

no longer a stranger to your companion, in light, besides, you must be present at my interview with the King, Aixa, I wish to place you under her protection.

They then all three ascended to the middle or balcony, a small turret situated at the top of one of the towers of the Alcazar, rendered charming and picturesque by small Moorish pillars, with elliptical arches that seemed suspended over an azure abyss.

In this delightful retreat the favorite awaited Don Pedro with dignified coldness. The King entered quickly, and advanced towards Aixa, but the Jewess, awed and intimidated, passed on the threshold.

"I do not return to you a conqueror bringing trophies," said he, in a hoarse tone; "you will have to console an unfortunate, ruined by treason—one who has seen his sword break in his hand before he was able to use it."

"In the chances of war there are but good luck and misfortune," answered she, calmly. "But have you returned alone, Pedro?"

"Oh! I do not yet despair of my fortune," he answered. "One of my allies at least has remained faithful to me; it is your father, the generous Mahomed. He did not wait for an appeal to come to my assistance. Thanks to you and to him."

Is it then on me that you still reckon to raise your courage? Is it from my eyes alone that you draw that heroic power which will bring triumph to your cause, or devote you to a glorious end?"

"What mean these strange doubts, Aixa," he said.

"I will explain them by asking you a single question," said she, pointing to the threshold where poor Rachel stood shaking and trembling at the severe aspect and imperious voice of the favorite. "Who is that woman, Pedro?"

"That woman," answered the king, endeavoring to smile, though at the same time turning pale, for he felt the purpose of the Morisca's suspicions; "it is a sister whom I wish to confide to you, Aixa. It is the daughter of my faithful treasurer, Samuel Ben Levi, a poor child, whom I saved from the pursuit of the English freebooters. An unfortunate, whom you will love, will you not?"

"One whom I shall love, because you twice risked your life for her?" interrupted the Morisca, sharply.

"Should I then have left this young damsel to perish?" asked Don Pedro, with difficulty suppressing his anger. "Ought I to have allowed her to suffer the outrages of a rude soldiery?"

"But the daughter of Samuel is a Jewess," said Aixa, disdainfully. "What matters to the King of Castile the life and honor of a child of that degraded race? A Jewess cannot be my companion. She cannot even dwell in the Alcazar without defiling it."

"Are you then a Christian of the old blood that you speak with so much arrogance?" said Don Pedro, in a low and angry voice. "I could scarcely have expected such harsh language, such haughty sentiments from the mouth of a noble Spaniard, like Maria de Padilla! Ah, I thought you more tolerant, Aixa; when I avowed my love for you, did I require you to sacrifice your religious faith for me?"

"And in your love for this Jewess you do not expect that she should abjure her worship either—is it not so, Don Pedro?" said Aixa, with gloomy irony. "But I beg you will not abuse me by such insulting comparisons. Have you forgotten who I am? A daughter of royal blood, you might have loved me without shame or disgrace. My love brought no humiliation to you; thanks to me, my father, King Mohamed, will defend you against all enemies, as he would his own son. He will expend for you his last marabolin; he will sacrifice for you the last of his guards; but it is on condition that you, on your side, respect the honor of the name, and that you do not, by unwelcome means, seek to break it, and to debase her, who has so loyally loved you."

"But, really," rejoined Don Pedro, "you hold such foolish language that I do not understand you. How can I seek to debase you in asking you to grant protection and an asylum to a poor young girl?"

"What need has she of my protection, since she possesses yours?" said the Morisca, in a fierce tone. "Why does she not return to her father's house? Under what pretence, by that title would she remain in the Alcazar? What means this royal caprice? Does it proclaim that I am fallen from the imaginary power that has made me to many enemies, and that another woman aspires to gain the specious title of favorite?" (Belshazzar, Don Pedro.)

"Speak lower, Aixa; calm this needless anger," said the king, who feared that this stormy debate might overwhelm Rachel, and who saw, with anxiety, that Mohamed remained silent and immovable. "Samuel Ben Levi has not yet returned to Seville, and I have promised to watch over his well-beloved daughter. Besides, in confiding her to your guardianship, I give you the best possible proof of the groundlessness of your suspicions."

