QUEENIE HETHERTON.

By Mrs. Mary J. Holmes, author of "Tempest and Sunshine," "Etheiyn's Mistake," "Forrest House," etc.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE INTERVIEW.

Reinette had thought, and thought, and thought, till her head seemed bursting with the effort to solve the mystery of her nurse's silence. Had she done anything that she was ashamed to speak or let her identity be known, and if so what was it, and did it concern any one but herself?

"No, I will not believe it," she said more than once, with a striking out of her hand as if thrusting something aside. "I will not believe it. There is some good reason for her conduct which she can give me, and I am going to her to know the truth, but the world will not be as charitable as I, and will say bad things of her, no doubt. So to the world she must remain Mrs. La Rue, and nobody will ever know that she is Christine, except Mr. Beresford, who, of course, knows it now, for that Louis Arnaud has written to him, no doubt. Why couldn't he mind his own business, I wonder? But I can trust him, and I shall go to him and tell him he knows, and ask him to keep the knowledge to himself."

Reinette reached this decision at the very time when Margery was talking of her to Mr. Beresford, and telling of the scarlet cloak, and the ride on the Champs d' Elysees. After this decision Reinette grew calmer; the violent throbbing in her temples ceased, and she slept comparatively well that night. But though the morning found her stronger and better, she felt nervous and unstrung, and shrank with a great dread from confronting Mrs. La Rue, and wringing her secret from her, if secret there were to wring.

"I am so hurt and disappointed," she thought, as she dressed herself for her calls. "I had loved Christine so much, and had such pleasant fancies of her, and wanted so to find her, and now she is this woman whom I never liked, and from whom I shrank the first time I saw her, and she tried to be so familiar with me, just as she has done so often since. I understand that now. She has some affection for me, but why this silence on her part—this advising me not to try to find my nurse? There surely is something wrong, and I am going to find it out."

The waiting for Mr. Beresford seemed a long time to the excited girl, though in reality it was not more than ten minutes from the time she entered the office before she was closeted with the lawyer in his private room, where he received his clients who came to him on special business. And Reinette's was very special, or at least very private, and when the door was closed she plunged into it at once, by saying:

"Mr. Beresford, you have written to Monsieur Albrech, in Mentone, and asked about Christine Bodine."

She did not put it interrogatively, but as an assertion, and blushing guiltily, the lawyer replied:

"Yes, I did write to him, asking information of the woman's whereabouts. You were so anxious to find her, you know."

"Hush!" Queenie said, pouring the full scorn of her blazing eyes upon him. "Don't try to excuse yourself in that way. It was curiosity rather than a desire to serve me which prompted you to write, and you have had your reward. Louis Arnaud, Monsieur Albrech's clerk, has answered your letter."

"Yes, he has," Mr. Beresford replied, and Reinette continued:

"I know it. I have one from him, too. Here it is and I will read it to you."

She drew the letter from her pocket, and read it through in a clear, steady voice, as if its contents were just what she had expected,

"You are not surprised, of course," she said, when she had finished. "He told you that Christine was Mrs. La Rue, but did he tell you anything more than me? Where is the letter, and will you show it to me? and how did you make it out?"

"It was written partly in English and partly in French, so I did pretty well," Mr. Beresford replied, and she continued:

"Did he write you nothing more than he did me? I have a right to know if there is anything wrong about Christine—any reason why she should have kept herself from me in this unaccountable manner. Show me the letter, Mr. Beresford."

She was confronting him steadily with her great black eyes, and he knew she would persist in her demand until something was done to quiet her.

So he arose at last, and going into the adjoining room, where a fire was burning in the grate, took Louis Arnaud's letter from his pocket and threw it into the fire; then, making a feint of hunting through pigeon-holes and on the table where piles of paper lay, he asked his clerk, so loud that Reinette could distinctly hear him, if he had seen a certain letter which he described. The clerk had not, but was finally driven to admitting that he might have torn it up that morning with other letters of no importance. He was reprimanded for his carelessness, and then Mr. Beresford returned to Reinette, feeling like a hypocrite, but thinking the end justified the means, for Mr. Hetherton's daughter must never know the insinuation that that letter contained. But Queenie was not deceived, and with a meaning smile, which had much bitterness in it, she said to him before he could speak:

"Don't trouble yourself with more deception. Your clerk never destroyed that letter, for you are not the man to leave it lying round. It is safe somewhere, as you know, and you do not wish to show it to me. But no matter; I shall get it from Christine. I am going next to her, and she cannot keep from me why she has made no sign that she was my old nurse when she knew how much I wished to find her."

"Possibly she feared you might not think as much of Margery if you knew she was your nurse's daughter. She must see how proud you are," Mr. Beresford said, and Reinette replied:

"I have thought of that, but she should have known me better than to think anything could change my love for Margery. No, there is some other reason. She might have done something after mother died, and when she was taking care of me in Paris and at Chateau des Fleurs, and papa dismissed her for it, but paid her money all the same, because mother wished it. Yes, I am sure that is it, and that explains why father never was willing to talk to me about her, and always said he did not know where she was?"

