

abatement. The manner in which our common enemy has been battled with in this metropolis is deserving of the highest praise. For once the local authorities are alive to the danger, and fully up to the work required of their hands. Never has the East-end had such a thorough or rhauling as now. The prying eyes of official inspectors have been everywhere, and have seen a few sights before undreamed of, sights which, even to read of, makes one wonder that plague and pestilence have not made that part of London their permanent home. Unofficial men have also gone down into the unsavoury region, notebook in hand, and have brought up out of the depths some strange stories how the people live. Here is part of what one has told us, speaking of Shoreditch:—"Judging from the number of so-called tripe shops in this locality, it would seem that the offal of the whole butchery interest of the metropolis here found a market. Horrible-looking little dens are these tripe-shops, stocked with raw heads of oxen, and boiled heads of sheep, and great hairy bullocks' hoofs, and dead white feet of calves. The window-boards, and the knives and choppers, are smeared with brains, and the walls are bloody. The counters are broad, as they need be; for, besides offal for human food, they likewise offer offal for cat and dog food, and there, cheek by jowl, with sheep's heads and bullocks' heads, and hearts, and livers, and tripe, are mounds of skewered 'paunch' bundles, and great slabs of horse-flesh, the latter not unfrequently smoking hot from the knackers' boilers." Is not this scene more suggestive of the Feejee islands than of the boasted metropolis of the world? But when such things are, it is good to know of them, for it is the first step towards improvement. That the cholera should fasten upon a locality like Shoreditch was a matter of course. What it is now doing there, let the same writer tell in language which, for grim horror, reads like a passage from Defoe's History of the Plague. He says:—"Turn whichever way I might, it was impossible to get out of view of Death and his works. There was his sign—a short length of deal board hastily brushed with black paint—nailed in front of the cooper's shop, where likely enough yesterday the cooper whistled as he hammered at his tubs and pails. Six paces, and we come on a thriving chandlery, a mourning shutter, half concealing the bold announcement that competition was defied, and that until further notice the proprietor intended to retail good rough Congou tea at two-and-four-pence a pound, the upreared shutter supplying the further notice in a very effectual manner. Five doors from the chandlery is a private house, with a business plate in the window, announcing that there bonnets are cleaned, dyed, and altered at the shortest notice, but now who is left to clean, dye and alter bonnets, is, alas! a speculation; for behind the business plate, and extending over the whole window space, a ghostly blind droops in full length. And here comes a man with a pair of tressels on his shoulder, and a measuring tape peeping from his waistcoat pocket, smoking his pipe with the air of a mechanic with whom trade is flourishing. Death everywhere. To the left of you—to the right of you, behind you, maybe—who knows? True as gospel is this account, which observation I conceive to be the more necessary, since I have to tell that in turning a corner there I came upon the shop of an undertaker, and his shutters were up, and there were astonished neighbours on the step, and his wife and daughter, whose trade was 'pinking' and shroud-trimming, were holding converse with them with red eyes. Up the streets, and down the streets, within a circuit of a stone's throw, I counted nine-and-twenty houses where, slain by cholera, lay bodies of human beings awaiting burial."

This is horrible, but, thank God, we have reason to hope that the worst is past. In the week before last 1407 persons died of cholera; last week the mortality declined to 1045. What it has been may be estimated from the fact that out of 10,898 persons who have died in London within the last five weeks, 4454 have perished by the pestilence. I am happy to say that the Mansion House Relief Committee is inundated

with money, and is busily dispensing it in relieving the distress caused by sickness and bereavement. I must not omit to mention that the Princess of Wales, with the graceful kindness that belongs to her, sent last week a present of flowers wherewith to brighten the dreary wards of the London Hospital, which stands in the very thick of the fray. You must really pardon me, if I have dwelt too long upon this topic. Here it is the one subject of men's talk, and even for you it must possess an interest, since you are not beyond the reach of a similar calamity.

Rumours of Fenian doings have been cropping up again this week in a very unpleasant manner. One Scottish paper came out with a circumstantial account of the achievements of a Fenian fleet among the Orkney islands; but this proved to be a hoax on the too credulous editor. There are, however, well authenticated reports of mysterious vessels in that region, and the Admiralty has been applied to, in order that ships-of-war may be sent down to protect the inhabitants. A certain uneasiness has been caused here, too, by the proposed alteration in the United States neutrality laws. If that alteration be adopted, the Fenians will have a weapon put into their hands, and there will be trouble. By-the-by, nothing more has been heard of the Guy Fawkes affair, about which I wrote you last week. It was evidently a stupid practical joke, suggested by the approaching prorogation of Parliament. One of the last acts of the Legislature, before breaking up for the holidays, I may say, was to continue the suspension of *Habeas Corpus* in Ireland. Bad news this for the Fenian Brotherhood.