"What do you ask, Pedro?" said the favorite, with a sardonic air. "I love you, and I cannot but mistrust your efforts to prove that I am wrong. I mistrust the sudden generosity that you exhibit towards that young Jewess, whose beauty is so highly extolled. I fear that, if she were ugly or old, it would not appear so natural to you to forget the sacred interests of your crown for a prepossession that is unworthy of you."

"But I swear to you, Aixa," resumed the

king, "that you alone have put this singular construction on my words and actions."

"Be it so," she answered. "I will believe, Pedro, that I have deceived myself. This Rachel is a stranger to you; you wish me to consent that she remain in the Alcazar, the thing is easily arranged. Let her increase the number of women destined to serve me, and study my caprices. She shall not quit me. Oh, I promise you, I will watch over her with the solicitude of a sister. She shall fan me when I am warm; she shall put on my Turkish slippers. Do you consent to this? Can I dispose of this handmaiden at my will? Am I to thank you for so rare, so valuable a present?"

"Really there are no means of inducing you to listen to reason," said the King of Castile. "Can you speak with so much contempt of the daughter of the High Treasurer, the man whom I have so much interest in keeping on good terms with, since he alone can furnish the subsidies necessary to defray the expenses of the war?"

"How much your love for Samuel has increased, Pedro, since you have learnt to admire his daughter!" said Aixa, sarcastically. "What! you talk of money! Well, in exchange for Rachel, I promise that my father shall fill your coffers with marabolins until the defeat of Don Enrique!"

"And will Mahomed also prevent the whole Jewry of Seville from revolting against me?" he asked.

"It is not fear of enemies that prevents you yielding to my wishes," said Aixa, firmly; "you try in vain to deceive me, Don Pedro. You love that girl; well, woe to her."

"But this is going beyond obstinacy and jealousy, Aixa," returned the king; "your passion renders you mad and blind."

"And yours makes you descend almost to insult a woman," she answered. "No, no; I am not blind. I read too plainly in your eyes, in your embarrassment, in your very irritation, that you love Rachel more than you ever loved Maria de Padilla or the poor Aixa. You tremble for her. You entreat and threaten for her by turns. You loved Maria de Padilla with that love which the sun of Andalusia readily kindles in young hearts. Me you loved because it seemed glorious to you to have the daughter of a king for a mistress; but you love the Jewess," added the Morisca furiously, "as one loves but once, with tenderness, with ardor, with constancy. You sacrifice your pride to her, you even sacrifice your passion to her, for you can almost be timid with her. Women have an intuitive knowledge in love; I am sure not to be deceived; the more disinterested your love is, the more real and lasting it will prove. In me you have found a woman who equalled yourself in haughtiness and energy; you are sure to prefer Rachel, a humble girl, whom you raise to your own elevation, and whom you would willingly make a queen. But have a care, Pedro, Aixa stands between you and your wishes; she will not submit to be ignominiously driven away."

"Aixa," said the king, severely, "in my turn I will tell thee to be candid. Acknowledge that thou seekest a pretext to leave the Alcazar, and to take with thee the King of Granada, thy father, since thou knowest me to be vanquished."

"Don Pedro," said the favorite, "I am going to prove your mistake; only let me interrogate that young girl."

"The king, overwhelmed, did not reply."

(To be continued.)

The Hour Circle

A LAUGHABLE FARCE

As a certain learned judge in Mexico, some time since, walked one morning into court, he thought he would examine whether he was in time for business; and, feeling for his repeater, found it was not in his pocket.

"As usual," he said to a friend who accompanied him as he passed through the crowd near the door, "as usual, I have again left my watch at home under my pillow."

He took his seat on the bench, and thought no more of it. The court adjourned, and he returned home. As soon as he was quietly seated in his parlour, he bethought himself of his timepiece, and, turning to his wife, he requested her to send for it to their chamber.

"But my dear judge," said she, "I sent it to you three hours ago."

"Sent it to me, my dear? Certainly not."

"Unquestionably," replied the lady; "and by the person you sent for it."

"The person I sent for it!" echoed the judge.

"Precisely, my dear, the very person you sent for it. You had not left home more than an hour when a well-dressed man knocked at the door and asked to see me. He brought one of the finest turkeys I ever saw; and said that on your way to court you met an Indian with a number of fowls. Having bought this one at a bargain, you had given him a couple of reals to bring it home, with the request that I would have it killed, picked, and put to cool, as you intended to invite your brother judges to a dish of *molle* with you to-morrow. And, 'Oh! by the way, senorita,' said he, 'his excellency the judge requested me to ask you to give yourself the trouble to go to your chamber and take his watch from under the pillow, where he says he left it as usual this morning, and send it to him by me.' And, of course, *me querido*, I did so."