"You used to question him of her, then?" Mr. Beresford said, eagerly, and Reinette answered:

"Yes; and he would tell me nothing. Evidently he did not like her, but I know how strong his prejudices were if once he took a dislike to one, and so I attached no importance to them. She must have displeased him in some way."

"How long did she live with you as your nurse after your mother's death?" Mr. Beresford asked, with an object in view which, however, was unsuspected by Reinette, who replied:

"I do not know; a year or so, I think, though all my knowledge of that part of my life seems to be a blank; and where was Margery then? She is not much younger than I am."

She put this question more to herself than to Mr. Beresford, who nevertheless, replied:

"Perhaps Christine was married unknown to your father, who when he found it out, was angry, as it took a valuable nurse from his child."

"Yes, yes, thank you," Reinette said, eagerly. "It was something of that nature, no doubt, and you lawyers are shrewd enough to see it, while I might have groped in the dark forever. Yes, thank you; I am glad you thought of that, but I shall make her tell me all the same, and, Mr. Beresford, what I wish of you is that you will tell no one what you have heard from Louis Arnaud. It is sufficient for me to know that she is Christine, and others need not know it. There are many suspicious people in the world who would say hard things of Christine, and—possibly—connect the trouble in some way with—with—father—and I won't have it. Maybe he quarrelled with her, and maybe he did't. At all events I will not have his name coupled with hers in any way. My father was a gentleman and a Hetherton."

She said this as if more to reassure herself than to impress Mr. Beresford, who bowed an acquiescence to the fact that her father was a gentleman and a Hetherton. If there was any merit in being the latter she certainly was a very fair representative of it as she stood up so proud and calm, and uttered her protest against her father's name being mixed with that of Christine Bodine.

"I am going there now," she said, adjusting her shawl and drawing on her gloves, "and when I see you again I shall know everything there is to know of Christine Bodine."

Mr. Beresford felt a little doubtful on that subject, but said nothing, and going with her to her carriage, helped her in, and then in a thoughtful mood returned to his office, wondering what would be the result of the call on Christine Bodine.

CHAPTER XXXII.

CHRISTINE.

It was more than a headache and swollen face which had ailed Mrs. La Rue, and sent her to her room on that night when Mr. Beresford called upon Margery. The headache was there, it is true, and something of a facеache, too, for the woman was suffering from the effects of a severe cold, under cover of which she hid the terrible pain which was lacerating her heart and making her sick with nervous apprehension lest, at last, she was to be found out and confronted by the girl whom she feared and shrank from more than from all the world beside, unless it was Margery, her dearly loved, beautiful child, who had brought her the letter which had affected her so strangely. It had been forwarded from Oak Bluffs, and postmarked originally at Mentone, and it read as follows:

"MADAME LA RUE.—Inclosed find a note from Miss Hetherton, who has written asking your whereabout and that this might be forwarded to you. In my absence for a few days, my clerk, Louis Arnaud, took charge of my business letters, and, it seems, answered the young lady, telling her your address. Had I been home this would not have occurred, but it cannot now be helped. Hoping no great harm will come of it, I am

"Your ob't servant,

"M. ALBRECH."

This letter Margery had taken from the office, and wondered in a vague kind of way what it contained, and why M Albrech had written to her mother again when she had supposed her business relations with him finished. Since the time when Margery first learned to write, it had been a distinctly understood thing that both she and her mother were to respect each other's correspondence, and Margery would as soon have broken the seal of a letter directed to a stranger as to her mother, consequently she had never known just what was in the letters which had passed between Mrs. La Rue and M. Albrech, of Mentone. She had always known since her father's death that her mother had at stated times received a certain amount of money from some source unknown to her; and she knew, too, that latterly the annuity had ceased, because, as her mother said, the person who paid it was dead. That the sum was very small she had been made to believe, and her mother had told her once, when she asked what became of it, that it was safely invested in stocks and bonds in Paris, and was to be kept for her as a dowry when she was married, or to be used before if absolutely necessary.

"But where does it come from? Who gives it to you?" Margery had once inquired, and her mother had replied:

"A gentleman in Paris, whose wife was very fond of me. I was her maid first, and after she died took care of her child."

And Margery, wholly unsuspicious, accepted this explanation as all there was to tell, and received the impression somehow that the gentleman's name was Polignac, and never dreamed of what lay behind, of the guilt, and sin, and terrible remorse, which haunted her mother so continually, and had made her grew old so fast. Margery could remember her when she was bright and pretty, with a sparkle in her eyes and a bloom upon her cheeks which now were sunken and pale, while her long, black, abundant hair was streaked with gray, and within the last few months had been rapidly growing white. She had brought the Mentone letter, and given it to her mother, with the simple remark: "It was forwarded from Oak Bluffs." Then she went to her work without so much as looking at her mother, who felt a kind of nervous fear taking possession of her as if in that foreign letter there was danger lurking for her. She was always expecting danger now, and her face was very white as she took the letter from Margery and went up to her room to read it alone.

