

they found that extensive preparations were already in progress, to promote their comfort and enjoyment. A horse, released from all harness save the collar and a loose bridle, grazed at his sweet will over the rich grass; while the cart from which he had been detached stood, laden with boxes, in a shady corner, and was the centre of busy operations. Two stalwart gillies in full Highland costume, the one of Macpherson, the other of Mackenzie tartan, were ably assisted by Dannie from the manse, who took at least his full share in the active run of lanter and wit with which they enlivened their labours. Boxes and cases and packages of all sizes and shapes were rapidly emptied of their contents; piles of dishes were arranged on one side ready for use, and pitchers of cream (carefully closed) deposited in a running pool to preserve their coolness and sweetness. Near by the cart, three straight and sturdy tree tops, set in a rude triangle, were planted in the ground, the apex securely bound with a rope of twisted heather. From this a strong chain was suspended, on which to hang kettles and pots; and underneath, a lively fire of wood crackled and spluttered and roared.

(To be continued.)

A COSSACK BURIAL.

Many a touching, little burial service have I witnessed among the Cossacks, but none more moving than one which I accidentally saw in the beginning of winter. We had been making a rapid forward movement, and had captured a pass in the Balkans. In the late afternoon, after the engagement was over, I was making my way by a short cut across the hills to a point where I expected to find the headquarters, when I came upon a singular scene. Near the top of a bare knoll, strongly relieved against the sunset sky, three riderless horses came out in sharp silhouette. A little to the right of them, and on the very summit of the knoll, two Cossacks were stooping over, busy with something, I could not see what. The landscape, desolate, sombre and brown in the near foreground, deepened to intense purple in the middle distance, and beyond on either side of the knoll, which was the dominant object in the scene, the jagged mountain tops sharply cut the wintry sky. The glory of a rich sunset mystified the tails of the masses, while it seemed to sharpen their contours and heighten their contrasts. It was one of those evenings when there steals into the mind a sense of the solemnity of the hour almost amounting to religious fervour, and when one contemplates the departure of the daylight with an inexplicable feeling of sadness, and a scarcely formed, but still vivid realization of the fathomless mystery of the near future.

As I approached the group the two men rose to their feet, and, without looking in my direction, uncovered their heads and stood motionless. Between them a long low mound disturbed the rounded outline of the hill, and a rude cross made of an unhewn tree trunk added its unexpected silhouette to the shapes of the men, seen as irregular masses against the deep crimson of the western sky. I involuntarily paused, and waited, cap in hand, until their silent prayer was finished, and they had slowly turned away toward the three horses; then, skirting the knoll crowned by the mound and cross, kept on my way. All that friendly hands could do to honour the victim of the day's fight had been religiously done by his two comrades. In the midst of the turmoil of war he had been given a decent, dignified, Christian burial. And what more impressive funeral could be than the one I saw in the twilight of the glorious Balkan sunset? The place, the hour, the simple ceremony, the symbol of Christian faith, and proof of comrades' love—it was the poetry of a soldier's burial.—*F. G. Millet, in Harper's Magazine for February.*

LINCOLN'S FORTUNATE ESCAPE.

The authors of the *Century* "Life of Lincoln" thus refer to Lincoln's escape from becoming a resident office-holder under the Washington Government, after his Congressional term had expired: "It was in this way that Abraham Lincoln met and escaped one of the greatest dangers of his life. In after days he recognized the error he had committed, and congratulated himself upon the happy deliverance he had obtained through no merit of his own. The loss of at least four years of the active pursuit of his profession would have been irreparable, leaving out of view the strong probability that the singular charm of Washington life to men who have a passion for politics might have kept him there forever. It has been said that a residence in Washington leaves no man precisely as it found him. This is an axiom which may be applied to most cities in a certain sense, but it is true in a peculiar degree of our capital. To the men who come there from small rural communities in the South and the West, the bustle and stir, the intellectual movement, such as it is, the ordinary subjects of conversation, of such vastly greater importance than anything they have previously known, the daily and hourly combats on the floor of both Houses, the intrigue and struggle of office-hunting, which interests vast numbers besides office-seekers, the superior piquancy and interest of the scandal which is talked at a Congressional boarding-house over the which seasons the dull days at a village tavern,—all this gives a savour to life in Washington, the memory of which doubles the tedium of the sequestered vale to which the beaten legislator returns when his brief hour of glory is over. It is this which brings to the State Department, after every general election, that crowd of spectators, with their bales of recommendations from plying colleagues who have been re-elected, whose diminishing prayers run down the whole gamut of supplication from St. James to St. Paul of Loando, and of whom at the last, it must be said, as Mr. Evans once said after an unusually heavy day, 'Many called, but few chosen.' Of those who do not achieve the ruinous success of going abroad to consulates that will not pay their board, or missions where they only avoid daily shame by hiding their penury and their ignorance away from observation, a

great portion yields to their fate, and join that fleet of wrecks which floats forever on the pavement of Washington.