"You did!" said the judge.

"Well," replied his honor, "all I can say to you, my dear, is that you are as great a sinner as the birds in a turkey. You've been robbed, madam; the man was a thief; I never sent for my watch; you've been imposed upon, and, as a necessary consequence, the watch is lost forever."

"The trick was a cunning one; and, after a laugh, and the restoration of the judge's good humor by a good dinner, it was resolved actually to have the turkey for to-morrow's dinner, and his honor's brothers of the bench to enjoy so dear a morsel. Accordingly, after the adjournment of court next day, they all repaired to his dwelling, with appetites sharpened by the expectation of a rare repast. Scarcely had they entered the *sala* and exchanged salutations, when the lady broke forth with congratulations to his honor upon the recovery of his stolen watch!

"How happy am I," exclaimed she, "that the villain was apprehended."

"Apprehended?" said the judge with surprise.

"You are always talking riddles," he went on. "Explain yourself, my dear. I know nothing of thief, watch, conviction."

"It can't be possible that I have been again deceived," quoth the lady; "but this is the story: About one o'clock to-day, a pale and rather interesting young gentleman, dressed in a seedy suit of black, came to the house in great haste—almost out of breath. He said that he was just from court; that he was one of the clerks; that the great villain who had had the audacity to steal your honor's watch had just been arrested; that the evidence was nearly perfect to convict him, and all that was required to complete it was the turkey, which must be brought into court, and for that he had been sent with a porter by your express orders."

"And you gave it to him?"

"Of course I did! Who could have doubted him, or resisted the orders of a judge?"

"Watch and turkey both gone! Pray, madam, what are we to do for our dinner?"

But the lady had taken care of her guests notwithstanding her simplicity, and the party enjoyed both the joke and their viands.

A KEY TO A PERSON'S NAME

By the accompanying table of letters the name of a person or any word may be easily found out in the following manner:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
C	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z			
E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z				
F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z					
G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z						
H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z							
I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z								
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z									
K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z										
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z											
M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z												
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z													
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z														
P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z															
Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z																
R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z																	
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z																		
T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z																			
U	V	W	X	Y	Z																				
V	W	X	Y	Z																					
W	X	Y	Z																						
X	Y	Z																							
Y	Z																								
Z																									

Let the person whose name you wish to know inform you in which of the upright columns the first letter of his name is contained. If it be found in but one column, it is the top letter; if it occurs in more than one column, it is found by adding the alphabetical numbers of the top letters of these columns, and the sum will be the number of the letter sought. By taking one letter at a time in this way the whole number can be ascertained. For example take the word Jane. J is found in two columns commencing with B and H, which are the second and eighth letters down the alphabet; the sum is ten, and the tenth letter down the alphabet is J, the letter sought. A appears in but one column, where it stands at the top. N is seen in the columns headed with B, D and H; these are the second, fourth and eighth letters of the alphabet, which, added, gives the fourteenth, or N, and so on. The use of this table will excite no little curiosity among those unacquainted with the foregoing explanation.

SOMETHING FOR YOUNG MEN

Few things in the lives of young men are so impressive, or so full of valuable suggestions, as their frequent lamentations over lost opportunities for mental or moral culture.

In his autobiography, Sir Walter Scott says: "If it should ever fall to the lot of any youth to peruse this piece, let such a youth remember it is with the deepest regret that I recollect in my manhood the opportunities for learning which I neglected in my youth; that through every part of my literary career I have felt pinched and hampered by my own ignorance, and that I would at this moment give half the reputation I have had the good fortune to acquire, if by doing so I could rest the remaining part upon a sound foundation of learning and science."

Edmund Burke grew wise in this respect while it was not too late to retrieve the most of his errors and losses, for before his youth was entirely past he wrote to a friend:—

"What would I give to have my spirits a little more settled! I am too giddy; this is the bane of my life; it hurries me from my studies to trifles, and I am afraid it will hinder me from knowing anything thoroughly. I have a superficial knowledge of many things, but scarcely the bottom of any."

