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Afghanistan.

The Afghans first made the acquaintance of the English in 1809. Napoleon had been intriguing in Persia, in consequence of which the Hon. M. Elphinstone was sent as envoy to Shah Shuja. This man afterwards became a refugee in British territory, and in 1838 an expedition under Sir J. Keane advanced through the Bolan Pass for the purpose of re-establishing him upon the throne. Kandahar was taken in April, 1839, and Shah Shuja was crowned. On the second of November, 1841, a revolt broke out at Kabul, and Mayor Bevines and other officers were murdered. On the 6th of January, 1842, began that disastrous retreat, from which Dr. Brydone alone reached Jalalabad. General Pollock forced the Khybar Pass, and relieved Jalalabad on the 16th of April, 1842. On the 15th September, he occupied Kabul where he was joined by General Nott. The army finally evacuated the country in December, 1842. In 1848, the Afghans joined the Sikhs in their revolt against the British. In January, 1855, a treaty was made at Peshawar. During the Indian mutiny Dost Mahommed, the ruler of Afghanistan, remained faithful, though his fidelity was strongly tried. The present ruler of the whole of Afghanistan, and Afghan Turkestan with Badakshan as a tributary, is Shere Ali Khan. In 1870 in a correspondence between the Russian and English governments, the Oxus from its source in Lake Sirikal to the western limit of Balkh was recognized as the frontier of Afghan dominion. Such is a very brief outline of the relations between Afghanistan and Britain since they first became known to each other in 1809. Recent events have brought the former comparatively little known country into greater prominence.

Afghanistan is a mountainous country lying to the N.W. of India, and extending about 62° to 70° E long., and from 30° to 35° N. lat. Its extreme length from N. to S. is about 450 miles, and from E. to W. it stretches about 600 miles. It is a huge quadrilateral plateau considerably broader than it is long.

Ridges of high and rugged mountains bound it on the N. and E., on the south the valleys of two rivers the Lora and the Helmand separate it from Biluchistan. The western boundary from the intersection of the Lake of Seistan runs as a general thing almost due north, till it meet the spurs of the Safed Koh which form part of the Northern boundary. The country falls naturally into six divisions, embracing the high central part of the table-land on which stands Ghazni; the Kabul Basin; the upper and lower Helmand basins; the basin of the river Herat; and the eastern part of the table-land draining towards the Indus.

Afghanistan cannot boast of many large rivers, and what there are are scarcely navigable. In fact it may be said that for practical purposes there is no navigable country. The Kabul river is the most important one It is between 250 and 300 miles in length, and below its junction with the Kuner river is both deep and broad. The current, however, is very swift. Below Jalalabad, boats of 50 tons can be navigated. The usual way of crossing is by ferries. There are also fords, but these are available only in the dry season. Other rivers are the *Helmand*, the *Lora*, and the *Tarrah*.

Numerous tribes dwell in this wild, mountainous country. Of these the most important are the Afghans, properly so called. The distinction between them and the so-called Pathans, is not very easily pointed out, the two resembling one another very much indeed, both in language, customs and other respects, and seeming to be essentially of the same stock. They are fine athletic fellows, tall, muscular, well-proportioned and developed; their complexion is fair, and they wear the full and flowing beard; their features are very aquiline, and the Jewish cast of countenance is strikingly noticeable, especially among the women. To a stranger they at first appear very prepossessing, a frank, manly, open manner they have about them, contributing largely to make a foreigner have a better opinion of them than they really deserve. On closer acquaintanceship their true character comes out, and shows them as they really are, unscrupulous in every kind of wickedness, perjuring themselves on the least excuse, terribly vindictive, vain and treacherous. Custom compell them to treat a stranger within their own household with respect. They nevertheless consider him as fair game as soon as he has gone. They are inured to bloodshed from their infancy, and are careless of death. Hardiness and sobriety are among their better characteristics. No true Afghan will engage in trade. Agriculture and war take up all their attention, and alone are considered worthy of a man. The soil in many places is extremely fertile, and with good cultivation might be made to produce abundant crops. The country has all the advantages to be derived from variations of soil and climate. In many places there is an Indian temperature nearly all the year round. In other parts the weather is more moderate, and on the whole the climate of Afghanistan may be set down as one of the finest in Asia. Among the productions of the country are wheat, rice, melons, madder and tobacco. The fruit crop is of great importance—forming as it does the principal food of a large part of the people. Mulberries are sometimes dried and packed in skins for winter use. Grapes are grown very largely, and the varieties are numerous.

Afghanistan is rich in minerals or thought to be so at any rate, although few of them are worked. Gold, silver, copper, iron and lead are found. Coal, sulphate, silicate of zinc, and nitre also occur. The yew, the hazel, the juniper, the walnut, the oak, the alder, and the ash are found among the trees. Assafœtida and manna form part of the principal exports. As regards government the country is nominally under one chief, but the Sirdars as the leaders of the different districts are called are particularly independent. There is no such thing as unity. Everyone is ready at any time to plunge into war as ambition or revenge may prompt him. The Afghans in their political institutions are democratical. A code of law, rude it may be, yet understood and acknowledged by every one is the connecting bond of society, and each considers himself personally interested in preventing any infringement of this. In religion the Afghans are orthodox Mahommedans, and, as a rule, more tolerant than their co-religionists in other places.

Poets' Children.

The fates of the families of the English poets are rather peculiar. Shakspeare and Milton each died without a son, but both left daughters, and both names are now extinct. Shakspeare was soon so. Addison had an only child, a daughter, a girl of some five or six years at her father's death. She died unmarried, at the age of eighty or more. Farquhar left two girls dependent on the friendship of his son Wilkes, the actor, who stood nobly by them while he lived. They had a small pension from the Government, and had long outlived their father, and seen his reputation unalterably established; both died unmarried. The son and daughter of Coleridge both died childless. The two sons of Sir Walter Scott died without children—one of two daughters died unmarried, and the Scotts of Abbotsford and Waverly are now represented by the children of a daughter. How little could Scott foresee the sudden failure of male issue? The poet of the Fairie Queen lost a child when very young by fire when the rebels burned his house in Ireland. Some of the poets had sons and no daughters. Thus we read of Chaucer's son, of Dryden's sons, of the sons of Burns, of Allan Ramsey's son, of Dr. Young's son. Ben Jonson survived all his children. Some, and those among the greatest, died unmarried—Butler, Cowley, Otway, Prior, Pope, Gay, Thompson, Akenside, Shenstone, Collins, Gray, Goldsmith and Rogers.

Jottings.

Talking of champions and championships, it may be remarked that ever since the defeat of the Torontos by the Caughnawagas, the latter fancy themselves cock-o'-the-walkers.

