

a sudden alertness and a steady voice, he said :

"Don't move, please, Mr. Carruthers, I want to try an experiment with you. Don't move a muscle."

"All right, Major," replied the subaltern, without even turning his eyes. "Hadh't the least idea of moving, I assure you. What's the game?"

By this time all the others were listening in a lazy expectant way.

"Do you think?" continued the Major, and his voice just trembling a little, "do you think you can keep absolutely still for two minutes to save your life?"

"Are you joking?"

"On the contrary, move a muscle and you are a dead man. Can you stand the strain!"

The subaltern barely whispered; "Yes," and his face paled slightly.

"Burke," said the major, addressing an officer across the table, "pour some of that milk in a saucer, and set it on the floor here just back of me. Gently, man! Quick!"

Not a word was spoken as the officer quickly filled the saucer, walked with it carefully around the table, and put it down where the major had indicated on the floor.

Like a marble statue sat the young subaltern in his white linen clothes, while a cobra capella, which had been crawling up the leg of his trousers, slowly raised his head, then turned, descended to the floor, and glided towards the milk.

Suddenly the silence was broken by the report of the major's revolver, and the snake lay dead upon the floor.

"Thank you, Major," said the subaltern, as the two men shook hands warmly. "You have saved my life."

"You're welcome, my boy," replied the senior. "But you did your share."—*Youths' Companion.*

He Took Everything.

THE FARM, THE HORSES, THE LITTLE BOYS, AND THE WIDOW.

The old saying that the German farmer piles up greenbacks where the American sets out for the poorhouse is strikingly illustrated in Kankakee county. Fritz Loeb, an awkward youth, tramped into the country asking the price of twenty acres of land. Young E. J. Bunch having inherited a hundred acre farm, laughed at the little German:—

"Twenty-acre farm! That wouldn't support a hen and her chickens."

"So?"

From Mr. Bunch he bought 20 acres and a small dwelling. Then he rolled up his sleeves. Driving to town daily behind a span of bays, Mr. Bunch saw Fritz weeding the garden, cutting thistles, hoeing corn. Which the better farmer? The German's land yielded more an acre, his cows gave more milk, his hens laid more eggs. More money was made from the 20 acres than from the 40. Pretty Mrs. Bunch, glancing at the German's well-filled pocket-book, said to him:—

"You should marry?"

"No one not have me."

"Some little Dutch girl might."

"So?"

Years rolled on. Fritz worked so late in the field that he milked the cows after dark. He wore his old blue coat until Bill Todd offered to give a dollar toward buying him a new one, just for the appearance of the neighborhood. Mr. Bunch rode to town behind the span of bays. He now borrowed money from Fritz, mortgaging the farm and stock. Mr. Bunch died, the debts unpaid. The property, having for years decreased in value, must be sold, leaving little for the widow and her two boys, aged ten and twelve. Fritz said to her:—

"Der leetle boys could drive oop der cows and dig 'taters. Let dem live mid me."

She consented, and the boys, fond of Fritz, threw up their hats and turned summersaults on the grass. A thunderstorm in July drove Fritz from haying to the Bunch farm house. The widow, fearing the lightning, was glad to see him, giving him the best plush chair in the parlor, filling and lighting his pipe. As the smoke curled up over his head he said:—

"Der farm vhas mine?"

"Yes, Fritz."

"Der span of bays vhas mine?"

"Yes, Fritz."

"Der leetle boys vhas mine?"

"Yes, Fritz."

"I no likes to leave noddings. Vhas der viddy mine?"

She looked through a window at the rainbow arching the retreating storm cloud, and she answered in a low voice:—

"Yes, Fritz."

At three o'clock yesterday afternoon they drove to a parsonage behind the span of bays:—*Chicago Herald.*

Canadian Railways.

In an article on "Railway Construction in Canada in 1891," the *Railway Age* says:

During the last year a considerable amount of railway building in the aggregate was carried on in the Dominion of Canada, although in a country of such vast extent and with so small a railway mileage in comparison to area the addition of a few hundred miles each year scattered through the different provinces makes very little show on the map. During the last year the two great companies which control nearly three-quarters of the entire railway mileage of Canada, the Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific did comparatively little building—the former practically none and the latter little in comparison with the work of some previous years, and yet our returns already show about 679 miles of new track, built for 27 different lines, which aggregates as follows:

	Lines.	Miles.
Ontario	9	119.75
Quebec	4	83
Manitoba	2	138
Northwest Territory	2	151
British Columbia	4	66
New Brunswick	2	20.75
Nova Scotia	4	17
Total	27	505.60

It is very difficult to obtain information in regard to some of the new railway enterprises in Canada, either from their officers or from government officials, and it is probable that our rec-

ords may not be entirely complete or free from errors, though they are chiefly based on official returns to this office.

June 30, 1890, the railway mileage of Canada, by the government report, was 13,356 miles, and we estimated that this had been increased, including the nearly 600 miles of last year, to about 14,250 miles. A considerable number of lines are under way and many more have been projected, and as the Dominion and Provincial governments have adopted a very liberal policy in respect to subsidies it may be expected that the work of providing the vast domain of that country with railway facilities, better proportioned to its area, will be pushed with some vigor.

General Notes.

"Here's the latest thing out," said the groceryman, "a parachute goes with each kerosene can."—*Judge.*

The shoemaker sharpened his knife.
For he and his wife were at knife.
And he said, "Now at knife
All bounds you have knife!
Say your prayers and bid far well to knife!"

New York Herald

The pay sheets of the western division of the C.P.R. employees aggregate a very handsome sum. The monthly payments amount to about \$200,000, making a total for the year of nearly \$2,500,000.

First Drummer to Farmer.—I am representing the Thunderbolt Rain-Producing company. Our showers last two hours twenty minutes and we make a sample shower free of charge.

Second Drummer.—Let me take your order sir, for the Aquarius Artificial Rain Making company. Our rain is superior to anything in the market, and we give a silk umbrella and a pair of rubbers with every shower.—*Mary's Illustrated.*

The harvest has been store away.
The thrasher's almost done,
And now the granger's startin' in
To have his day of fun.
He first takes in the country fair,
Then huskin' bees and sich,
And with singin' schools and dances,
His winter sport is rich.

Lieut. Schwatka confirms what recent explorers have said concerning Alaska. The country is a broken one and the rivers are practically unnavigable. Alaska can only be opened up by railroads. It contains some magnificent forest and the soil appears to be well filled with minerals. It may be a great country for mining, and, if so, its development by railways is sure to come sooner or later.

It is related of the Earl and Countess of Aberdeen that when they first visited America several years ago, they had a funny experience with a folding bed in a Chicago hotel. It was the first contrivance of the kind they had ever seen, and a servant explained its mysteries to the countess. During the night, however, their bell in the office rang a long call for assistance, and a chamber maid who was dispatched to the suite of rooms occupied by the lordly pair, found the noble earl clad in a hastily donned dressing gown, frantically endeavoring to extricate the fair countess from the jaws of the bed, which had closed on her unexpectedly. The earl regarded the episode as a good joke.