[COPYRIGHT, 1890.]

BY MARION HARLAND.

May was content to wait for the morrow's meeting with her pet. Hester was wild with impatience to be again

with her worshiped friend. Hetty might remonstrate, and her mother entreat her not to intrude upon the family on the evening of the travelers' arrival. The spoiled child was unmanageable. She could not sleep a wink, she protested, until she had kissed Miss May, and exchanged reports of the week's separating them from the dear every-day intercourse. She would take with her her portfolio she had almost worked herself ill to fill with what May must think showed diligent endeavor to improve.

"Then, there is the great news to tell!"

"Wouldn't it be well to wait awhile before speaking of that?" dissuaded the mother.

"It is a week old, already!" Hester pouted. "And I said never a word to Mrs. Gilchrist yesterday. "The Seasons"—the *mot de famille* at the Gilchrists' for brother and sister—"are our only *own* friends, mamma. You can trust them to hold their tongues!"

"What seems a great event to us will be small to them," cautioned Mrs. Wayt—then gave Hester her way.

Nine o'clock saw her in Homer's charge on the orchard-road, the shortest, as it was the most secluded to the Gilchrist place.

"Where *are* you taking me, Tony?" she aroused from a happy, expectant reverie to ask, midway.

The aftermath of the June mowing was tall by now, and the chair was almost hidden in it.

"Now—I don' keer fur ter take ye near that big tree. Tain't wholesome nor proper!" grunted the charioteer. He was slightly afraid of the testy little damsel, and took on doughty airs at times to disprove a fact. "We'll soon git inter the path agi'n."

"But I won't stand this!" cried Hester, irate. "Go back to the path! Not wholesome! not proper! What do you mean?"

"Now—I seen the light there oftener'n anywheres else"—Homer was beginning, when they were hailed by a well-known voice.

"What are you doing over there?" called March.

"Swimming for our lives," returned Hester. "Won't you dive, and drag me out by the hair of my head?"

Her tone was tremulous with delight. As he took her hand, it quivered like a poplar-leaf in his large, cordial grasp. He was fond of Hester on her own account, fonder of her because he linked her with Hetty. He had strolled down the street with his cigar after giving his mother a detailed account of the pleasure-making of the last three weeks. He felt the heat inland to be oppressive after the surf-breeze. His mother was glad that his saunter was not in the direction of the parsonage. She knew nothing of the short cut from the back street or, with what ease an athlete of six-and-twenty could vault a five-barred fence. Besides, was not her boy a cured and discharged patient?

The meeting with Hester, if not the best thing he had hoped for, was so much better than a solitary ramble in dream-haunted grounds, that he greeted her joyously. It was not the first time the idea had come to him of making a confidante of the keen-witted, deep-hearted child, but it suddenly took the shape of determination.

"Going to see May!" he echoed her reply to his next question. "She is tired out, and has gone to her room by this. She means to claim you for the whole of to-morrow. Give me a little chat in our arbor instead, and I will take you home. I have not seen you for an age, and I have something very interesting to me and important to you, to say to you."

She laughed up in his face in sheer pleasure.

"And I have something particularly interesting to me, and not important to you, to tell in return. We have an event in our family—an agreeable happening as to results, although it comes by a dark and crooked road—or so mamma persists in saying."

March had propelled her into the open track and stopped as she said this to lean forward and peer into the saucy face. A disagreeable—an absurd—thrill passed over him. Had he lost Hetty?

"An event! Accomplished or prospective?"

"Both!" chuckled Hester.

"Is it an engagement?" bringing out the word courageously.

The question was never answered. A vigorous onward push had brought them into the moonlit area surrounding the king apple tree. Thor rushed forward, bellowing ferociously at a long, black body that lay half under, half beyond the dipping outward branches, now weighted almost to the ground with growing fruit.