Toronto's cup of happiness is now full. In addition to her ex-M. P.'s, ex-Mayors, and ex-Aldermen, she has now got her ex-hibition—to pay for.

Customer (to tailor). Guess I'll in-vest in that waistcoat. What's your quot-ation?
Tailor. It's worth $3.75, sir.
Customer. Is that true-sir?

Blood will tell.—"Oh," she exclaimed to her fellow, "you can keep your presents if you can give me nothing better than a trashy 15-cent dime novel."

An Irishman recently sent a post card applying for a situation, and put a 3c. stamp on it, and said: "Please find enclosed 3c. stamp for reply."

A LINE in one of Moore's songs runs thus: "Our couch shall be roses, bespangled with dew." To which a sensible girl replied: "It would give me the rheumatiz, and soft would you."

SONNET.

BY F. S. SALTUS.

Oft through the mazes of the Roman mart
And quaint Trastevere I have strolled alone,
And in Saint Peter's, miracle of stone,
Have felt the awe of God pervade my heart.
The stately city in its every part
Has to mine eyes its grandest splendours shown;
Its loves, and pains, and sufferings I have known,
Its dizzy carnival, its peerless art!
The Vatican recalls delicious days.
And, with the flawless, mellow moon o'erhead,
Through august ruins I have wandered free;
But ah! I marvel at all, yet dare not praise—
On yonder green Campagna she lies dead,
And what is Rome's magnificence to me?

A MAYFAIR MYSTERY.

BY JAMES PAYN.

II.

DUBITATION.

Preparations for the ball, which included a *fete* in so much of the garden as the throwing out of the ball-room had spared, were completed in ample time. A whole army of work-people had occupied the house for days, and absolutely nothing was omitted which could insure the success of an entertainment which the fashionable papers had described beforehand as of "unique magnificence;" and yet the Baroness was consumed with anxiety lest there should be a screw loose, the least screw anywhere. The greatness of the occasion was too supreme for positive enjoyment. She wished in her heart—as a hostess generally does in similar circumstances—that the whole thing was over, and that she might begin to talk about it. "Would it were supper-time and all were well!" is an aspiration that most persons in her position are prone to echo; only in her case the supper itself was a difficulty, because no one could give her any certain information as to what his Imperial Majesty liked in the way of food, or how he chose to eat it, except that he used his Imperial fingers instead of a fork. A little table was put apart for him, just as one is placed for conjurers at juvenile entertainments, and everything rich and rare that earth and air could furnish was provided to tempt his Imperial palate. Some wicked wags (friends, I am sorry to say, of Cyril's) had suggested that nautch girls were indispensable to dance before him as he sat at table; and the Baroness would have taken the matter into serious consideration, and had the whole *corps de ballet* from the Italian Opera, had it not been for Cyril. There was also a question whether he *did* sit at table; and a pile of Persian carpets was kept in readiness, in case it should be found that he could not be comfortable in a chair.

"Can't sit in a chair!" exclaimed the Baron, to whom this piece of information was vouchsafed on that eventful morning. "Ah, that comes of putting him on horseback at the review, I suppose."

"My dear Baron, you are ridiculously ignorant," said the lady. "Don't you know that Persians never sit down at home—that is, except cross-legged?"

"Bless my soul!" said the Baron. For the first time he had begun to entertain a ray of interest in their expected guest. "Fancy a fellow with his legs crossed—like a cheque!"

At that moment a telegram—he used to have one about every half-hour—arrived for Cyril.

"What is it about?" asked the Baroness excitedly. "You look annoyed. Nothing has happened, I do hope!" and she held out her hand for the missive.

But Cyril had already torn it up into small pieces. "It seems," said he, "that chibouks must be provided for the Shah and all his suite."

"What does that matter? What are chibouks? Do you mean to say they can't be got?"

The Baroness had dreadful suspicions that they were animals peculiar to Persia, sacred to the sovereign, and without which he never moved, like white elephants in Burmah.

"They are only Eastern pipes," laughed Cyril.

"Then send for five-and-forty of the best that can be procured," said the Baroness. "Why on earth should that annoy you, Cyril? Upon my word, you looked so queer that it gave me quite a turn."

"Well, these Persian fellows are a dirty lot, you know, as Jack remarks" (Jack was Jack Delayne, in the Foreign Office, who had sent the telegram), "and I was thinking that they'd spoil your new carpet."

"Carpet!" echoed the Baroness scornfully; "what signifies about the carpet?"

"I suppose I had better not come home to dinner to-day, my dear," remarked the Baron mildly, as he rose from his chair.

"Dinner!" repeated she, with even greater scorn. "The idea of a man thinking of his dinner who has got the Shah of Persia coming to sup with him!"

For a few minutes afterwards Cyril and his beloved object were left alone in the conservatory together.

"Cyril," said she, "you have not deceived *me*; you would never have changed colour if that telegram had been only about the chibouks. What *was* it about?"

He whispered something in her ear which made her turn as pale as the camellias among which they stood; she tottered, and would have fallen; and as there was nowhere for her to fall except upon the tesselated pavement, Cyril considerately opened his arms, and she fell into them.

"Oh, my gracious goodness!" were her first words. It would be a breach of confidence to repeat the conversation further, which was carried on in tender murmurs. Suffice it to record its conclusion.

"You are quite, *quite* sure, Cyril darling, that the man will come?"

"I will lay my life upon it, sweetest. Your dear mother shall not be disappointed so far."

III.

DELECTATION.

The day of our Baroness' delight only began to dawn after it had been long over for the majority of her fellow-creatures. The Shah was not expected at Evelyn Lodge till eleven o'clock p.m., and his movements were so erratic that he might not make his appearance till even a yet later hour. Long before eleven o'clock, however, and indeed immediately after the time named in the invitation for the ball, Evelyn Lodge was thronged with rank and fashion. The Baron and Baroness stood to receive their company on either side of the ball-room door, which opened upon the great hall; the former behaved like a well-constructed automaton; his head inclined, his lips parted with a smile, he put out his hand and arm like a pump-handle at every arrival. The lady, on the other hand, had, it was evident, her heart in the matter; she had a gracious look and a pleasant word (pretty much the same look and the same word, it must be owned, however) for everybody; but when anybody very magnificently was announced—on the arrival of the Duchess of Doldrum, for example—she advanced a step over the threshold, beckoning with an imperious gesture her lord and master to do the like. This latter manœuvre was repeated about twenty times; the ordinary welcome movements about eight hundred. So the papers had not been far wrong in predicting that there would be a thousand persons of rank and fashion at Evelyn Lodge that night, including many of very eminent distinction; there were even rumours of the presence of a royal duke (the circulation of which, between ourselves, cost the Baroness a pretty penny, but that was merely a little garnish to the affair. Her imperial guest, as she delighted to call him, was an attraction that could afford to be independent of all others.