"Probably it has something to do with my money," she thought, seeking to reassure herself as she broke the seal and opened the envelope from which Queenie's note dropped into her lap.

Picking it up she read the address: "Christine Bodine, care of M. Albrech," and recognizing the handwriting, which she had often seen on notes sent to her daughter by Reinette, she gave a low, gasping cry, while for a moment everything around her grew black, and she could neither see nor hear for the great fear overmastering her.

"Tracked at last," she whispered, as she tried to read what M. Albrech had written, and could not for the blur before her eyes.

For weeks and months Mrs. La Rue's remedy for nervousness had been morphine, which she took in constantly increasing doses, and she had resorted to it now, and, swallowing half a grain, grew calm at last, and read her agent's letter; and then picking up the pink-tinted, dainty note with Reinette's monogram upon the seal, kissed it passionately, and cried over it as if it had been some living creature whom she loved speaking to her instead of a bit of perfumed paper, in which these lines were written:

HETHERTON PLACE,

"MERRIVALE, Worcester county, Mass., U. S. A.

"MY DEAR DARLING, OLD CHRISTINE:—Have you forgotten all about the little baby you used to bear in your arms years ago, in Paris and at Chateau des Fleurs? Little Queenie they called me, though my real name was Reinette, and I am the daughter of Mrs. Frederick Hetherton, who died in Rome twenty-one years ago, and to whom you were so kind. I have it in mother's letter written to father, in which she tells him how good and true you were to her and baby him always to be good and kind to you for her sake. And I think he tried to be, for I have ascertained that he set apart a certain amount of money for you, which was all very well, though I should have shown my gratitude in an altogether different way. I might have given you money if you needed it, but I should also have made you come home to us, and should have loved and petted you because you knew my mother, and were so good to her. And that is what I wish to do now.

"Papa is dead, as you perhaps know. He died on the ship before we reached New York, and I am living alone at Hetherton Place, which is almost as lovely as Chateau des Fleurs, with a much finer view. Christine, did you know my mother was an American? She was, and her home was here in Merrivale, where my father found her and where I have a host of relatives on her side; such a dear darling old grandmother who calls me Rennet, and wears purple gloves, and loves me a great deal more than I deserve, and an Uncle Tom, who sells molasses and sods, and a cousin Anna Ferguson, who is about to make a great marriage and an Aunt Mary Rossiter, who is just like some grand duchess, so refined and dignified, and her daughters Ethel and Grace with faces as pure, and saintly, and sweet as the faces of some of the Madonnas in the galleries of the Louvre, and Phil—but I can't tell you about him now. He is a young man six feet high, and I liked him so much, and he has gone to India, and I am very, very lonely, and I want you to come and live with me here in America. I will try and make you so happy, and you will seem to bring me nearer to my mother, for you will tell me of mother; what she did and what she said of me the few days she had me before she died. I am sure to love you because she did, and in her first letters to her mother and sister after she reached Paris she spoke of her good Christine, who was so much to her; so do come at once, and make her daughter happy.

"You see that I am writing on the assumption that you have no other ties. I do not believe you are married, and I always think of you as my dear old nurse, Christine, whom I sometimes fancy I can remember. Did you not come to me once in the Bois when another nurse had charge of me, and hug, and kiss and cry over me, and call me your dear child and give me a quantity of bonbons? Some such scene comes up to me from the misty past, and you had such bright black eyes and so much color in your cheeks. Was that you and why did you not stay with me always?

"Write immediately and answer all these questions, and tell me you will come to your loving foster-child.

"REINETTE."

Oh, how the wretched woman writhed as she read this letter, with thuds of pain beating in her heart and her eyes dim with burning tears. It was so kind, so affectionate in its tone, and so familiar, too; so unlike what Reinette's manner toward her had been, and so unlike what it would be if she knew.

"Queenie, my darling, will you call yourself my foster-child when you know the truth?" she moaned, as she rocked to and fro in her anguish, while at her work below Margery sat singing a little song she had learned in the Tabernacle at Oak Bluffs:

"There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for you."

"Rest for the weary," Mrs. La Rue repeated, as the clear, sweet tones floated up to her. "And I am weary, oh! so weary; but there is no rest for me, except in death, which is a long, dreamless rest, and that I can have so soon, for my friend is always near me," and she glanced toward the shelf where stood a vial of laudanum, to which she had resort when morphine did not avail to quiet her and bring forgetfulness. "But I must see Margery once more," she thought. "I must kiss her again and hear her call me mother."

It was nearly time now for the evening meal, and, summoning all her strength and calmness, Mrs. La Rue went down stairs, and, under cover of the fast-increasing darkness, managed so well that Margery suspected nothing, and attributed her mother's pallor and weakness to the neuralgia from which she was suffering.

"I am going to bed early to-night," Mrs. La Rue said, when supper was over, and the table cleared away. "I am feeling quite ill."

Then Margery looked at her closely, and asked if it was anything more than neuralgia which ailed her. Was there bad news in the letter?