"Homer!" shouted March to the figure retreating toward the garden. "Come back! hurry!" And, hastily, to Hester: "I will send you home with him and go for the police. Don't be frightened. It is only a drunken tramp, or may be, asleep. In either case he can not stay here. These are my father's grounds."

Hester had not uttered a sound, but the slight figure, bent toward the recumbent one, had a strained intensity of expression words could not have conveyed. Her eyes were fixed, as by the fascination of horrified dread—one small hand plucked oddly at her throat.

"Take her home, Homer!" March ordered, "and say nothing to alarm the ladies. I'll attend to *him*!"

"No! no! no!" shrilled Hester in an unearthly tone that made him start. "You must go home! you! *you!* and say nothing! tell nobody! O God of mercy! it has come at last! Don't touch him!" her voice rising into a husky shriek. For, parting the boughs, March passed to the head of the prostrate man, and stooped to raise him. His quick eye had perceived that he was well-dressed and no common tramp in figure, also that he had lain, not fallen, where he was found. In bending to take hold of him, he detected, even in the intensity of his excitement, the peculiar, heavy, close odor of drugs that had hung in the air on the Fourth of July night. In company with a policeman, our young artist had once visited a Chinese "opium dive" in New York, and he recognized the smell now.

Homer was beside him, and lent intelligent aid.

"*Non*," he drawled, without the slightest evidence of alarm. "*I* mos'ly lif's him up *so*-fashion!"

The action brought the features into a rift of moonlight.

"Great Heavens!" broke from March in a low tone of horror and dismay. "It is Mr. Wayt!"

Laying him back on the turf he went back to Hester and seized the bar of her chair.

"You must go home! You must not see him, my poor child! It is your father, and he is very ill—unconscious. Not a moment is to be lost. I must go for a doctor immediately!"

"*Let go!*"

Beside herself with fury, she actually struck at the hand grasping the propeller; her eyes flashed fire; her accents, hardly louder than a wheezing whisper, were jerky gasps, painful to hear.

"Let go, I say' and do you go to your safe, decent home, as I told you! Tony and I are used to this sort of thing!"

"Hester! you do not know what you are saying!" March came around and faced her, trying to quiet her by cold, stern authority.

It was thrown away. She raved on—still tearing with her tiny, fierce hands at her heaving throat as if to give speech freer vent.

"I do know! Oh, we are graduates in these frolicsome escapades! It is inconsiderate in him—" with a horrid laugh—"to give his wife, his wife's sister and the family factotum such a job as carrying him all this way. To do him justice, he seldom forgets the decencies so entirely. If I had my way, he should lie here all night. Only his wife would come out and stay with him. What are you staring at me for, Mr. Gilchrist? Here is our family skeleton! Does it frighten you out of your wits?"

Her croaks of laughter threatened dissolution to the fragile frame. It was an awful, a repulsive exhibition.

"It is you who have lost yours!" rejoined March, gravely. "Your father may be dying for aught you know. A hundred men fell in the streets of New York to-day, overcome by the heat—and we are wasting precious minutes in wild, nonsensical talk. If you will let Homer

"THIS IS OUR FAMILY SKELETON."

take you to the house, and compose yourself sufficiently to prepare your mother for the shock of seeing her husband brought in insensible, we may save him yet. Go! and send Homer back at once."

The wild eyes surveyed him piercingly; with a low, meaning laugh, she sank back among her cushions.

"I think—" she said distinctly and deliberately—"that you are the best man God ever made! Go on, Tony!"

CHAPTER VIII.—CONTINUED.