In the mean time Cyril Clarke and some of his trusty friends did their very best to set things agoing; the music struck up, and a few languid dances were got through; but there was a sense of expectation upon all the company that dulled it and forbade enjoyment. They could dance and eat and drink and go to a garden *fete* any day of the week; but they had come to Evelyn Lodge to meet the Shah of Persia. At a quarter past eleven the last guest of the Patterinis had arrived, except the one for whom all eyes were strained, all ears upon the stretch. The Baroness sent for Cyril and suggested that a messenger should be dispatched to Buckingham Palace to inquire the cause of the delay.

"That would be madness," was his reply; "to be hurried would be intolerable to his Imperial Majesty. He would probably cut the messenger's head off."

The Baroness would not have minded *that* if he would only have started for Evelyn Lodge immediately afterwards, and it was with some difficulty that she refrained from saying so.

However, she had not much longer to wait. There was a clatter of hoofs at the door, greater than any that had preceded it, and a wild cheer broke forth from the crowd assembled without.

At last the Shah had come.

Through the long hall of marble, between the banks of flowers and the rows of statues, the Baroness could perceive his dusky Majesty coming slowly towards her, followed by the officers of his household. On one side, but a little behind, walked Jack Delayne, the supernumerary or "flying interpreter," as he called himself. The presence of this gentleman gave the Baroness almost as much pleasure as that of her Imperial guest himself; for she knew about as much French as the Shah did, and could never have never made herself intelligible to him without assistance. It had cost her days to make up her mind what to say to him, for dreadful tales had been told her of his quickness to take offence; how somebody, for example, had observed to him that the sun was very bright; to which he had replied that that was more his (the Shah's) look-out than that of the person making the observation, inasmuch as the sun was his object of worship. She had resolved, after much cogitation, to say, "Welcome to our humble roof, your Imperial Majesty," and then leave him to choose his own topics of conversation.

"I don't think much of his suit," observed the Baron, beneath his breath. He meant his *suite*—which was certainly smaller than might have been expected—but he pronounced the word like a suit of clothes.

"What would you have?" replied the Baroness angrily. "Look at his fez cap; look at his sabre; he is one blaze of diamonds and every diamond worth a million at the very least."

The Baron shook his head; he very seldom dared to do so at anything his wife observed, but upon a question of money's worth he considered he had some right to an opinion. He thought within his breast that if his distinguished guest should be driven to raise money upon his personal apparel, a million would be a long price for the whole of it.

The general style of progression of the Shah of Persia when put in motion was, as everybody knew by that time, a species of imbecile shamble that at once distinguished him from the common herd; but on the present occasion it was remarked that he moved with a certain dignity—ill-natured persons said because he was aware that he was performing an act of unusual condescension in coming to Evelyn Lodge at all. This dignity, combined with the splendour of his garments, which glistened like a suit of mail with precious stones made his progress up the hall, as the Baroness said, "a truly Imperial spectacle." His attendants glistened little less than himself, and would have cast the flying interpreter, in his ordinary evening clothes, quite into the shade, but for the extraordinary brightness and intelligence of Jack's eyes. He was a person not easily depressed by hereditary greatness of any kind, and was accustomed to describe his peregrinations with the Shah, in confidence, as "a jolly lark." On the present occasion, when everybody else was on the tenter-hooks of ceremony and sublime expectation, and the Baroness was, as she afterwards confessed, "ready to drop" with an overpowering sense of personal responsibility, Jack was evidently quite at ease. His eyes roved hither and thither, and presently fixed themselves on Cyril Clarke with such an expression of comic enjoyment as brought a look of severe reproof into his friend's face.

"Welcome to our humble roof, your Imperial Majesty," observed the Baroness, in a clear, triumphant voice, at the same time advancing three steps to meet her august visitor.

The Shah's arms fell flat on his sides, and he bowed profoundly.

"His Imperial Majesty bids me say that he is very glad to come," said Jack, in respectful tones, "and that he congratulates you upon the weather."

Then the Baron came forward.

"Proud to see your Majesty, I'm sure, Hope it won't be the last time."

This was the observation he was accustomed to make to every guest to whom he wished to be civil, and he had not the faculty enjoyed by the Poet-Laureate and others of gracefully varying his phrases.

"Impossible; starts for Teheran to-night," whispered Jack hastily. Then aloud, in grave and deferential tone, he added, "His Imperial Majesty reciprocates your good wishes, but is not inclined for prolonged conversation upon any topic."

This was an immense relief to the hostess who, with her rounded arm—on which he kept his eyes fixed as though it were some species of sausage forbidden to the true believer—linked in that of her distinguished guest, began to make a progress through the rooms. The Shah looked exquisitely uncomfortable; his face betrayed that mixture of fear and fierceness peculiar to Eastern despots when in European society, and every now and then he addressed his interpreter in the Persian language in a tone of manifest dissatisfaction. Only when Myra came forward to be introduced to him did he show any symptoms of interest. She was generally mistress of herself, and on this occasion manifested a calmness and dignity that were beyond all praise. The Duchess, who was a witness to the introduction, remarked that the Patterini girl rather overdid it, and would have shown better taste in manifesting a little more humility. But the Shah himself (and nobody cared for the Duchess in comparison to him) appeared more than satisfied.

"After having seen your daughter, Baroness," said the interpreter, "his Imperial Majesty feels that there can be nothing left to see worth speaking about, and he would rather go home at once."

"Go home! What does he want to go home about? He's only just come," whispered the Baroness remonstratingly. The Shah's attention was fortunately engaged at the moment in looking at himself in a mirror.

"He wants to go home and think about her—whether he can afford to buy her," answered Jack imperturbably. "Don't say that money won't do it, because you'll make him angry. He is not in a sweet temper. That's why he's got such a short *suite*. He has just put to death ——"

"Supper is served," said the major-domo, approaching his mistress with a respectful obeisance, and cutting short the sanguinary details.

The supper was an immense success. So far from the Shah being particular in his food, he ate of everything. But the sherbet which had been provided for him did not seem to his taste.

"What *can* we do?" whispered the Baroness in great distress.

"Hush! put some brandy in it," said Jack.

"Brandy? Why, I thought all spirituous drinks were contrary to his religion."

"Of course they are; that's why he likes them. Put lots of brandy in it."

The Shah drank *this* sherbet like a fish. As the temporal head of the Persian Church, he abstained, however, from the champagne, which his two attendants partook of from large goblets.

The ball was proceeding by this time with great vigour, and everything going on propitiously.

"Would his Imperial Majesty like a turn in the garden?" inquired the baroness, willing that her guest should show himself to those who were unable to penetrate the crowd in the banqueting hall. Jack repeated the invitation, but the Shah shook his twinkling fez.