Washington Irving, when giving counsel to a young friend, exclaimed, in the bitterness of his heart,—"How many an hour of hard labor and

studies have I had to subject myself to, to atone for a slight degree of sloth, for the hours that I suffered society to cheat me out of."

Even Josiah Quincy, the last man in the world that we should have expected of having wasted a moment in his daily life, laments more than once his "neglect of that mental and moral cultivation which he regards as the noblest of human pursuits." On one occasion he says,—"I resolve, therefore, to be more circumspect, to hoard my moments with a more thrifty spirit, to listen to the suggestions of diligence, and so quicken that spirit of intellectual improvement to which I devote my life."

It will do no young man the least harm to ponder well the lesson to be learned from these eloquent confessions.

AN INGENUOUS INSTRUMENT

Droz, a mechanic of Geneva, produced a clock which excelled all others in ingenuity. On it was seated a negro, a shepherd, and a dog. When the clock struck, the shepherd played six times on his flute, and the dog approached and fawned upon him. This wonderful machine was exhibited to the King of Spain, who was greatly delighted with it.

"The gentleness of my dog," said Droz, "is his least merit. If your Majesty touch one of the apples which you see in the shepherd's basket, you will admire the animal's fidelity."

The King took an apple, and the dog flew at his hand, barking so loudly that the King's dog, which was in the room, began to bark also. At this the courtiers, not doubting that it was an affair of witchcraft, hastily left the room, crossing themselves as they departed. Having desired the Minister of Marine (the only one who ventured to remain) to ask the negro what o'clock it was, the Minister did so, but obtained no reply.

Droz then observed that the negro had not yet learned Spanish, upon which the question was repeated in French, when the negro immediately answered him. At this prodigy the firmness of the Minister also forsook him, and he retreated precipitately, declaring that it must be the work of a supernatural being.

LEAP YEAR.

It is remarkable how the ladies keep leap year here, says a New Orleans correspondent. The usual form is gone through with on the streets as well as in the parlor.

On Saturday I attended the matinee at the new Varieties Theatre, and was much amused with the witty freaks of the ladies. Several who had invited gentlemen to accompany them tickets, offered their arm to their company, and seated them in their proper places. The performance over, the lady again offered her arm, and, after a promenade along Canal Street, the usual courtesy would be extended by the lady paying the fare in the street cars.

The other evening, in one of the Baronne Street cars, just about the time there is a great rush and the cars are crowded, an elderly gentleman entered the car. Every seat was occupied, and, as he turned to leave, a lady left her seat, and taking the venerable gentleman by the arm, said, in a low, sweet voice,—"Pray, be seated, sir; take my place."

As he was about to decline, she said,—"No, sir; I insist upon your taking it. This is leap year, you know."

This little action caused many a compliment to pass from the lips of the male passengers.

ANECDOTE OF A DOG.

A narrow log lay as a bridge over a deep ravine. From the opposite ends of the log, at the same moment, there started to cross it a big Newfoundland dog and a little Italian greyhound; of course they met in the middle; of course there was not room for them to pass, neither could they go back. The height was a dangerous one for the greyhound, and to the water at the bottom he was extremely averse. The Newfoundland could have taken the leap in safety, but evidently did not want to. There was a fix! The little dog sat down on his haunches; stuck his nose straight up in the air, and howled! The Newfoundland stood intent, his face solemn with inward workings. Presently he gave a nudge with his nose to the howling greyhound—as if to say, "Be still, youngster, and listen." Then there was a silence and seeming contabulation for a second or two. Immediately the big dog spread his legs wide apart like a Colossus, bestriding the log on its extreme outer edges, and balancing himself carefully. The little dog sprang through the opening like a flash. When they reached the opposite shores the greyhound broke into frantic gambols of delight, and the Newfoundland, after his more sedate fashion, expressed great complacency in his achievement—as he surely had a right to do.

ARRANGEMENT OF FLOWERS.