"No—yes; but nothing I can now explain," Mrs. La Rue replied; then going up to her daughter, she kissed her twice, and said: "Good night, my darling. Don't speak to me when you come up to bed; I may be asleep."

Margery kissed her back, with no thought of what was in the mind of the miserable woman as she slowly climbed the stairs, and, going to her room, shut the door, and, taking down her friend, poured out what was to give her forgetfulness and rest. Drop by drop the dark liquid fell into the glass until there were forty drops in all and she held it to the light, and looked at it, and smiled as she thought of the morrow, when she would be deaf to to Margery's call, and deaf to Queenie's reproaches if she should come, as she might do now at any time.

"But I shall be gone from it forever, and Margery will think it is an overdose taken accidentally to ease the pain. Yes, this is better than the river; and yet I am so hot and feverish that the cold water would be grateful to me, and this is just the night for such a deed, only Margery would know I meant it, and I must not lose her respect. I must carry that with me at least. No, to sleep and never waken is the best. So, Margery, darling, and you, too, Queenie, good-by!"

She raised the glass to her lips just as the doorbell rang a loud, clanging peal, which made her start so violently that the glass dropped from her trembling hand, and the poison was spilled on the floor.

It was Mr. Beresford speaking to Margery, and even in her excitement the half-crazed woman wondered what had brought him there, and, stealing noiselessly into the hall, listened to the jesting going on below as the lawyer explained why he had come and Margery answered him playfully. It was an honor for him to call upon them, Mrs. La Rue thought, and there flashed into her mind:

"What if he fancied her more than the other one; the truth, then, if it comes out, would bring her nearer to him, while if I die and leave everything to conjecture—if no explanations are ever made, no excuses given, he would shrink from the child of a suicide and imposter. I will not die to-night; that broken glass was an omen that I need not. I will live for you, Margery, for you, as I was going to die for you."

The door was shut below by this time, Mr. Beresford was in the sitting-room with Margery, and only the sound of their voices reached her as she stood a moment longer leaning over the bannister. But she could hear the silvery ripple of Margery's laugh, and Mr. Beresford's deep-toned voice as he replied, and it seemed to quiet her and turn her mind away from the horrid contemplation which had been assailing her.

Returning to her room, she cleared away all traces of the broken glass, wiped up the stains of the dark fluid from the carpet, and then, undressing herself, she went to bed, but not to sleep, for her thoughts were busy with the past, the years ago when she was young and innocent, and first entered the services of Margaret Hetherton. She had seen an advertisement in the morning paper to the effect that a waiting maid, who could speak some English, or at least understand it, was wanted by a young American lady, who could be seen at the hotel Meurice every day for a week between the hours of twelve and two. As the terms offered were unusually liberal she resolved to apply for the situation, trusting to her good nature and readiness to do anything and everything, to overbalance any lack of polish in her manners, for Christine was lowly born, and had lived more in garrets than salons, but she was honest and good, and kind, and these qualities showed themselves upon her face, which then was bright and pretty, and looked like a face to be trusted.

And Margaret Hetherton was won by it at once, for Christine went to her at the appointed hour and found the ante-room to Madame Hetherton's apartments crowded with applicants waiting for an audience. From these, as they came one by one from the interview, she gathered some idea of the lady. She was young, and beautiful and timid, and more afraid of Monsieur than she was of the maids. But when at last it was Christine's turn to be admitted, she was not prepared for the wondrously lovely, girlish face which smiled upon her. Attired in a morning wrapper of blue, which matched her eyes, Margaret reclined upon a white satin couch, while partly behind her Mr. Hetherton stood with folded arms, watching the aspirants for office as they presented themselves.

Accustomed as he was to the world, he saw at a glance that Christine Bodine knew nothing of the customs of the *beau monde*—knew nothing of the habits of a fine lady, such as he meant his wife to be, now that she was removed from the Ferguson's, a thought of whom made him shudder. Indeed, Christine, when questioned for references, and the address of her last employer, acknowledged freely that she had never served as maid except as she was once a nurse in an English family who took her with them to Rome.

"But I can learn," she said; "and I will try so hard, and serve madame so faithfully. I should so like you to try me," and she looked imploringly at Margaret, who saw something in the girl which pleased her.

She was so young, and tidy, and plain in her dress, and looked so good and trusty that her heart warmed toward her. References were nothing to her, or grand ladies whom she had served, and, turning to her husband, she said, in a low tone:

"Oh, Frederick, I like her so much better than the others. I am sure she will suit. Let us take her."

But Frederick demurred, urging that she had no style, no appearance of a maid.

"But she is good, I am sure, and I want her," the young wife pleaded, and Christine was retained, and entered upon her duties the next day, smartly gotten up in a new costume which Margaret selected for her, entering into all its details with a great interest, for, knowing by this time what dress could do, she meant to surprise her husband with the metamorphose in her maid.

