

HERE AND AWAY.

“A chapter of Accidents!”

If this department were writing a novel that would be the heading of the next chapter.

And it would be an interesting chapter, full of incident, and accident, and changing scene. There would be the excitement of revolution, the anxiety of reconstruction, and the baleful influence of contending stars.

For the stars must have had something to do with the luck that has attended the MONTHLY during the past two months. No sooner had the November number reached its readers than changes began, and interruptions and delays. First with the editor, then with the publishers, then Her Majesty's Royal Mail proved but a human institution capable of mistake, and then the stars fought against all.

The stars evidently thought two months short enough time for readers to mark, learn, and inwardly digest the November MONTHLY, or else that another number of the same weight, following hard on the November, would prove fatal to Grippe-weakened constitutions, and so this long delay, though for the present it is worrying, aye maddening, to the luckless managers, may be a disguised blessing.

One thing made manifest by this delay is that there are numbers of readers, far and near, who watch for the MONTHLY as for an expected friend. The many anxious enquiries that have poured in on the helpless editor had each this grain of consolation: “the MONTHLY is due; we don't like to miss a number, and we are impatient to see it.” Very good! but some did not know how much the magazine was to them until it failed, for once, to reach them. “You never miss the water till the well runs dry.” The well is not dry now, only something wrong with the windlass. When the new machinery gets properly adjusted and running smoothly, the water, cool, and fresh, and sweet, will flow in one unbroken, musical, life-giving stream.

The Book Shelf asks for a hearing. It is a patient board, but there is a point where it thinks endurance ceases to be a virtue, and the Shelf has a real grievance. Nearly two months ago it stayed up late at nights proving the month's literature. It examined a full score of books and prepared a report, which, although meant for publication, has not yet reached the printer. The Shelf wishes to say if a roll marked “copy” should be discovered anywhere, it should not be sent to Knox College Museum, as it will be found on examination to belong to the nineteenth century and not to the first, and to be quite decipherable in the composing room of the MONTHLY's printer.

But lest the finder become curious and try to read the manuscript, as he would one of Prof. Campbell's Hittite inscriptions, the names of some