Flowers may be arranged either according to the harmony or contrast of colors. Red harmonizes with orange, orange with yellow, violet with red, indigo with violet, blue with indigo, and green with blue. Green is the contrast of red, sky-blue to orange, yellow to violet, blue to orange-red, indigo to orange-yellow, and violet to bluish-green. To find the contrast to any flower, cut a small circular piece out of one of its petals, place it upon white paper, look at it steadily with one eye for a few seconds, without letting the eyelids

close, then look from the colored circle to another part of the white paper, when a circle of another color will be apparent. This color is the true contrast or complimentary color. Taste differs as to whether the effect of arranging the flowers according to contrast or complimentary color is more pleasing to the eye than according to harmonies. The former, however, is the most in favor. To carry it out a blue flower should be placed next an orange flower, a yellow near a violet, and a red or a white should have plenty of foliage around it. White contrasts with blue or orange, or still better with red and pink, but not with yellow or violet.

FAMILY COURTESIES.

In the family, the law of pleasing ought to extend from the highest to the lowest. You are bound to please your children, and your children are bound to please each other, and you are bound to please your servants if you expect them to please you. Some men are pleasant in the household and nowhere else. We all know such men. They are good fathers and kind husbands. If you had seen them in their own homes you would have thought they were almost angels; but if you had seen them in the street, in their stores, in the counting-houses, or anywhere else outside of their own homes, you would have thought them almost savage. But the opposite is apt to be the case with others. When among strangers or neighbors they endeavor to act with propriety; but when they get home they say to themselves, "I have played a part long enough, and now I am going to be natural." So they sit down, and are ugly, and snappish, and blunt and disagreeable. They lay aside those little courtesies that make the roughest floor smooth, and make the hardest things like velvet, and that makes life pleasant. They expend all their politeness in places where it will be profitable—where it will bring silver and gold.

THE STORY OF A MAGNIFICENT PAIR OF WHISKERS.

Gentlemen rejoicing in whiskers of the kind which advertising hairdressers term "magnificent," would, it is popularly supposed, as a rule, rather dig than submit to be robbed of a single hair of their cherished adornments. An instance to the contrary, however, occurred a short time since in South London, which exhibits an amount of philosophy on the part of the individual concerned that can scarcely be surpassed. A party of friends were standing at a public-house bar, showing by their merriment that they were, vulgarly speaking, "spreesibly inclined." Whilst so engaged, a of prodigious length and graceful droop, entered the house. The wag of the party, thinking there was a capital opportunity to show off his wit before his friends, began to "chaff" the stranger about his whiskers, ending his badinage with asking him "How much he would take for them?" The stranger replied that he had never had an offer, consequently he could scarcely fix a price. "Will you take five pounds?" said the wag, winking at his companions. The owner of the whiskers at once closed with the offer, but stipulated that the money should be produced. The joker, thinking, of course, that his money was perfectly safe, complied with the requests, and the stranger, inquiring for a pair of scissors, cut off his whiskers, presented them to the astonished jester, and took up the money. The rash speculator, finding that he had been "sold," feebly protested that it was "only in fun," but in vain; his own friends were against him, and upheld the bargain as a fair one. His dignest was not lessened when the stranger coolly added "that he was glad he had found some one to take his whiskers, for he was going on the stage, and did not want them any longer."—*South London Press.*

WHAT JOSH BILLINGS KNOWS ABOUT HOTELS.

Hotels are houses of refuge, the married man's retreat, the bachelor's paradise. Good landlords are like good stepmothers—they know their business and do it. They knew your wife's father when he was living, and your first wife—but they never mention her before your second. Hotels are connected in most minds with hash. Hash is made of cast-off meals, and has done more to nourish the present generation than any other kind of mixed food. A nice little tenderloin steak, a few baked potatoes, a couple of pieces of pie, some doughnuts, a few biscuits, and—hash does very well for breakfast.

Many hotels are kept on the European plan, but the majority of them on none at all. Everybody knows what a hotel room is like—how boiling over with comfort it is, and how it makes people who occupy it think about home. It generally measures about thirteen feet seven inches by nine feet four. There are two pegs to hang clothes on—one broken off and the other pulled out. The bell rope broken off just six inches beyond reach. There are no curtains, for what good could they be. You couldn't see out. The bureau has three legs, and the looking-glass hangs by one pivot. The bed is made of slats and a very thin mattress. You have to go to bed sideways, as when you get in you go down on the slats. A piece of beefsteak on the bars of a grilliron.

Smart boys in Quincy, Ill., cut off rats tails, plant them in flower pots, and sell them to unsophisticated florists as a new species of cactus.