And she did surprise him, though this was perhaps as much due to Christine herself as to the pretty dress, and muslin apron, and cap with scarlet ribbons, which the girl wore so jauntily. Christine had overheard and understood much which had passed in asides between Mr. and Mrs. Hetherton with regard to herself, and knew that the gentleman did not think her fine enough or attractive enough to be a waiting-maid, and with her pride aroused, she vowed that he should some day change his mind. To this end she bent every energy until her object was secured, and more than secured, and she began to tremble for the result. How peaceful, and happy, and innocent those first few months spent in Mr. Hetherton's service seemed to Christine now as she looked back upon them, and how sweet, and kind, and patient her mistress had always been with her, treating her more as an equal and a friend than as a servant, and thereby frequently calling down upon herself sharp reproofs from her husband, who did not approve of her familiarity with a maid. It showed at once a lowborn taste, he said, and he wished his wife to conquer all such feelings, and, forgetting the past, remember that she was now Mrs. Frederick Hetherton, of Paris. But Margaret could not forget the past, or cease to pine for the dear ones at home, the plain, old-fashioned mother, whose ways she knew were homespun in the extreme, and not at all like the elegant manners of her proud husband, but who, nevertheless, was her mother, for whom she cried every day of her life. Laying her head on the lap of her faithful Christine she would sob her homesickness, and talk by the hour of Merrivale and its people, until Christine knew every rock, and crag, and winding brook in the pleasant New England town, and knew pretty well what the Fergusons were, and how they stood in Merrivale.

They were of mutual benefit to each other—this mistress and maid, for while Christine anticipated every wish of Margaret, waiting upon her as if she had been a duchess, and teaching her the French language as well as the German, of which she had some knowledge, Margaret in turn taught her to read from English books, and during the many weeks when she was alone and her husband away with his friends, she gave her lessons in writing, and history, and geography, and arithmetic, so that Christine, who was apt and bright, became a much better scholar than was common to persons of her class, and astonished her master with the great and rapid improvement so perceptible in her. He no longer thought her ignorant, or commonplace, or void of attractions, and when he was home he invariably found himself lingering longer in his wife's apartments when Christine was there, with her saucy smile, her bright eyes, and pretty, piquant way of saying things. She made herself necessary to him, and, carefully studying his wishes, ministered to him, with the alacrity of a slave, and when he offered her money for extra services she refused to take it, and said that what she did was done for love of him and madame.

And so the mischief grew before the very eyes of the unsuspecting woman to whom both husband and maid were finally false, while she trusted both and clung to the latter with a love which made the poor woman shiver with remorseless pain, as she remembered it now, when the sins of the past were overwhelming her so fearfully. What a dark chasm she bridged over, not daring even to to look at it, lest she should shriek aloud, and how fast her burning tears fell as she recalled those days in Rome, when the faithless husband was seeking his own pleasure, while the wife, who was so plainly dying, grew paler and thinner each day, and yet strove so hard to keep up, by talking of the great happiness in store for her and surprise for him, if all went well with her, and she lived through the trial awaiting her.

"Frederick is so fond of children, and he will be so happy and surprised when he hears of it. I am glad I did not tell him," she said, when at last the waiting and suspense were over, and a little girl baby was pillowed on her arm.

Christine could see that baby now, and feel the touch of its soft hands, and see the white, worn face upon the pillow, and the great blue eyes which followed her so wistfully and questioningly, and at last had in them a look of terror and dread, as the days went by and no strength came to the feeble limbs, or vitality to the nerves. She was dying, and she knew it at last, and throwing herself into Christine's arms, she sobbed like a little child.

"It is hard to die," she said, "when I am so young and have so much to live for, now baby is born. And home is so far away, and mother, too, and Frederick—where is he, Christine? Where is my husband? He ought to be here, and I so sick and lonely."

Christine knew that very well, and her tears fell like rain upon the golden head resting upon her bosom, while she tried to comfort the young mother, who was passing so surely away.

"Monsieur must come soon," she said; "and then madame will be better, and we shall go back to Chateau des Fleurs and be so happy there."

But Margaret knew better. She would never go to Chateau des Fleurs—never see her husband again, and that grieved her the most, for all his neglect and coldness had not killed her love, and she longed for him now so much when she lay dying in Rome, with only her baby and Christine with her—Christine, whom she blessed for all she had been to her, calling her the dearest maid a mistress ever had, and talking to her until the conscious-smitten girl cried out, in an agony of remorse:

"No, no!—don't, don't! I am not so good as you think. You will kill me if you talk to me so."

But Margaret only talked on of her love for her, and her trust and confidence in the girl, who, knowing she was unworthy, stopped her ears at last to shut out the sound of Margaret's dying voice, which, after that voice was hushed in death, she heard it repeating over and over the words: "God bless you, Christine, and reward you according to your kindness and faithfulness to me!"

Margaret had meant it for a blessing, but it was really a curse, and it had followed Christine ever since, until now, when her sin was finding her out, and making her writhe with anguish and fear.