"It is needless to say that Mr. Lincoln received no damage from his term of service in Washington, but we know of nothing which shows so strongly the perilous fascination of the place as the fact that a man of his extraordinary moral and mental qualities could ever have thought for a moment of accepting a position so insignificant and incongruous as that which he was more than willing to assume when he left Congress. He would have filled the place with honour and credit—but at a monstrous expense. We do not so much refer to his exceptional career and his great figure in history; these momentous contingencies could not have suggested themselves to him. But the place he was reasonably sure of filling in the battle of life should have made a subordinate office in Washington a thing-out of the question. He was already a lawyer of skill and reputation; an orator upon whom his party relied to speak for them to the people. An innate love of combat was in his heart; he loved discussion like a mediæval schoolman. The air was already tremulous with faint bugle-notes that heralded a conflict of giants on a field of moral significance to which he was fully alive and awake, where he was certain to lead his hundreds and his thousands. Yet if Justin Butterfield had not been a more supple, more adroit and less scrupulous suitor for office than himself, Abraham Lincoln would have sat for four inestimable years at a bureau-desk in the Interior Department, and when the hour of action sounded in Illinois, who would have filled the place which he took as if he had been born for it? Who could have done the duty which he bore as lightly as if he had been fashioned for it from the beginning of time?

WORDS.

Words too lightly spoken
Come not back again,
And sweet buds are broken
By the softest rain.

Words may strike as arrows,
With too cruel smart;
He who heeds the sparrows
Heeds the wounded heart.

Words may be good angels,
Winged with love and light,
Bearing God's evangel
To the homes of light.

Words may be as devils,
Slaying where they fall,
Oh! the bitter evils
Coming at their call.

Guard the might thus given,
Sowing weeds or flowers,
Spreading hell or heaven
With these words of ours.

AMONG THE GAS-WELLS.

A group of burning wells north of Washington, Pa., has presented many grand and beautiful night scenes. Though several miles apart they appear, at a distance, to be close together, and their light intermingles. On a dark night, with all of them burning, they make a great show. These wells in full blast—with those flanking them on the right and left, with the broad glare of those at Wellsbury, W. Va., showing twenty miles to the north-west, and with those at Murraysville, Pa., thirty miles to the north-east—make a scene which would terrify a stranger, if he should come upon it unaware of the existence of such things as burning gas-wells. It would only need columns of fiery lava to convince him that the whole region was full of volcanoes. And his terror would doubtless be complete when he saw a great fiery column shoot skyward, unless he was made aware of the real cause of the phenomenon, when he would remain to admire what a moment before had filled him with alarm. The explanation of the sudden burst of flame is that it is necessary often to "blow out" the wells and the pipes leading to the regulator, to keep them from being clogged by the salt which gathers in the pipes from the salt water thrown up by the gas. The flow of the gas is stopped for a moment; and when again released, the gas drives everything before it into the open air. This escaping gas is burned at the regulator. The effect of the suddenly-increased pressure is to shoot a tongue of flame, hissing and roaring, high in air. On a misty night, when the light is broken up and diffused,—the snow-covered hills sometimes adding their reflection—the whole sky is brilliantly illuminated, and the scene is grand and beautiful.—*Samuel W. Hall, in St. Nicholas for February.*

ONE month's drink bill of the United Kingdom equals all the money spent in churches, schools and hospitals in a year. A ten days' drink bill equals all that is raised for missionary enterprise in twelve months.

A NEW YORK gentleman has bought a tract of land on an island in the Lake of Memphremagog, on which he is to erect buildings suitable for the entertainment of a large number of poor boys from New York for a few weeks in the summer.

A BANKER's clerk said at a Young Men's Christian Association prayer meeting recently that while counting a package of money he noticed a \$20 bill, on the back of which was written with indelible pencil: "This is the last of \$30,000. Whiskey did it."

THE trustees of Princeton College have rejected the proposition of President McCosh, and the advice of several of the Alumni Associations to make that institution a university. The reason for this action was that Princeton College has not professional schools, such as those of law and medicine, and does not intend to have them.