Left alone with the unconscious man, March stooped and rolled him entirely over. He had been lying face downward, his cheek to the sward; one arm was by his side, the other was thrown in a natural position above his head. His pulse was almost normal, although somewhat sluggish; his respiration heavy, but not stertorous; his complexion was not sanguine. His breath, and, March feared, his whole body, reeked of opium. March shook him gently. He slept on. With a disgustful shiver he forced himself to pass an arm under his head and lift it to his knee. There was no change in the limp lethargy. The young man laid him down, and, rising, stood off and looked at the pitiable wreck. Hester's frenzied tirade had disabused the listener's mind of the suspicion of suicide. He could no longer doubt that here was the unraveling of the complex design that had vexed his heart and head. The popular preacher was not the first of brilliant parts and high position who had fallen a victim to a debasing and insidious habit, but his skill and effrontery in concealing the truth were remarkable. Yet—might not March have divined the nature of the mystery before this revelation? The peculiar brilliancy of the deep-set eyes; his variable spirits; his fluent and, at times, erratic speech; the very character of his pulpit eloquence—might have betrayed him to an expert. His wife's nervous vigilance and eager assiduity of devotion—above all, the episode of the midnight tollers, and the conflicting stories of the need of that toll—finally—and he recalled it with a bursting heart—Hetty's declaration to her lover that there were insurmountable obstacles to their union—were as clear as daylight now. The sudden illness of that memorable Saturday night was stupor like that which now chained the slave of appetite to the earth.

How often and with what excess of anguish the revolting scene had been enacted only the two unhappy sisters knew, unless the still more hapless daughter were in the secret. Her wail: "O, God of mercy! it has come at last!" was a key to depths of suspenseful endurance and labyrinths of unavailing deception.

Unavailing, for the instant of detection was the beginning of the end. The man was ruined beyond redemption. A whisper of his infirmity would be the loss of place, reputation and livelihood, and his innocent family would go down quick into the pit with him. This was the vision of impending gloom that had disturbed what should be sunny deeps in the sweetest eyes in the world to him. This was the almost certain prospect that made her write: "I can never be more than your friend!"

The Gilchrist was clean, honest blood. Hetty testified her appreciation of this truth by refusing to marry him. He could think how his mother would look when she heard the story and how Fairhill gossip would gloat over the "newest thing in clerical scandals!"

Why should it be made public? Why should he not help to keep it quiet instead of pulling down ruin upon the helpless and unoffending? Hetty had written: "In mercy to the innocent." He seemed to hear her say it now, in his ear.

A faint melodious chime just vibrated through the sultry air. The fine bell on the "Old First" had struck the half hour. The church in which he was baptized; the church of his mother's love and prayers! At thought of the pulpit desecrated by this fellow's feet, a rush of indignant contempt surged up to his lips.

"Sacrilegious dog!" he muttered, touching the motionless heap at his foot.

Homer shambled back out of breath. He had brought a lantern.

"Now—it's powerful shady under the trees!" he replied to March's remark that the moon gave all the light they required. "An' ther's somethin' come ter me, as I want ter see!"

He set down the lantern, hugged the tree bole and went up a foot or two. Then were heard a scratching and a rattling overhead.

"Now—would ye a mind holdin' this 'tell I git 'em all?"

The "tall" was four bottles and a tin box. Two phials were long and empty. A name was blown in the glass. March held one down to the light.

"Elixir of Opium!"

The others were larger and of stout blue glass. A printed label said "Phosphate." March pulled out a cork and smelled the contents. Opium again!

The box held the same drug as a dark paste.

"I mistrusted them horse phates a coople o' times!" said Homer, imperturbably sagacious. "He war too everlastin' fond of 'em. He skeered me with the devil inter goin' ter the drug store with a paper ter tell 'em fer ter give me that ar' one," designating an empty phial. "Leastways one like it. An' Miss Hetty, she foun' in it in the garding, where I drapped it. Then 'twas she tole me nuvver to go nowhar, thout 'twas, she sent me. An' I ain't sence! An' he's treatened me orful a many a time 'cause what she said to me that time. I guess he bought 'em in New York, mos' likely. He's a sharp un—Mr. Wayt is!"

March eyed him suspiciously.

"How did you know where these things were, if you had nothing to do with hiding them?"