"And yet I was kind to her," she whispered; "and she died in my arms, with her head upon my breast, and she kissed me twice upon my lips; one was for me, she said, and one for the baby when she was old enough to know. Ah, me, those kisses! how they burn like fire! and I am burning, too—burning! Is there a hell, I wonder, and is it worse than the torment I am enduring?"

Her mind was disordered, and she raved incoherently of Rome, and Chateau des Fleurs, and Paris, and Margaret, and Reinette until she was utterly exhausted, and growing quiet, at last fell into a sleep so deep that she did not hear Margery when she let Mr. Beresford out and came up to her room.

"Poor mother she is resting sweetly, and I hope will be better to-morrow," Margery said as she bent over the sleeping woman, whose face looked so white, and worn, and pinched.

The next morning, however, Mrs. La Rue did not attempt to get up. She was too weak and sick, she said, and should keep her bed all day. "And, Margery," she added, with quivering lip and a pleading tone, "don't let any one in here, will you, if they come asking for me? Not any one; promise, Margery."

"No, mother, no one shall disturb you; I promise" Margery said, soothingly, looking at her mother in some alarm lest her mind was wandering.

"Did you not take morphine last night?" Margery asked, and Mrs. La Rue replied:

"No, yes. I think I did; the pain was so bad."

This would account for her strange demeanor, and with her fears allayed Margery did what she could to make her comfortable. A tempting breakfast was brought up to her, and Margery washed her face and hands, and smoothed her hair, which it seemed to her, had grown grayer during the night, and tidied up the room, and then, with a kiss, started to leave her.

"Fortunately I have not much work on hand to-day, and can stay with you a great deal. I must finish Miss Ferguson's sacque, and that is all. Now try to sleep again so as to be brighter. I can't have such a woeful looking, pale faced little mother on my hands. I shall have to send her off and get another one."

She spoke playfully, but every word was a stab to the miserable women, who said again:

"Remember, Margery, nobody is to come up here."

"No, mother, nobody. You are safer than the old bishop in his castle on the Rhine, for the rats did reach him there, and not so much as a mouse shall harm you here, so *au revoir*," and with another kiss—the last—she very last she would ever give as she gave that, she ran down stairs just as a carriage stopped at the gate and Reinette came rapidly up the walk.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SUPERSTITIOUS ABOUT THUNDER

Almost all the Indian tribes in the United States believed the thunder to be produced by the wings of a great bird, and that the lightning was the serpents that were inuariably connected with the thunder bird. Among the ancient tribes of the Mississippi valley the thunder, therefore, soon became the thunder god, who could be propitiated with sacrifices. The Illinois Indians offered up a small dog, when a child happened to be sick upon a day when there was much thunder, supposing the latter to be the cause of the malady.

Many accidents like conflagrations, were attributed to this angry god, and some tribes did bloody penance in propitiation, often burning to death their own children. Statements that the Indians adored the thunder, however, seem to be erroneous. It was the cause of the thunder that they worshipped, and before which they burned tobacco and buffalo meat, or cut off the joints of their fingers or threw their children into the fire when they were overcome by fear.

The Peauvians had as an idol a stone that had been split by lightning. They offered it gold and silver. The natives of Honduras burned cotton seed when it thundered, Other Southern tribes made no sacrifices on the approach of a storm, but abased themselves in the most abject fear. The wild rice being aquatic and looking like an arrow or spear, it is also attribute to the thunder spirit as its origin. In Mexico great temples were built upon the sacred spots where lightning had struck.

—Lord Sherbrooke says that the English make better clocks than the Athenians made two thousand years ago, but that they have not learned so well how to estimate the value of time.

—The oldest coroner in England is dead, Coroner Whitmarsh died at his residence, the Hawthorns, Chippenham, Wilts, from an attack of apoplexy, on Sept. 20, in his eightieth year. Mr. Whitmarsh had held his office fifty-three years, and it had descended from father to son for over 300 years. All the holders were physicians.

—A few years ago the greatest steamers did not exceed 350 feet in length, 45 feet in breath, 3,500 tons in tonnage, or 4,000 horse power. Now the City of Berlin of the Inman line is 448 feet by 44½ feet, and their new steamer, the City of Rome, building of iron at Barrow, will be still larger, having a length of 546 feet, a breadth of 52 feet and a gross registered tonnage of 8,000. The Cunard steel ship, the Servia, now building at Glasgow, is 550 feet by 50 feet, with over 10,000 indicated horse power, and will doubtless possess a speed in advance of the very fastest ship at present afloat in the mercantile marine.

A STORM ON THE SUN.