"He know what's good for him, and I don't think the open air would quite suit him, Baroness. He has had too much b. and s.—brandy and sherbet. He starts to-night for Teheran, and the sooner I can get him off, the better."

The Baroness looked at her illustrious visitor with an admiration even greater than before. Her mind reverted to his august ancestor in the *Arabian Nights*, who was wont to make his journeys through the air upon an enchanted carpet. It did not seem to her that he was likely to go to Teheran that night by other means of progression, and yet the air would be certain to disagree with him.

"There are some chibouks, Mr. Delayne," she whispered; "if you think——"

"Not for worlds," answered the interpreter hastily. "Get a cup of very strong coffee; then make the band strike up something strong—the 'Rogue's March,' or anything—and I'll get him away."

The coffee was brought. The Shah looked at it for a moment with grave displeasure, as though he detected chicory in it, or a drowning fly, and then kicked it out of the attendant's hand. Fortunately at that instant the band struck up a wild and piercing Eastern air, and, assisted—indeed, compelled—by the arm of his flying interpreter, his Imperial Majesty rose from his divan and proceeded diagonally, and now and then with an unexpected movement at right angles, like the knight at chess, towards the entrance hall. The Baron hastened forward to escort him, but his politeness had nearly cost him dear, for the Eastern potentate, mistaking the object of his haste, and ever on the watch for treachery, half drew his sabre, and yelled something in the Persian tongue which sounded uncommonly like an execration. Jack hurried him through the hall; closely followed by his two prime ministers, or whatever they were, and at the door found the royal carriage in waiting, which whirled him off to the palace.

Everybody said that nothing had been more characteristic of the illustrious visitor, more redolent of Eastern customs, than the mode of his departure. His breaking the coffee cup to symbolize how his heart was torn at having to bid adieu to his host, his half drawing his yataghan, as though his despair at parting would have almost led him to cut short his own illustrious existence, and his manifest reluctance to leave the house, were the themes of universal admiration.

If a King can do no wrong, a Shah is in a still more unassailable position; and it is my belief that, if he had cut the Baron's head off, it would have been set down to his Majesty's geniality and condescension.

Everybody who caught a glimpse of the Shah that evening was dazzled and delighted. The Duchess of Doldrum publicly acknowledged to her hostess that she had spent a delightful evening, and the Baroness was overwhelmed with congratulations and invitations from "the best people" in Mayfair.

That very morning, ere the midday beams began to stream into the deserted ball-room, and when the mistress of Evelyn Lodge was still sunk in dreams of greatness, Cyril Clarke was married by special licence, in a neighbouring church, to Myra Patterini.

The consent of both parents, as we know, had been obtained, and had set her scruples quite at ease, and Cyril—who, unlike his father-in law, was averse to speculations or risks of any kind—had thought it better to settle the matter. He had been kept "hanging on and off" so long that he dreaded any more delays.

When the Baron and Baroness came down to their *dejeuner a la fourchette*, they found it was a marriage breakfast, and there was nothing for it but to congratulate the bride and bridegroom.

"After the magnificent event of yesterday, Cyril, you might have taken my approbation for granted," was the only reproof that fell from his mother-in-law's lips.

"My dear Baroness, I *did* take it for granted," said Cyril naively.

The Baron even went so far as to compliment him upon his sagacity. "You are a deuced sight" (he was certainly not a real nobleman) "cleverer fellow than I took you to be," was his very expression; nor did his encouragement end in words, for he gave him a cheque for his daughter's dowry upon the spot. He was not pleased with what had happened, but he was a man who never cried over spilled milk; when he made a bad debt he wiped it off his books, and thought no more about it—nay, he never even spoke ill of his debtor.

There was still another surprise awaiting the Baroness that morning when she came to look at the newspaper. In most of them the *fete* of the previous night was described in the most glowing colours, and the house of Patterini complimented in the highest terms upon the honour that had been conferred upon it; but one or two had not a word about the matter. They described the movements of the Shah in other directions, and announced his departure for that morning, but not a syllable did they print about his visit to Evelyn Lodge. Those representatives of the press who had not taken advantage of the Baroness' invitations to her ball had quietly ignored it altogether. They had been asked, of course; the Baroness had been careful to ask them all; but some malign influences had been at work even upon an incorruptible press, and her politeness had been thrown away. The force of spite and envy on the part of certain people—people who pronounced their *p*'s like *b*'s, but who had influence with the "babers"—could not further go, as the little party all agreed. Still, as the judge observed in the famous murder case, the testimony of ten witnesses called to prove that they did not see the crime committed was a small thing when weighed against the testimony of one who did see it. And not only had eight hundred persons of fashion seen the Shah at Evelyn Lodge, but the representatives of a dozen newspapers.

The latter fact became afterwards of great importance, for, incredible as it may seem, no sooner had his Imperial Majesty left England—*i. e.*, that very afternoon—and been thereby prevented from contradicting the ridiculous statement in person, than a rumour got about that *he had never been at the Patterini ball at all!*

The conflict of evidence was curious. Eight hundred persons of fashion plus twelve newspaper reporters on one side and all the people of fashion who had not been able to obtain invitations and all the newspapers *minus* twelve upon the other. Immense influence—I am sorry to say, even that of the Lord Chamberlain himself—was thrown into the latter scale; but people who had met the Shah of Persia at supper were not likely to be browbeaten out of *that* fact, and the twelve newspapers, of course, stuck to their guns. Nobody ever heard of a newspaper acknowledging itself in the wrong, except under pressure of an action for libel, and the action (and the idea of bringing one was at one time seriously debated at Evelyn Lodge) would have been instituted in this case, if at all, by the other side. Cyril persuaded the Baroness, with difficulty, to treat the scandal with the contempt it deserved, and so the matter rested.

The divan on which the Shah had sat in solitary state—the Persian Lone, as Jack had called him—and the chibouk which he would have smoked had he not taken so much brandy with his sherbet, were preserved with reverent care, and shewn to particular friends as a special favour for long afterwards.

Only two things, as it seems to me, gave any colour to the ridiculous and malicious rumour to which I have alluded. The one was Jack Delayne's sudden retirement from the Foreign Office, in consequence, it was stated, of some transgression in connection with his Imperial Majesty's visit, but which might, of course, have been for any other reason, for there were plenty. The other was even a still slighter ground for the scandal: it was only the fact that among the numerous members of the household of Cyril Clarke, Esq., was to be seen an Eastern retainer, said to have been *the* Persian crossing-sweeper in Regent street, who disappeared at the very date of the great event I have been describing—the ball at the Patterini's. This was in all probability a mere coincidence; and what it could possible have to do with the Shah of Persia's visit to Evelyn Lodge I leave the reader to judge Cyril proved an excellent son-in-law; and again and again I have heard the Baron Patterini remark, that he was "a deuced sight" &c., &c.; in fact, he had the very highest opinion of his sagacity. He used to have rows with his mother-in-law—who has not? But with regard to the Shah of Persia, not a word ever passed between them. As to Myra, if anything *was* wrong about that Imperial visit (and far be it from me to hint there was), it is certain that she knew all about it from the moment that telegram came for Cyril, when he assured her that "the man" would come, and offered "to lay his life that her dear mother should not be disappointed."

