat, Dalkeith Palace, near Edinburgh, and his influence by reason of property is largely enhanced by his personal popularity. It is, therefore, likely that a very severe tussle may ensue. Mr. Gladstone, it may be remembered, was defeated in his own county of Lancashire.

English papers allude to the probability that the Duke of Sutherland, who in an unlucky hour took four shares of stock in the Glasgow Bank, will be made to pay nigh on to £1,000,000, as the stockholders are personally liable for the bank's entire indebtedness. The duke's net income is about $600,000 per annum, none of which has ever been squandered in fast living. In London his palatial home, Stafford House, has always been open to distinguished foreigners, and it was here that Garibaldi stayed when visiting England ten years ago. The duke is a good-hearted, liberal, "go-ahead" man, and has applied his fortune generously for the public good. Both Englishmen and Scotchmen sympathize with him in this unexpected and severe misfortune.

MR. JOHN M'CULLOUGH, who is now among the foremost of tragedians at home or abroad, says that the public taste for good tragic acting has by no means declined, but that new actors are too indolent and eager for money to study the solid Shakespearean parts. The multiplicity of theatres and the frivolity of audiences have tempted novitiates to crowd into the social drama—the mere talking drama—and cease to study classical parts. Shakespeare's plays never drew so much money to the treasury of the theatre as at the present time, and *Julius Cæsar* was never so well played or mounted so well, either here or in England, as it was at Booth's Theatre. Mr. M'Cullough's professional income is from $1,000 to $2,500 a week. Edwin Booth has made more money than any actor who ever played Shakespeare. At the California Theatre, in 1878, then managed by Mr. M'Cullough, Mr. Booth was engaged for eight weeks at half the gross receipts, and received for his share $30,000.

THE Sandwich Islands must in fairness be reckoned among the countries which have progressed most in the last half century. They have, in fact, leaped in that period from barbarism to civilization, and Queen Emma presents a great advance over Kamahameha II. than Queen Victoria over William the Conqueror. Kamehameha II. was the first Sandwich Island monarch who become personally known to European fame. Accompanied by his principal Queen and sundry subordinate consorts