"Now"—stolid under the implied doubt or not noticing it—"you reklec' the Sunday night me 'n you was talkin' here, 'n' he come along, an' I shinned up the tree? I bet"—with more animation than March had ever seen him display before—"he was a comin' fur a drink then! 'Twas the very night before, when Miss Hetty, she come all the way up to my room, an' sez she: 'Homer,' sez she, 'Mr. Wayt has done it agin,' she say. An' so he had, an' him a lyin' on the study floor jes' as you see him now—an' Mrs. Wayt a cryin' over him. You see she'd b'lieved, sure an' certain, he'd nuvver do so no more. But I mistrusted them horse phates. Now, that very night—Sunday night 'twas, 'n' me an' you was a talkin' here—as I was a slidin' down the tree I kotched inter a hole, an' somethin' sort o' jingled, like glass. I nuvver 'thought no more 'bout it tell jes' ez I come up to-night an' see him a sprawlin' thar, an' I smelled the stuff. I'll jes' hide 'em in the grass, an' to-morrow early I'll bury 'em in the garding. But it's a quare cupboard, that is."

While talking, he was busy spreading upon the turf a heavy shawl, such as were worn by men thirty odd years ago. "Now—if you'll lend a lift to him!" to the wondering observer.

The plan was ingenious, but Homer's dexterity in carrying it out, and the sang foid he maintained throughout betokened an amount of practice at which March's soul recoiled. It was frightfully realistic. Mr. Wayt was laid in the middle of the big plaid; the two ends were knotted tightly upon his chest, inclosing his arms, the other two about his ankles.

"I'll hitch on to the heavy cend," quoth the bunch of muscle and bone March had begun to admire. "Me bein' useter to it nor what you be. You take holt on his feet."

In such style the stately saint was borne up the back steps and laid upon the settee in the parsonage hall.

Mrs. Wayt was upon the porch. Her first words gave one of the bearers his cue.

"O, Mr. Gilchrist! This is dreadful! and he seemed so well at dinner-time! The heat often affects him seriously. He had a sun-stroke some years ago, and every summer he feels the effects of it. Lay him down here and rest before taking him upstairs. There. Thank you."

While she undid and removed the clerical cravat and collar from his throat, March straightened his spine and looked around for Hetty. The house

was as still as a grave. The front door was closed; the rooms on both sides of the hall were dark and silent. It was Thursday night, the universal "evening out" for Fairhill servants. March recollected it in the mechanical way—one thinks of trifles at important junctures. He was glad—mechanically—that Mary Ann was not there to carry the tale of Mr. Wayt's fainting fit, or semi-sun-stroke, or whatever name his wife chose to put to it, to Mrs. Gilchrist. He was beginning to ask himself what he should say at home of what he had done with himself between nnie and ten o'clock that evening.

The transportation up to the second story was slow and difficult. Mrs. Wayt supported her husband's head, and, like a flash, recurred to March Hester's sneer of the task laid upon "his wife, his wife's sister and the family factotum." It must have been barely accomplished on the July night when he and May brought Hester home, and Hetty ran down out of breath, her hair dishevelled and eyes scared. That her hands should be fouled by such a burden!

The pale face was set whitely, as, having deposited the load upon the bed, he accosted the wife:

"Would you like to have a physician?"

His tone was hard and constrained. She did not look up.

"You are very good, but it is not necessary—thank you! I have seen him as ill before from the same cause and know what to do for him. And he is morbidly sensitive with regard to these attacks. He thinks it would injure him in his profession if the impression were to get abroad that his health is unsound or his constitution breaking up. I shall not even dare to tell him that you have seen him to-night."

She was putting extraordinary force upon herself, but still she could not meet his eye.

"I can not thank you just now as I would, Mr. Gilchrist. I am all unnerved, and although I know this seizure is not dangerous, it is a terrible ordeal to me to witness it. May I ask that you will not mention it, even to Judge and Mrs. Gilchrist? My husband would be mortified and distressed beyond measure were his illness the subject of even friendly remark."