(THE END.)

Letters From Very Low Latitudes.

"It's never too late to mind your own business."—*Plato.*

I hate a bore. When you have anything good to say he beckons you to stop so that he can say it, and when, as it often happens, you haven't anything good to say he fills up the space with tiresome rubbish. He persists in going on with a subject when you want it put an end to, and he won't hear you out when you feel like talking. Give me the man that listens—or the woman either, for that matter, even if it is a miracle—and I will talk to them. I'm not a good talker, but sometimes I feel as if there was a lot of things to be said, and that I could say them better than other people, and curiously enough I can't bear to listen to any one else then. Well, I had my own way of it pretty well in the country. My nurse and the Young Girl were admirable listeners and knew a good thing, but the Young Boy had less discrimination. In the middle of my elegant sentence he would appear as if in frightful agonies, and with demoniac howls interrupt our sweet converse. He would then as abruptly glide peaceably off saying he had a turn for the better. Now that sort of thing spoils one's pretty sentence. You can't go on with the same subject for the shadow of mockery is abroad. Only think of your beautiful imagery—your classic quotation—food for hideous leer or unseemly pantomime!

The other evening he betook himself off as if oppressed by innumerable cramps and other internal horrors with shrieks to match, and we had a chat by ourselves undisturbed by any such carnival. It is only in the evening that you can talk well anywhere. It is indeed an effort to talk well at any time, and very few accomplish it. You don't want a crowd of people and two persons (except in certain occasions) are too few. If you could get four people in this world who would be content to divide up the language and story of the evening it would be well, perhaps. But you can't. It can only be managed with three, and then you can rule out the bore. I have certain secret leanings for two only, for if the worst comes to the worst, you both talk at once, and I've heard a trio assert themselves contemporaneously with respectable success. But beyond that number some regard must be shown to your neighbour, else you might be hauled up as a nuisance creating a riot or rout in the language of Blackstone. It's a great pity people can't talk in concerts just as they sing or play. Each one could then tell his own good story, and how he took everybody else down a peg, and no time would be lost. What a blessing this would be in public meetings not to speak of the floors of Parliament and sewing societies! But I digress. There were three of us, The last rays of the setting sun were pencilling the western sky just as you read in your last novel, and the gentle warblings of some unknown bird were entirely put in the background by the direful cat-calls of the Young Boy who, though lost to sight, was unpleasantly near to the hearing. My affectionate nurse was attired in respectable bombazine and looked in no particular direction, but as if ready to be at hand to administer to a body diseased and waiting for new world's to conquer in a medicinal way. The young girl wa[illegible] white—I don't know the name, don't ask me, I can't know everything—and a mass of frizzles, and seemed ready to laugh immoderately at the most ordinary thing. I'll cut that boy's throat, it is the recollection of his winks and contortions that makes two-thirds of her laughs. We sat there under the shadow of the old door porch heedless of any description of the last rays in question, or the honeysuckles or other stock scenery of rural life. When people are in the most romantic situations, or when their hearts throb under the exhilirating effects produced by a magnificent landscape, there is little or nothing said like what we read of in descriptive writers, I give it as my experience that I have always been unable to pass the most ordinary compliment or speak any appropriate eulogy in the presence of anything really deserving of either. Whilst, therefore, the solar beauties were disregarded and the honeysuckles ignored in silence, the little incident of being stung by the busy bee while looking a for ball, called forth a torrent of excited and mayhap blasphemous language that was quite disproportioned to the sublimity of the occasion. We are all eloquent at times.

Speaking of conversations nowadays, I said, addressing myself to one corner of the old homestead, I am afraid they have sadly degenerated. Somebody has said that there have been no good talkers since the diffusion of printing. There is more material lying around us in the shape of elegant language and pretty sayings, than we can read, and it is better in every way than the conversations we hear. We have no need of thinking in order to speak well, the editors have it all cut and dry for use, we pay them for it. The result is that each one has a paper or a magazine to talk to him and prefers it—to his disgrace—to the higher and nobler language of spontaneous utterance in conversation. The only approach to the old coteries where brilliant men like the Garrick or Johnson club talked as mortals never talked since, is where some bore having digested a heavy review article inflicts it on a long suffering and studiously polite drawing-room circle. (Approbation on the part of the Young Lady.) (Myself not noticing this continues.) Who would exchange this for an evening in the Academia, where the walking students of a great philosopher discoursed on a passage in Homer or debated the merits of the contestants for the Crown or criticized a statue of Phidias? Or who would exchange it for an evening in the country house with Horace's royal patron, when a speech of Hortensius, or a scene from the great Latin Epic was the theme of conversation. These were golden ages in conversation, just as in the time of Louis XIV in France, and of Addison and Steele and Swift in England. But what are we to-day in the Iron or perhaps the *Brazen* age? Take an ordinary company after dinner. The clergyman if he spares you a formal sermon, will, if learned, talk so high over your head that he might as well be in the pulpit. The doctor, in the fulness of big words that abounds in his profession, discourses like another Galen on the idiosyncrasies of the last disgusting case he diagnosed in the hospital. The lawyer will talk of triumphs on the circuit and witnesses that he puzzled on cross-examination. The merchant will revise the tariff and explain his business in full. Each ones goes away under the belief that he has entertained everybody else, and saying that Brown and Jones always "talk shop," and don't know a thing outside of their own trade or profession. When a man has any particular hobby, and you get to his house and in his power, after two hours infliction on you, in which you haven't said three words, he shows you out under the impression that you are a most entertaining fellow. He feels that he has been enjoying the company and conversation of a "devilish agreeable fellow." You are the sort of man he wants to come and have a social chat of an evening. What matters to him that his wife pleaded an excuse some time before, and that everyone has deserted the both of you. He feels it a duty to entertain people. Well, people with very small hobbies do this when you are alone with them and when they meet in company, but this is only a parody of conversation, Nothing, in my opinion, can reclaim men from this barbarism but the exercise of superior conversational powers in women. One man talks to another as though the latter knew nothing of what he was telling him before, but that kind Nature gifted him sufficiently to understand this when well told. A man frequently talks to a woman as if she knew nothing beforehand, and wasn't capable of knowing much at any time. The reproach is not altogether undeserved. Few women are entertaining in purely conversational ability outside of the weather, the light gossip of calls, or the scope of their husband's business. Of young ladies I would not trust myself to speak critically. I suppose in time they will become the married ladies conversationally the same as we have the latter now. When we have ladies who will talk moderately well on subjects interesting and intelligible to ordinary men we will have more evidences of conversational ability around us. The disjointed rubbish of a dozen subjects touched and abandoned will be equally consigned to oblivion with the despotism of the tyrant who ursurps all length and bounds to say his say. A flighty talker who skips over a dozen of subjects tires you beyonnd doubt; but there is ever a prospect of an agreeable one coming in view, though it be immediately renounced for some one else. The persistent talker is a terrible punishment, a bore in society.