Observers of the sun found indications of intense commotion on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of August. The sun spots were many, large and active, and protuberances shot up their rose-colored tongues with increased force and velocity from the surface. The earth made instantaneous response to the solar storm. A magnetic disturbance suddenly began accompanied by an unusual exhibition of earth currents. The magnetic variations were frequent and large, and the earth currents continuous and strong. It is years since the Greenwich Observatory has recorded magnetic disturbances of an equal magnitude, and it sends forth a timely warning to telegraph engineers, and especially to those concerned in laying submarine cables, that earth currents may now become frequent as compared with the quietness of recent years. A superb exhibition of aurora accompanied the magnetic disturbance. An observer at the Stoneyhurst Observatory describes it as recalling the magnificent displays of 1869, 1870 and 1871, while the play of the magnets was one of the most violent ever recorded at that observatory. The auroral display was extensively observed in England and Scotland. One observer describes it as an outburst of streamers, appearing like wavy, swaying curtains from the zenith to near the horizon, with the loveliest green tints near the zenith. Another writes that streaks extended from horizon to zenith, the color being principally pale blue with reddish tinge. Another paints the display as a brilliant band of white light followed by streamers, each streamer fading away before the succeeding one became very bright. Still another records a glowing celestial picture of the northern horizon skirted by a bright white haze, terminating in an ill-defined arch, from which sprang a large number of broad streamers, stretching toward the zenith.

The same phenomenon was seen by American observers, although it did not relieve the attention bestowed upon it by the European observers. It is evident, however, that the epoch of grand auroras and magnetic storms has returned, and that our northern skies for months to come will probably be lighted with auroral flames. More earnestly than ever arises the question of the cause of the sunspot cycle and its intimate connection with electric and magnetic phenomena. No one doubts that the commotion in the solar orb is reflected on the earth in the flashes of auroral light and the erratic movements of the magnetic needle. We can see the cause and note the effect. But no one, if the disturbing influence of the great planets is rejected, has found the clue to the secret of the sun-spots. We can only grope in darkness while we wait for persistent searchers to solve the problem, and admire with mingled reverence and awe the mighty power with which the sun sways his retinue of worlds, and the strength of the sympathetic chord by which each planet in the system reflects in auroral light and disturbed magnetism the abnormal condition of the great central orb.—*Providence, R. I. Journal.*

HOW THEY CAPTURE HYENAS.

The following mode of tying hyenas in their dens, as practiced in Afghanistan, is given by Arthur Connolly in his Overland Journal, in the words of an Afghan chief, the Shirkaree Synd Daoud:

"When you have tracked the beast to his den, you take a rope with two slip-knots upon it, in your right hand, and with your left holding a felt cloak before you, you go boldly but quietly in. The animal does not know the nature of the danger and therefore retires to the back of his den, but you may always tell where his head is by the glare of his eyes. You keep on moving gradually toward him on your knees, and when you are within distance throw the cloak over his head, close with him and take care he does not see himself. The beast is so frightened that he cowers back, and, though he may bite the felt, he cannot turn his neck round to hurt you; so you quietly feel for his forelegs, slip the knots over them, and then, with one strong pull, draw them tight up to the back of his feet and tie them there. The beast is now your own, and you can do what you like with him. We generally take those we catch home to the kraal, and hunt them on the plain with bridles in their mouths, that our dogs may be taught not to fear the brutes when they meet them wild."

Hyenas are also taken alive by the Arabs by a very similar method, except that a wooden gag is used instead of a felt cloak. The similarity in the mode of capture in two such distant countries as are Algeria and Afghanistan, and by two races so different, is remarkable. From the fact that the Afghans consider that the feat requires great presence of mind, and no instance being given of a man having died of a bite received in a clumsy attempt, we may infer that the Afghan hyena is more powerful or more ferocious than his African congener.

BRO. GARDNER'S LIME-KILN CLUB.

"What I was gwine to remark," said the old man as the meeting opened, "was to de effeck dat a sartin cull'd clargyman who has charge of a flock in de western part of dis State, has written me a letter axin' dat dis club sot its face agin' dancin'. It am his opinyun dat a pusson who stands at de head of de line when de Virginia reel am called off am on clus terms wid ole Satan. Now den, I doan' say dat I would take de ole woman on my arm an' walk on to a public hall to jin in a dance wid Tom, Dick and Harry, but de udder night when Sir Isaac Walpole gin a little party we war dar, an' we shook de foot in de liveliest sort o' style. What harm kin some frish child across a pine floor to de fiddles am past my grip. Do music am p'ison wicked, and if it am wuss fur a man to glide dan walk den I am ready to believe anyning. An ex-member of dis club sot down by his own fireside one night an' talked 'nuff lies and scandal in one hour to last de cull'd folks of Detroit six months. Could dancin' be any wuss? People who doan' dance or play games or attend games am de werry pussons who have time to gossip an' start scandals, an' we all know it. I want dis clergyman to go on doin' good an' buildin' up de church, but when he axes me to help choke down de social feelin' an' de jolly speerit which de Lawd gin most men I must refuse. Heaben must be a werry gloomy place if it am peopled wid only dose pussons who em 'fraid to open deir moufs when dey laff fur fear de evil one will jump down deir throats. I say to every man in dis hall to go ahead an' injoy hisself as best he kin, and as much as he kin widout doin' injoory to his fellowmen. Stop at de limit in all fings an' you'll break no laws nor add to your sins. Let us purceed wid de purceedings.—*Detroit Free Press.*

GENERAL DE CISSEY.