March hesitated, and she turned upon him quickly. Her face was that of an old woman—gray, withered and scored with lines, each one of which meant an agony.

His resolution dissolved like frost before fire.

"You may depend upon my discretion and friendship," he said, impulsively.

She burst into tears, the low, convulsive sobbing he had heard above stairs on that other night.

Unable to bear more, he ran down the staircase, and recognized before he reached the foot that he had committed himself to a lie.

"Mr. Gilchrist!"

His hand was upon the lock of the front door, when he caught the low call.

Hetty stood upon the threshold of the library, a shadowy figure in white that seemed to waver in the uncertain light.

"I should like to speak to you, if you can spare a few minutes," she pursued, leading the way into the room.

With a bow of acquiescence, he sat down and waited for her to begin. His mind was in a tumult; dumb pain devoured him. He felt as any honorable man might feel who condones a felony.

CHAPTER IX.

"My sister has begged you to keep secret what you have seen to-night—has she not?" was Hetty's first inquiry, spoken without haste and without excitement.

A mute bow replied.

"And you have promised to do it?"

"I told Mrs. Wayt that she might depend upon my discretion."

"Which she construes into a pledge to connive at a wrong done to a church and a community," in precisely the same tone and manner as before.

March stared at her perplexedly. What did the girl mean? And was this resolute, impassive woman of business the blushing trembler who, a month ago, could not deny her love for him? She was very serious now, but apparently very tranquil.

"You would say, if you were not too kind-hearted, that this is what I am doing ever since I became a member of his family. Mr. Wayt and I have not

SHE STOOD ON THE THRESHOLD.

exchanged a syllable directly for over five years. I neither respect nor like him. He can never forgive my knowledge of his character, and my interference with his habits. These were confirmed before I came to my sister."

"Let me beg," interposed March "that you will not go on with what can not but be distressing to you. You need no justification in my sight. If you will permit me to call to-morrow morning we can talk matters over calmly and at leisure. It is late, and you have had a severe nervous strain."

"Unless you insist upon the postponement I would rather speak now, while my mind is steady in the purpose to make an end of subterfuge and concealment. I am weary, but it is of falsehoods, acted and spoken. Hester has told me of your generous pretense of misunderstanding the nature of Mr. Wayt's attack. There it is again!" relaxing into her usual tone, and with whimsical vexation that made March smile. "I am afraid I have forgotten how to be frank! My poor sister's eager talk of 'attacks' and 'seizures' and 'turns' and 'sun-stroke' and 'constitutional headaches' has unbalanced my perceptions of right and wrong."

"You can not expect me to agree with you there?" the suppressed smile becoming visible.

She was not to be turned aside from the straight track.

"Nothing so perverts conscience as a systematic course of concealment, even when it is practiced for what seems to be noble ends. I have felt this for a long time. Lately the sense of guilt has been insupportable. It may be relief—if not expiation—to tell the truth in the plainest terms I can use. It may leave me more wretched than I am now. But right is right."

Her chin trembled, and she raised her hand to cover it. Her admirable composure was smoldering excitement, kept under by will and the conscience whose rectitude she undervalued. With a sub pang, March perceived that this disclosure was not a confidence, but a duty.

"Mr. Wayt was a confirmed opium eater and drinker, twelve years ago," she resumed in a cold monotone. "He would drink intoxicating liquors, too, when narcotics were not to be had. I believe the appetite for the two is a common symptom of the habit. His wife shielded him, then, as she does now, and so successfully that he kept a church in Cincinnati for four years. Hester was a beautiful, active child, eight years old, and a great pet with her father. He does not care for children as a rule, but she was pretty and clever and amused him. One day she begged her mother to let her take 'dear papa's' lunch up to him. It was always 'dear papa' with her. He had a way of locking himself in his study from morning until night Saturday. Even his wife did not suspect that he wrote his Sunday sermon with a glass of laudanum and brandy at his side. He was busy upon a set of popular discourses on 'Crying Sins of the Day.' They drew immense crowds."