"Just so," said the Young Lady, quite suddenly, "I quite agree with you there."

The Young Boy had just rejoined us and with hideous grimace was waking up the occupant of the black bombazine dress by pencilling her nose and mouth with a feather.

I said what I had to say with less interruption than I experienced for days past, but I wanted to say a few other things not quite so uncomplimentary. I don't just like what the Young Lady said.

General Self-Satisfaction.

The most of people one meets are more inclined to be dissatisfied with all their surroundings than the reverse. Their lives are one more or less sustained grumble. They are inclined to think they have not had fair play, and that their share of the good things of this life is not at all in accordance with their merits. The sight of their neighbour's prosperity makes them sick. They covet his wife, his ox, and his ass. They are sure the world is all topsy turvy, or they would be higher than they are. They not only envy, but they growl and they depreciate. They have nasty disparaging stories to tell about everybody they know. Their noses have got into the condition of a perpetual snarl. They show their teeth as if they were ravening wolves. They cannot finish a sentence without a "but." Their very praises are like the saliva of the boa constrictor, only preparatory to wholesale swallowing. If a man has ever had a black mark against him, they are sure to know it. If a woman has ever made a wrong step, let her look out for squalls.

But while all this true, as every one's experience can testify, there is another pretty numerous class who have a diseased and withal an offensive amount of self-satisfaction about them. In the language of rural life, all their eggs have two yolks. All their belongings are wonderful. All their sayings are clever. All their children are prodigies, and all their plans succeed. Somehow or other they edge in, in the most serene, matter-of-fact fashion, that they and theirs are superior people. All their stories are plentifully sprinkled with the first personal pronoun, and all tend to show how cool and quick they have been in all their movements. There never was an incident in which they did not play first fiddle; never a conversation in which they did not bear the chief part; never a project which they did not carry successfully through; never a wit whom they did not silence; never a woman whom they could not win. The most monstrously improbable things they could have easily carried through had they liked, and the strangest experiences had more than a parallel in their eventful histories. Pity their poor wives, who have to listen to all their egotistical talk from year's end to year's end, and not merely to listen, but for peace sake, to appear to admire and rejoice in. Have not these poor women heard at least five hundred times all about that clever trick played on the schoolmaster forty years ago? Embellished, amplified, and recast, as that narration about what was said and done when their hero fell among some sharpers undoubtedly has been, yet the great central facts are oh! how familiar, and all tending to show what smart fellows those husbands of theirs were long, long ago. The whole tone, the evere look of such people seems to say, "You're all well enough, but dear have pity, you're nothing like us." The very children catch the infection and improve on it. It's awful. Self-depreciation is bad, simply abominably, a barefaced fishing for a compliment. Envying and grumbling are quite as detestable, but of all the horrors in this weary world, save us from those awful self-satisfied people, who themselves had never a taint of original sin, and never possessed either a ring or a relative that was not perfect.

Dramatic Notes.

Mrs. P. D. Bowers has played during the week at Cleveland, Jane Shore being the leading role.

VON BULOW will give a concert this month in Berlin, at which he will play the five last sonatas of Beethoven.

John E. Owens plays this week at the National Theatre, Washington, in the Victims, Forty Winks and Our Boys. His support is splendid.

John Lester Wallack has been offered $2,500 a week for one month by the management of Baldwin's Theatre, San Francisco, but he declined.

The *Dramatic News* accused Miss Pauline Markham of having turned the head of its "local scribe" at Petrolia, and the fair blonde has written to the *News* pronouncing the story a malicious lie.

A call is made upon all members of the Widows' and Orphans' Dramatic Fund Association for one-half dollar each dues, owing upon the death of Robert Jones Tretheway, lately of Boston.

Frou-Frou has been the attraction of the Gymnase, in Paris, during the last month, with Mdlle. Legault as *Gilberte*. It wil shortly be replaced by the much talked-off revival of La Dame aux Camelias.

Geo. F. Rowe, in Wilkins Micawber, was the theatrical attraction at the Detroit Opera House last week. Our Boarding House at Whitney's, and Cool Burgess at the Theatre Comique, completed the Detroiter's theatrical amusement.

The steamship *City of Chester* brought to New York last Saturday Mr. Mapleson, the London impressario, and his array of operatic and vocal celebrities, Mme. Etelka Gerster, Mdlle. Minnie Hauck, Frapoli, Campanni, Arditi, Del Puente, Foli, Campoballo, and the remainder of his troupe, including a chorus of sixty-two, which is said to be the finest chorus in the world.

Mme. Jenny Van Zandt is to take the part of *Adriano* in the forthcoming representation in London of Rienzi, by the Carl Rosa Company. It will be the first performance in English of this opera.

Miss Sara Jewett, the graceful actress, is said to have a beautiful voice, which, had she not entered the dramatic profession, might have been heard to advantage in opera.

"The Corsican Brothers," revived, fairly set and passably dressed, has been played during the present week at Niblo's. Charles Pope, in the dual role of the twin brothers, was effective at times.

Miss Rose Eytinge's assumption of the part of *Nancy*, in a new version of "Oliver Twist," is a remarkable one in many respects. She has softened the harsher aspects, and in the violent scenes of the ending gives a fresh touch of womanly pathos to the brutality of the scene. We have no actress at present who can play it with equal vigour and tenderness.

HOME SAVAGES.—The following story is published in the *Christian Week*:—A gentleman gave a party in honour of a distinguished missionary lately returned from his field of work. The ladies appeared in very decollate dresses, and, as his host feared the style might shock his reverence, he apologized to him for it, saying the fashion demanded it. "Oh, I don't mind it at all," replied the missionary, "I've been ten years among the savages."

There are several ways of making money, but I have not hit any of them so far.

Personal.

THE Countess Ariosto, the last descendant of the poet, has just died at Ravenna, aged ninety.

THE Emperor of Brazil has invited eminent doctors from Europe and Rio Janeiro to study on the spot the true character of yellow fever, and discover a remedy for it. Several have accepted the call.