The charge against M. de Cissey is that during his term of office he was completely under the influence of an Austrian lady from whom Colonel Jung had been separated. Maitre Lachaud, who is not given to making idle accusations, but for whose political bias much allowance must be made, painted her in the character of Countess Zicka in the play, and insisted that she was in the habit of carrying information from the French Ministry of War to Count Moltke's office in the Unter den Linden. There is nothing in General de Cissey's public record to warrant this imputation. He wears every decoration that French soldiers are permitted to receive. He won his spurs at the taking of Constantine, in Algeria, forty-five years ago. He fought with valor before Metz in 1870. He contested to the last the party of Bazaine, and vehemently opposed the policy of capitulation. He was taken prisoner by the Germans, and on his release was at once put in command of the army of Versailles which put down the Commune. He gave Henri Rochefort in particular much reason to hate him and the editor of *L'Intransigeant* is now paying off the score. As Minister of War he had much to do with the scheme of military organization that M. Thiers had projected, having introduced the study of German into the army and improved its weapons in many respects. But he happened to make a great many enemies who, when he retired in 1876, threw doubt on the pretext of ill health, which he alleged as the cause of his retirement.

ABOLISHING DOG-LATIN.

An attempt has been made on the other side of the water to abolish dog-Latin hieroglyphics used by physicians in writing prescriptions for the druggists. It has been asserted that this hideous jargon, together with bad penmanship, has been responsible for more fatal blunders in making up prescriptions than carelessness or ignorance on the part of the druggist. Doubtless in the "cultured" nineteenth century it seems supremely ridiculous to commence directions to a druggist with "B," which is the transformed sign of Jupiter, and, of course, an invocation to that planet to exercise a favorable influence over the subsequent course of the dose to be swallowed. However, most people think the "R" with the downstroke is a contraction for "Recipe," while they do not profess to understand (nor is it desired they should understand) the cabalism which covers the rest of the sheet: "R Spir. Scot. ziii. Suc. Dem. opt zii. Liq. Lim. exp. q. s. ad zvii. M. et Sol. sec. artem. Sig. ij coch. mag sum. intervallo brev." Who would suppose that this was only a Hudibrascan method of directing that the patient should take a powerful glass of whiskey punch on going to bed? However, the obscurity of the words is just one of the reasons why they are so dear to the practitioner. It is not advisable that crotchety or nervous people should always know what they are getting.

AROUND THE WORLD.

—In many parts of England the springs have not been so ow or twenty-six years.

—The Swiss pleasure season has been the best for six years. Up to June 30 the Lucerne Steamboat Company had carried 40,000 more passengers than up to the same date last year.

—A man leaped from a third-story window in Philadelphia, to escape from his infuriated wife. His leg was broken; but that was nothing, he said, to what he would have suffered if he hadn't jumped.

—M. Emile de Girardin recommends young Frenchmen to let Greek and latin alone, and to study English and Spanish, because they are the languages of the future.

—Great Britain owns nearly nine million square miles of the earth's surface. The United States own about three million. Between them, these two nations control more than one-fourth the surface of the globe.

—German clerks are underbidding English in London, and there is an outcry. Germans seem very glad in these days to quit their Faderland, Bismark has perhaps shown them too clearly "how wide the limits stand between a splendid and a happy land."

—The *Scotsman* says that since "Ouida's" novels were tabooed by the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution some of the directors have read the whole of these obnoxious works, probably to qualify themselves with arguments should the question be again raised.

—Prince William, the eldest son of the Crown Prince of Prussia, already commands a company of the Grenadier Guards, and elicited universal admiration during the late manœuvres for the thoroughly soldier-like and practiced way in which he handled his men.

—An angry tramp at New Albany, Ind., fired a pistol at a woman, and hit the baby which she carried in her arms. The child was only slightly hurt, but the mother, though not wounded, died of prostration caused by the fright.

—The Pope has decided to dismiss his Swiss Guards. It may be recollected that all of the quaint dress of these men was designed by Michael Angelo. Buonarotti, save the helmet. This, it appears, he forgot; hence their incongruous appearance.

—An amateur cornet player, not being allowed to practise in his residence, at Bloomington, Ill., shut himself up in the stable. He had not blown many notes before a horse kicked him to death.

—The *British Medical Journal* says that Queen Victoria has signified her intention of conferring the honor of knighthood upon Dr. E. B. Sinclair, of Dublin, chiefly in consequence of his successful exertions in educating and training women to serve as midwives in the army.

—The wedding guests were assembled to see Howard Canby married to a Baltimore belle, when a telegraph boy brought in this message from the absent bridegroom; "I have left you." The bride fainted, and her friends slowly dispersed, expressing an unfavorable opinon of Canby.

—An Italian engineer has drawn out a plan, which meets with Theebau's approval, for enabling foreign embassies to have interviews with that bloodthirsty potentate without taking their shoes off. The edifice is so designed that he will only see their heads.

—The Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London have received their usual present of venison from