A sarcastic gleam passed over her face, and for the first time the listener saw a likeness to the witty and wise cripple.

"Hester knocked again and again without getting an answer. Then her father called out that he was busy and did not want any lunch. She was always willful and he had indulged her unreasonably. So she declared that she would not go away until he opened the door and took the tray—not if she had to stand there and knock all day. He tore open the door in a fury, threw the tray and the lunch down-stairs and flung the child after it. The drugged drink had made him crazy."

March shuddered.

"And that was the cause—"

"It left her what you see now. The effect upon her character and feelings was, if possible, more deplorable. From that hour she has never spoken to her father at all, or of him as 'papa.' It is always 'he' and 'him,' to the family, 'Mr. Wayt' to strangers. It seems horribly unnatural, but she loathes and despises him. While she lay crushed and suffering for the months that passed before she left her bed, she would go into convulsions at sight of him. Her mother begged her, on her knees, to 'forgive poor papa, who had a delirious headache when he pushed her away from the door.' Hester refused passionately. She is no more forgiving now. Yet she was so proud and shrewd even then that she never betrayed to the doctors how she was hurt. She let everybody believe that it was an accident. I had been her nurse for six months before she told me the fearful story.

"The truth never got abroad in Cincinnati, but flying rumors of Mr. Wayt's growing eccentricities and the possible cause gathered an opposition party in the church. It was headed by a prominent druggist who had talked with others in the trade from whom Mr. Wayt had bought opium, laudanum and brandy. He has been more cunning in his purchases since then. He was obliged to resign his charge, and became what poor Hester calls an ecclesiastical tramp. He controls his appetite within tolerably safe bounds for awhile, sometimes for months, then gives way, and we live on the verge of discovery and disgrace until the crisis comes. The end is always the same. We break camp and 'move on.'"

"Yet he brought clean papers to the Fairhill church."

A dreary smile went with the answer.

"Clerical charity suffereth long and is kind! Out of curiosity I attended once, a meeting of a presbytery that dismissed him from his church and commended him to another presbytery. We had narrowly escaped public exposure at that time. The sexton found Mr. Wayt in the condition you have seen this evening upon the floor of the lecture-room and called in a physician, who boldly proclaimed that the man was 'dead drunk.' The accused put in a plea of indisposition and an overdose of brandy, inadvertently swallowed. His brethren, assembled in solemn session, spoke of his faithful work in the vineyard and the leadings of Divine Providence, and said that their prayers went with him to his new field of labor.

"I don't want to be unjust and cynical, Mr. Gilchrist, and I can see that there is a pleasanter side to the case. There is such a thing as Christian charity, and more of it in the world than we are willing to admit. However church people may gossip about an unpopular pastor and maneuver to get rid of him, when the parting comes they will not brand him in the eyes of others. And clergymen are very faithful to one another. It is really beautiful to see how they try to hide faults and foibles. It is a literal fulfillment of the command: 'Bear ye one another's burdens. In some—in most of Mr. Wayt's charges the secret of his frequent change of pastorate was not told. He was 'odd,' and 'had nomadic tastes.' Sometimes the climate did not agree with his health. The air was too strong, or too weak. Twice poor Hester's condition demanded an immediate change. We went to Chicago to be near an eminent surgeon who, after all, never saw her.

"I will not weary you with the details of a life such as I pray God few families know. After a few years Hester and I became hopeless of any thing better. Wherever we might go, change, and the probability of disgrace were a mere question of time. My sister never loses faith in her husband and in an overruling Power that will never forsake the righteous. For, strange as it may seem, she believes in the piety of a man whose sacred profession is a continual lie.