MR. SCHLIEMAN, the explorer of the ruins of Troy and Mycenæ, claims to have discovered the ruins of the ancient capital of Ulysses' kingdom of Ithaca. No notable object of art has yet been excavated.

WHEN Mehemet Ali Pasha, the distinguished Turkish general, who was murdered lately, was in Berlin, he took the opportunity to visit his birth-place, Madeburg. Here he was so touched by old reminiscences that he declared that he should lay down his military duties in Turkey as soon as possible, again become a true German, and settle for the remainder of his life in some pleasant town in the Hartz.

THIS pleasant personal is told of Lord Beaconsfield while at Berlin: Returning one day on foot from the Congress, he espied at the corner of a street a flower girl, looking any thing but happy. He told his secretary, Mr. Corry, to interrogate her, and on learning that she had been standing there since daybreak, but had sold nothing, he purchased a rose of her, paying for it an English sovereign, to which he added a bottle of Rhine wine.

IN an account of the early years of Thiers, soon to be published in Paris, it is related that on coming into the world he was feeble and very small. He might have been put in a sabot, like the celebrated dwarf Nicolas Ferri, who was carried to church in an elegant wooden shoe in order to be baptized. Thiers certainly did not weigh more than three kilograms. One peculiarity about him is that he was not baptized in any church. He used to relate himself that he was baptizad in a cellar; for in the days of his youth the Reign of Terror had only just come to a close, and the priests were still afraid to perform any ceremony in the churches.

AMERICAN artists command a premium nowadays. Albani, whom we may expect to see here by-and-by, has won the highest honours abroad in the train of the universal favourite Miss Kellogg. The popular prima donna Minnie Hauck is also an American, as is Miss Cary. In fact, the tide is setting so strong Westward that we may expect presently to see singers Anglicizing their names instead of Italianizing them, as has been their fashion. On the dramatic stage, too, our American ladies take foremost rank. Miss Genevieve Ward, who has lately made a successful appearance here, has long been acknowledged as a leading tragedian in England; Clara Morris has earned a deserved reputation; and the youthful Louisville beauty, Mary Anderson has improved greatly since her debut last winter, and promises to take a foremost rank in her profession. Most hopeful of all is the fact that these ladies enjoy an untarnished reputation, and elevate the stage by their lives as well as by their talents.

A CURIOUS woman is Mother Dildine, the female hermit, who lives in the mountains fifteen miles from Sutro, Nevada. Recently she made her semi-annual visit to sell a few eggs and lay in a scanty supply of provisions. She is sixty, and has for twelve years lived alone in the mountains, and is perfectly happy in living secluded from the outside world. Her only support is that which she derives from 200 Angora goats and eight hens. She says she is seldom visited by the whites, and prefers never to see one about her premises, for in nearly every instance they tease her about her mode of living, and after their departure she worries over their conduct toward her. She likes the Piutes, and even seeks their companionship. They have never yet seen her in need but they would shoot some rabbits or kill a few birds for her relief, and in cold weather have even shared the warmth of their blankets with her. In height this singular woman is about five feet six inches, and in actions sprightly. Her dark auburn hair lies in wavelets about the forehead, and hangs about her head in long curls. Her dress is neat, and in no way conforms with that she is reported to wear in the mountains. She is a native of Massachusetts; has two brothers living in Westport, in that State, and a sister living in Lowell. Her living a recluse was brought about by troubles in her married life years ago.

LORD DUFFERIN's re-appearance in the House of Lords will be warmly welcomed. He was one of the best, if not the best, orators in that body. If any one fancies, however, that his speeches are the work of a moment, he is greatly mistaken. They are prepared with the greatest care. He works out a speech generally in the morning, and then sends for his short-hand writer, named Campbell, and dictates to him. Campbell then transcribes his notes upon large sheets of foolscap, writing on every second line, and leaving a margin of half the page. The extended manuscript is then returned to Dufferin, who polishes and improves his composition until scarcely a word of the original conception remains. The amended copy is returned to the secretary, who makes a fresh transcription. This in turn undergoes revision, and a third, often a fourth and a fifth, transcription will be ordered, until his Excellency is satisfied. Then commences the task of memorizing. Lord Dufferin is what actors would call "pretty good study," and it does not usually take him long to get his speeches "by heart." He reads and repeats his periods over slowly, walking up and down, and reciting paragraph by paragraph to Campbell, and not till he is perfectly satisfied with himself does he cease work. The reply in Greek which he made to the professoriate of MaGill University on being made LL.D. took him over a week to compose. It excited wonder and admiration in Canadian and English learned circles as a piece of off-hand scholarship.

Defying a Locomotive.

A Plucky Black Horse tries a Brush With a Long-Island Railroad Train.

After the 7.45 Long Island Railroad N.Y. express train from Hempstead passed Garden City the other morning, the engineer, John Townsend, espied a gaunt, black horse grazing by the fence. As the train neared the horse he bounded out on the track with a snort of defiance and started on a fast trot ahead of the locomotive. He was not swift-footed enough to keep ahead, however, and as the train crept close to his flying heels engineer Townsend shoved down the brakes, and set the whistle to shrieking. At this the horse redoubled his speed, and the train started ahead and was quickly at his heels again. For over a mile the race was kept up in this way. Everytime the train overtook the horse it would be slacked up, and a wild whistle would make the horse renew his efforts. Still he determinedly kept on the track.

In one place there was a small culvert crossing the roadbed, and the horse got one of his feet in this and went down heels over head. His nose struck the track and he made a somersault on his back, and then rolled on his side. The engineer stopped the train and went with some of the passengers to see whether the horse was dead, but before they could reach him he was on his feet and away down the track again at a tremendous pace, still snorting defiance at his pursuers. At the end of the next half mile he stumbled and fell a second time but pluckily picked himself up and ran on. A little further on, as the engine was close behind him, he dropped on his knees again, but was instantly erect and off once more.

After he had run three miles he came to a road diagonally crossing the railroad, and wheeled into it just as the train was again rushing and howling close behind him. The horse kicked up his heels as he dashed snorting down the road and disappeared. The train lost about seven minutes on its schedule time by the race, but the passengers quietly enjoyed it. A Pine street broker who was on the train says it was the finest sport he ever saw.

The Clock, etc.

[From the Toronto New Dominion.]