British and Foreign.

THERE are at present nearly forty Welshmen occupying London pulpits.

A LIFE of the late Bishop Bickersteth, of Exeter, by his son, will appear soon.

THE Mormon elders have been expelled from Buncombe County, North Carolina.

BOTH Houses of the Nevada Legislature have passed a bill to disfranchise Mormons.

A WILL case is on trial in one of the courts in New York City that was commenced in 1848.

THE Duke of Westminster has been elected President of the London Temperance Society.

THE Alabama Legislature has passed a law prohibiting the running of freight trains on Sunday.

FOUR hundred converted Jews are clergymen in the Church of England, three of whom have become bishops.

A COMPANY has been formed for the construction of railways in the Congo State, and the settlement of that territory.

NEXT year the Mikado will order English to be adopted as the second language in Japan, Chinese having been abandoned.

IT is stated that 13,000 Roman Catholics and 7,000 Protestants were committed to prison in Liverpool last year for drunkenness.

MR. SPURGEON has returned to London from Mentone in good health and spirits, and was expected to resume regular preaching.

ALL the medical men and all the Christian ministers in Amsterdam oppose the total abstinence movement, which, nevertheless, is making way.

THE Duc de Nemours has sold his mansion in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, Paris, to M. Maurice Ephrussi, the rich Jew banker, for 3,400,000 francs.

A PORTRAIT of Dr. Leopold von Ranke has been placed in the reading-room of the Royal Library of Berlin, just opposite the likeness of Newton and Locke.

THE New York Assembly Judiciary Committee recently, by a vote of six to four, decided to report adversely to Mr. Hoadley's Bill to abolish the death penalty for women.

IT appears that during the last seven years there have been 2,658 persons killed by railroad accidents in the United States and Canada, and just over 12,000 injured.

THE Committee of the French Chamber of Deputies on the Abrogation of the Concordat has affirmed by 110 to nine the principle of the separation of Church and State.

IT is understood that Principal Rainy, after consultation with some of his friends, has decided to oppose the movement in the Free Church for the revision of the Confession of Faith.

A SIX HOURS' service was held last week Thursday in the First Presbyterian Church, Syracuse, in connection with the union revival meetings. The day was appointed for fasting.

THE proportion of the native Christian students of the University of Bengal who have become Masters of Arts is twenty three times greater than of the Hindu and Mohammedan students.

THE Republican Legislature of Pennsylvania has given the people of that State the opportunity to vote on the question of prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors in the State.

TWENTY-FIVE thousand of the 75,000 prisoners at present confined in the different gaols throughout India, for different offences, were released recently as an act of clemency to commemorate the Queen's jubilee.

A NEGRO, named Calvin Garmany, has been found near Greenville, S. C., who has just discovered that he is a free man. He has been working for a brutal master, and had not heard of the Emancipation Proclamation.

A REMARKABLE series of simultaneous meetings has been held in London, under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, to advocate the claims of the heathen and Mohammedan world on the Church of Christ.

REFERRING to a letter of the Rev. Matthew Kerr, the Irish correspondent of the *Presbyterian Messenger* makes the startling assertion that the vast majority of Presbyterian ministers in the South of Ireland sympathize with Mr. Kerr, and are in favour of Home Rule.

THE *Budapester Tagblatt* announces that the celebrated Arminius Vambery, one of its editors, will accept the invitation extended to him to visit England, and lecture in the English cities on the possibility of a war between England and Russia in Central Asia, and its probable results.

THE International Arbitration and Peace Association have drawn up a petition to Parliament in favour of the establishment of an Anglo-American tribunal for the settlement of any disputes that may from time to time arise between this country and the United States.

AN edition of the Gospel of Mark, in Mandarin, has been published in England in raised Chinese characters, for the use of the blind in China. This is the two hundred and fiftieth language in which portions of the Scriptures have been printed for the blind, after the Moon system.

THE *British Weekly* has a fac-simile of a note by Mr. Gladstone, saying: "It is understood that Mr. Gladstone is accustomed to cite Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Dante and Bishop Butler as the four authors by whom he believes himself to have been most influenced.—W. E. G., Jan. 25, '87."

FUNERAL sermons were preached in First Ballymacarrett Church, Belfast, recently by the Rev. Dr. Johnston in the morning, and the Rev. James Martin in the evening—two of the oldest friends of the late venerable Doctor Mcneely. The church, which was draped in black, was densely crowded at both services.