"'Oh, Mr. Gilchrist!' the enforced monotony of her tone wavering into a cry of pain, 'I think that is the worst of all! When I recollect my mother's pure religion—when I see your mother's beneficent life and firm faith in goodness and in God—when I know that in spite of the seeming untruthfulness which is, she thinks, necessary to protect her husband—my sister holds fast to her love and trust in an Almighty Friend, and walks humbly with her God, I feel such indignation against a man who is the slave of passion, selfish, vain and conscienceless, and yet assumes to show such souls the way to Heaven, that I dare not enter the church where he is allowed to preach, lest I should cry out in the face of his hearers against the monstrous cheat!"

Her eyes flamed clear; the torrent of feeling swept away reserve and coldness.

"I understand!" March said, with sympathetic warmth. "You never disappoint me. Tell me what I can do to help you. I can not let you endure all this alone any longer."

"Nobody can take my share of the burden! I would hardly know myself without it. It will be the heavier for my sister's distress and Hester's anger when they hear what I have decided to do. Hester was on her way over to your house when you met her, full of news she could not wait until to-morrow to tell. My mother's only brother went to Japan thirty years ago, and became rich. He died last March, leaving most of his fortune to benevolent institutions there, and in America. To each of us, his sister's children, he bequeathed ten thousand dollars. It is not a fortune, but within our modest tastes, and when joined to the little I already have, it will support us decently. My first thought, when the news reached us, a week ago, was: 'Now Mr. Wayt need never take another charge! We need not live upon tainted means!'"

"You are a noble woman, Hetty—"

She interrupted him.

"I am not! This is not self sacrifice, but self preservation. If the money had not been given to us, I must have found some way out of a false position. I want you to tell your father all you know. Keep back nothing I have told you. He is a good and a merciful man. Let him speak openly to Mr. Wayt and forbid him ever to enter the pulpit again upon penalty of public exposure and suspension from the ministry. What Judge Gilchrist says will have weight. With all his high looks and sounding talk, Mr. Wayt is a coward. He would not venture to resist the decision. Then, we will go away quietly. I have thought of the little town in which my sister and I were born. Living is cheap there and there are excellent schools for the children. Twenty-five thousand dollars will go very far in that region and we can be honest people once more."

"You have arranged it all, have you?" said March, not at all in the tone she had expected to hear. "Give them the cheap town, and the good schools and the $25,000, by all means. They can have every thing but you!"

* * * * * * *

The long storm in August set in next day. A fine, close drizzle veiled the world by seven o'clock. At 8:30, the twins and Fanny needed their waterproof cloaks for the walk to school. By noon the patter on the piazza roof and falling floods upon lawn and garden and streets were slow, but abundant. It was scrubbing day and closet day, and, as Hester fretted sometimes to methodical Mary Ann on Friday—"all the rest of the week," below stairs. Hetty had to prepare a dessert and to set the lunch table. Before going down she made up a little fire in the sewing-room, and put out Hester's color box, glass of water, stretching board, paper and easel, within easy reach, should she decide to use them. Silently, and not too suggestively, she set upon the table near by a vase containing some fine specimens of the moccasin flower sent in by May Gilchrist with a note addressed to "Queen Mab." Hester hated hints, but if she lacked a study she would not have to look far for it.

It was "a bad day" with her. Her mother attributed it partly to her disappointment at not seeing her crony teacher.

Hetty, who had put the excited child to bed as soon as she got into the house the night before, held her peace. Mrs. Wayt, hovering from nursery and her husband's chamber to the sewing-room, saw that in her taciturn daughter's countenance that warned and kept her aloof. Another of Hester's biting sayings was that her mother, on the day succeeding one of her spouses' "seizures" was "betwixt the devil and the deep sea." She never admitted, even to her sister, that "dear Percy" was more than "unfortunate," yet read the girl's disapprobation in averted looks and studiously commonplace talk.

[To be Continued.]

PACIFIC COAST NEWS.

Oil Tanks on Fire.