Mr. Rainsford has come to Toronto again, and with Cathedral people that is one occurrence of the week or month. The young man is good-looking, cultivates muscular as well as Evangelical Christianity, and does things in his own way, and not as he has been told by tradition or the fathers. The attendance at the Cathedral has mounted up since Mr. Rainsford came, and there is every likelihood of the ministrations of this new assistant of St. James being as popular as ever. Some wondered at the great preponderance of women, and especially of young women, who thronged the Cathedral when Mr. Rainsford was last here. Why should they? It was the most natural thing in the world. Young women have in any case a great liking for a young, good-looking fellow, who dresses well and talks correspondingly. And when that young fellow happens to be a clergyman, the fascination is complete. Duty and inclination draw in the same direction, and are thus irresistible. The young good-looking preacher was then unmarried. It is to be hoped that the fact of his having brought back a wife may not diminish his popularity. In any case, Mr. Rainsford was wise in his generation to arm himself as he has done. Otherwise the Toronto ladies would have been overwhelming, and then, as monogamy prevails here, when fifty were competing for the prize, with slippers, cases of conscience, and various garments for the poor, it is evident that forty-nine would have been disappointed and disgusted, and would have been put into such a state that they would have thereafter profited little by the ministrations of the young but lost Evangelist. Curious the fascination which black coats, clerically cut, have for young damsels on the bright side of thirty-five. The red is the only colour that has a chance in competition with them, and, generally, even the soldier makes a poor run as second to the priest, especially if good-looking, and with a fair income.

Speaking of girls and their fancies about the other sex, I have often wondered, in looking along King street of an afternoon, if the people in Toronto are the length of having a Queen of Beauty, round whom all the male butterflies of fashion may buzz and flutter. Who can tell? I can't. I may say, however, that I never see any signs of such a thing, but I have often wondered and wondered, in the event of its being so, whether it were necessary that the cynosure should be married, and that her husband should be a muff. Who possibly can be the Mrs. Langtry of Toronto. Alas! alas! we have no big folk to bring out beauties and patronize them into notice. What man, old or young, that walks the streets of our city, could be regarded as a competent judge of female beauty? Could A——? or B——? or C——? or D——? Surely not, especially not D——. And what could we do with a Mrs. Langtry, even if we had her? Why, all our swells are but bank clerks, or members of the Yacht Club. What could they do in order to raise a *furore* over either a May Queen or a December one? I am afraid, in short, that pretty Mrs. Langtry and her sister rivals belong to a stage of civilization we have not yet reached in Toronto, and some I hear are ill-natured enough to say they hope it will be long before we attain to that stage. It is clear at any rate that nobody can look from my place without seeing that Toronto's daughters are in many cases very comely damsels, and well worth looking at even by competent judges. It is scarcely possible to say that almost any of them are absolute beauties, though I know for surety that there are at least a score of fathers who each fancies that his daughter bears the bell for all the attractions of both mind and face. It is pleasant to think that so many are so entirely pleased with their own daughters, and nobody but an old curmudgeon would insinuate that the girls were as well pleased with themselves.

Oh politics! politics! How the Conservatives are triumphing! Many a set of teeth owned by loyal adherents of the National Policy have during the past few days come together as with the snap of a steel trap, as their owners thought of the good things in store for them when Johnnie came marching home. All the Grits are, it seems, to be turned out or superannuated. The fact is, words fail them to tell of the coming glories and the abundant spoils. There is surely something said in the good book about certain congregations assembling wherever there happened to be a carcase. Won't there be a feast? The looks of some who walk King street deceive me if there won't.

But before Mr. Rainsford; before the ladies; before even the new ministers and the exhaustless spoils, there stands forth to the admiring gaze of the world if not the universe, Hanlan, the great, master oarsman of the Continent. He has awakened more enthusiasm, given rise to more talk, and been the occasion of the loss of more money than even John A. himself. Oh, he is the boy. It is the greatest pity in the world that Toronto had not had walls that they might have been broken down to admit Toronto's most distinguished citizen enter within her bounds after reaping glorious laurels down the river. In the absence of this the best was done that was possible. A torchlight procession added its brilliancy to the full moon, and throats innumerable crew like chanticleer when "our boy" returned to the city which he has covered with glory. I have been given to understand that the subject of the next University Prize Poem is "Hanlan and his Victories," while I *know* that all the male children born in Toronto for the next ten days are to be called Edward, or Ned, for short. The aldermen think of a public dinner, and some are offering as much as a hundred dollars an hour to get the hero to attend their balls and garden parties, as a genuine lion warranted to roar gently and to order so as not to hurt the nerves of the most delicate.

Mr. Mowat is examining all the shapes of a civic crown, and has called in Dr. McCaul to make quite sure that the gift of the Province shall be perfectly classical. I won't vouch for this last, but so goes the rumour round

THE CATHEDRAL CLOCK.

"How can I keep my hair in crimp in warm weather?" writes Alice. There are two ways, never known to fail: keep a big of pounded ice on it, or use best quality of office mucilage.

GOLD has been struck in the Magdala mine shaft, which is the deepest in the colony of Victoria, at a depth of 1,988 feet below the surface. This discovery is causing great excitement in Australia.

AMBIGUOUS.—In a country churchyard there is the following epitaph:—"Here lies the body of James Robinson and Ruth his wife;" and underneath this text, "Their warfare is accomplished."

HASTY Generalization—Mamma: "We'd better go in, darling; it threatens to rain." Harry: "Oh, then, it won't." Mamma: 'Why?" Harry: "Papa always threatens to vip me, but he never does."

A CELEBRATED oculist offered to operate on a Parisian blind beggar's eyes, and said, "I'll guarantee to restore your sight." "What!" exclaimed the beggar, "restore my sight, and so ruin my business! A pretty notion! Do you want to deprive me of my livelihood!"

TRUE as gospel is the remark of the London *World*, that "of all bores the sporting bore is perhaps the most insufferable, and a *tete-a-tete* with a man who will insist on enlarging for an hour at a stretch on the merits of his horses or his dogs is a weariness to the flesh of the most unmitigated kind. No attempt to turn the conversation to political or social topics is of any avail. The horsy or doggy man cares for none of these things, and at the first lull in the talk he is on his hobby again."

A CORRESPONDENT of the London *Daily News* writes from the Rhodope district: "I have often heard business men express a desire to find some point on the face of the earth where they could for a week or two enjoy perfect repose. Let them try Kirkova. There is no port here, no telegraph, and if you speak to a native of this little village about a newspaper, he will probably think that it is something to eat. But ask for fruit and he will overwhelm you with it at a farthing a pound."

PLAID dresses are very fashionable. At the Parisian races several very handsome models were seen. A beautiful style is of bright-coloured plaid goods, with the skirt plaited in deep plaits, which open on the lower part, forming a flounce. The only trimming on the dress consists of small tongues lying in a white lace shell-shaped piece, with buttons of old silver. The habit matching this suit has the basque cut up and trimmed with point lace, which lies over a revers of ruby silk. This has a very pretty effect when seen through the lace. The old silver buttons have ruby centres. The round hat worn with the suit has a plaid torsade and a tuft of feathers in the three colours of the torsade.