The condition of the money market is exciting serious interest here. The Bank of England will grant no accommodation under ten per cent, and, as a consequence, commercial life is nearly suspended, while general distrust prevails. Our new Chancellor of the Exchequer has been waited upon by deputation after deputation, urging him to exert his influence with the bank authorities, and to induce them to take steps towards altering this state of things, but he blandly dismisses his petitioners with very cold comfort, and does nothing. Perhaps Mr. Disraeli feels that the touch of his unaccustomed hand may only derange the delicate machinery, of whose intricacies he is nominally supposed to be master. However this may be, it is devoutly to be hoped that a change for the better may very soon come.

I need not say that the question of beef supply is, to Englishmen, one of first rate importance, and, therefore, an attempt made some time ago to introduce a cured South American article excited no little interest. But even if we were not rather fastidious about our meat, we could not have managed the leather-like substance offered us. An effort to masticate it was so decided a form of self-torture, that the enterprise fell through ignominiously. It is just reviving again, however, in a better form, let us hope. Two gentlemen, by name Paris and Sloper, have gone out to Buenos Ayres, taking with them some cans of English beef preserved after a peculiar fashion. This has been eaten, partly by the President of the Argentine Republic, and was found fresh as when killed. So we are told to look in a month or two for some 12,000 lbs. of South American meat, which will be sold here in perfect condition for fourpence or fivepence per pound. If Messrs. Paris and Sloper carry out their plans, they will each deserve a statue in Trafalgar Square, with the inscription on the pedestals sure to command the gratitude of future generations of Englishmen—"He gave John Bull his beef."

Some interest has been excited in the literary world by the news that a New York publisher has just brought out a tale, purporting to be the "last and best" of Miss Braddon's works. As a matter of fact, Miss Braddon never wrote the story at all, nor even heard of it, till it was put into her hands. Some people here are disposed to be very indignant at this attempt to trade upon the reputation of a distinguished writer, but the majority simply put it down as a piece of very sharp practice. I am afraid the com-

mercial conscience is an elastic one, and, as a commercial people, we are inclined to be chary of throwing stones, mindful of our own glass houses.

In the matter of books, as in everything else, this is a very dull time. Our "new poet," Swinburne, has, however, brought out a volume, full of all the beauties of versification, but in many places shamefully prurient. To the credit of our reviewers, it has been unmercifully castigated, as it deserves; but the mischief is that this very castigation sells the book, and increases the evil it was intended to destroy. It is a pity that Mr. Swinburne seems bent on blasting his own prospects.

From the moral suicide of a poet to the actual marriage of a painter is no great step. It is a fact that the daughter of one of our noblest houses, the Lady Rose Sophia Mary Fane, only sister of the Earl of Westmoreland, was married, yesterday, in Westminster Abbey to Mr. Henry Weigall, a portrait painter, and married, too, with all honour, an Archbishop performing the ceremony, while the bride's noble relatives looked benignly on. Long live liberty, equality, and fraternity, especially equality. But what do the "old fogies" say? Where do they think we shall all go to?

## BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

BY THOMAS SPEIGHT.

From the Publisher's advanced sheets. Right of translation reserved.

Continued from page 6.

CHAP. IX.—A MESSAGE BY WIRE.

The 4 p. m. train, on a certain autumn afternoon, had just left Kingsthorpe Station, a little roadside place 6 miles from Normanford, and Able Garrod, the clerk in charge, was setting off homo to tea, when summoned back into his office by the tinkling of the telegraph-bell; having signalled the sending-station that he was in attendance, he proceeded, word for word to take down the following message. From Marie, London, to Henri Duplessis, Lilac Lodge, near Kingsthorpe Station.—Your address is known to me. I shall reach Kingsthorpe by the afternoon train to-morrow—Wednesday. Meet me there without fail. When the message was completed, Able proceeded to copy it out in his best hand, with many flourishes of his pen, and strange contortions of his tongue, on to one of the printed forms supplied him for use on such occasions, which he then put into an envelope addressed to Mr Duplessis, and leaving the station in charge of Tim Finch, an old stiff-jointed porter, who with himself, made up the staff at Kingsthorpe, he crossed the line and the path of gravelly road beyond it, and lounged slowly through his little garden, and so into the house, here he found the table laid out for tea, and his wife busily employed cutting bread and butter.

"I'm thinking of walking as far as Lilac Lodge after tea, missis," said Able; "I've gotten a message by wire for Mr. Duplessis."

"A message for Mr Duplessis!" said Jane Garrod slowly and wonderingly, pausing with the knife in one hand and the bread in the other. "and what is the message, Able, my man?"

Able, with a little pomposity of tone, repeated it to her, word for word.

"A strange message—a very strange message!" said Jane Garrod musingly. "So this "Marie" comes by the four o'clock train to-morrow, does she? Well, I shall be there to see her when she arrives.—And look you here, Able; watch Mr. Duplessis closely when he reads the message, and try to find out by his looks whether he is pleased with it or not.—And now make haste with your tea and set off. I would give something to be by when he receives it."

Jane Garrod was a spare and rather sharp fea-