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 12.—Fire was started this morning among the large tanks of the Standard Oil Co. by a tinner doing work with a small stove. One tank filled with oil was destroyed and seven others, containing 1,000 gallons each, ignited, but were saved by the firemen. Hundreds of people stood on the bridge near by, and had an explosion occurred the loss of life would have been terrible. The loss is about $3,000, fully insured.

The Diphtheria.

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., Nov. 12.—Twelve new cases of Diphtheria and one death were reported to-day.

A Compromise Effected.

OAKLAND, Cal., Nov. 12.—Mrs. Greelon, sister of the late Dr. Maritt, has decided to compromise with her nephews and avoid a contest of the will. Each gets the large sum of $2,000,000 out of the estate.

Deaths from Asphyxiation.

SAN FRANCISCO, Cala., Nov. 12.—There were two death from asphyxiation to-day. Frank Bishop, 30 years of age, from Weymouth, Mass., put up at an hotel, he blew out the gas, and was found dead in bed this morning. Louise Sagemuhl, a recent arrival from Germany went to bed intoxicated and was found dead in the morning.

Imperial Federation.

WILL present an opportunity to extend the sale of the Name of Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry the unfailing remedy for cholera, cholera morbus, colic, cramps, diarrhœa, dysentery, and all summer complaints, to every part of the Empire. Wild Strawberry never fails.

BIRTH.

KING—At Moodyville, B. C., on November 11th, 1890, the wife of Alfred N. C. King, of a son.

DEATH.

HYAMS—In this city on the 11th instant, Solomon, eldest son of S. S. Hyams, a native of Cambridge, Mass., aged 20 years.

WANTED—By a first class farmer (married man, no children) a position to take charge of a farm. Apply to Wm. Parry, Victoria Post office. B. C. [nov1-1m-w

STRAYED.

FROM Hatley Park, Colwood, on the 5th inst., a fox terrier dog, with black and tan head, and black markings on body. If the finder will communicate with the owner, Roland Stuart, P. O. Box 317, Victoria, he will receive five dollars reward. 11-6d-1w

OFFICE OF THE

Black Jack Quartz Mining Co., (Ld.)

ASSESSMENT NO. 2.

NOTICE is hereby given that at a meeting of the Directors of the above company held on the 8th November, an assessment of THREE cents per share was levied upon the capital stock of said company, payable forthwith to the undersigned at the office of the company, Barkerville. Any stock upon which said assessment shall remain unpaid on the 6th December, 1890, shall be deemed to be delinquent, and will be duly advertised for sale at public auction, and unless payment be made before, will be sold on the 6th January, 1891, to pay the delinquent assessment, together with the costs of advertising and the expenses of the sale.

WM. H. PHELPS,
Secretary.

no13wlt

P. T. JOHNSTON & Co.

Have now ready for Sale a large and varied assortment of

Fruit Trees, Ornamental Trees and Shrubs, Evergreens, Herbaceous Plants, Bulbs, Etc.

Including all the old favorites and some never before offered to the Public.

Grasses, Clover, and all other Seeds at Lowest Prices.

For further particulars see priced Catalogue, which will be forwarded post free on application.

Seed Stores, No. 28 Fort Street. Nurseries, St. Charles Street, Off Cadboro Bay Road.

N.B.—Having to vacate a portion of our Nursery Premises before November 4th, purchasers coming early are likely to obtain specially good bargains.

oct-6m-d&w P. T. JOHNSTON & CO.

Burdock Blood Bitters

REGULATES THE Bowels, Bile and Blood. CURES Constipation, Biliousness, all Blood Humors, Dyspepsia, Liver Complaint, Scrofula, and all Broken Down Conditions of the System.

WATFORD, ONT.

My daughter, after a severe attack of Scarlet Fever, was completely broken down. I spent hundreds of dollars in doctors' bills with but little satisfaction. Before she had taken one bottle of Burdock Blood Bitters there was a remarkable change, and now she is entirely cured. MRS. HOPPERTON.