THE THREAD OF LIFE;

OR,

SUNSHINE AND SHADE.

CHAPTER V.

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES.

The Girton governess of these latter days stands on a very different footing indeed in the family from the forty-pound-a-year-and-all-found young person who instructed youth at a final bid for life in the last generation. She ranks, in fact, in the unwritten table of precedence with the tutor who has been a university man; and, as the outward and visible sign of her superior position, she dines with the rest of the household at seven-thirty, instead of taking an early dinner in the school-room with her junior pupils off hashed mutton and rice-pudding at half-past one. Elsie Challoner had been a Girton girl. She was an orphan, left with little in the world but her brains and her good looks to found her fortune upon; and she had wisely invested her whole small capital in getting herself an education which would enable her to earn herself in after-life a moderate livelihood. In the family at Whitestrand, where she had lately come, she lived far more like a friend than a governess; the difference in years between herself and Winifred was not extreme; and the two girls, taking a fancy to one another from the first, became companions at once, so intimate together, that Elsie could hardly with an effort now and again bring herself to exert a little brief authority over the minor details of Winifred's conduct. And, indeed, the modern governess, though still debarred the possession of a heart, is no longer exactly expected to prove herself a moral dragon; she is permitted to recognize the existence of human instincts in the world we inhabit, and not even forbidden to concede at times the abstract possibility that either she or her pupils might conceivably get married to an eligible person, should the eligible person at the right moment chance to present himself with the customary credentials as to position and prospects.

"I wonder, Elsie," Winifred said after lunch, "whether your cousin will really come up this afternoon? Perhaps he won't now, after that dreadful wetting. I daresay, as he only came down in the yawl, he hasn't got another suit of clothes with him. I shouldn't be surprised if he had to go to bed at the inn, as Mr. Relf does, while they dry his things for him by the kitchen fire! Mr. Relf never brings more, they say, than his one blue jersey."

"That's not like Hugh," Elsie answered confidently. "Hugh wouldn't go anywhere, by sea or land, without proper clothes for every possible civilized contingency. He's not a fop, you know—he's a man all over—but he dresses nicely and appropriately always. You should just see him in evening clothes; he's simply beautiful then. They suit him splendidly."

"So I should think, dear," Winifred answered with warmth. "I wonder, Elsie, whether papa and mamma will like your cousin?"

"It's awfully good of you, darling, to think so much of what sort of reception my cousin gets," Elsie replied with a kiss, in perfect innocence. (Winifred blushed faintly.) "But, of course, your papa and mamma are sure to like him. Everybody always does like Hugh. There's something winning about him that insures success. He's a universal favourite, wherever he goes. He's so clever and so nice, and so kind and so sympathetic. I never met anybody else so sympathetic as Hugh. He knows exactly beforehand how one feels about everything, and makes allowances so cordially for all one's little private sentiments. I suppose that's the poetic temperament in him. Poetry must mean, at bottom, I should think, keen insight into the emotions of others."

"But not always power of responding sympathetically to those emotions.—Look, for example, at such a case as Goethe's,' a clear voice said from the other side of the hedge. They were walking along, as they often walked, with arms clasped round one another's waists, just inside the grounds, close to the footpath that led across fields; and only a high fence of privet and dogrose separated their confidences from the ear of the fortuitous public on the adjoining footpath. So Hugh had come up, unawares from behind, and overheard their confidential chit-chat! How far back had he overheard? Elsie wondered to herself. If he had caught it all, she would be so ashamed of herself!

"Hugh!" she cried, running on to the little wicket gate to meet him. I'm so glad you've come. It's delightful to see you.—But oh, you must have thought us two dreadful little sillies.—How much of our conversation did you catch, I wonder?"

"Only the last sentence," Hugh answered lightly, taking both her hands in his and kissing her a quiet cousinly kiss on her smooth broad forehead. "Just that about poetry meaning keen insight into the emotions of others; so, if you were saying any ill about me, my child, or bearing false witness against your neighbour, you may rest assured as anyrate that I didn't hear it.—Good-morning, Miss Meysey. I'm recovered, you see: dried and clothed and in my right mind—at least, I hope so. I trust the hat is the same also?"

Winifred held out a timid small hand. "It's all right, thank you," she said, with a sudden flush; "but I shall never, never wear it again, for all that. I couldn't bear to. I don't think you ought to have risked your life for so very little."

"A life's nothing where a lady's concerned," Hugh answered airily with a mock bow. "But indeed you give me credit for too much gallantry. My life was not in question at all; I only risked a delightful bath, which was somewhat impeded by an unnecessarily heavy and awkward bathing dress.—What a sweet place this is, Elsie; so flowery and bowery, when you get inside it. The little lane with the roses overhead seems created after designs by Birket Foster. From outside, I confess, to a casual observer the first glimpse of East Anglian scenery is by no means reassuring."

They strolled up slowly together to the Hall door, where the senior branches were seated on the lawn, under the shade of the one big spreading lime-tree, enjoying the delicious coolness of the breeze as it blew in fresh from the open ocean. Elsie wondered how Hugh and the Squire would get on together; but her wonder indeed was little needed; for Hugh, as she had said, always got on admirably with everybody everywhere. He had a way of attacking people instinctively on their strong point; and in ten minutes, he and the Squire were fast friends, united by firm ties of common loves and common animosities. They were both Oxford men—at whatever yawning interval of time that friendly link forms always a solid bond of union between youth and age; and both had been at the same college, Oriel. "I daresay you know my old rooms," the Squire observed with a meditative sigh. "They looked out over Fellows' Quad, and had a rhyming Latin haxameter on a pane of stained glass in one of the bay windows.'

"I know them well," Hugh answered, with a rising smile of genuine pleasure—for he loved Oxford with a love passing the love of her ordinary children. "A friend of mine had them in my time. And I remember the line: 'Oxoniam quare venisti præmeditari.' An excellent leonine as leonines go, though limp in its quantity.—Do you know, I fell in love with that pane so greatly, that I had a wire framework made to put over it, for fear some fellows should smash it some night, flinging about oranges at a noisy wine-party."

From Oxford, they soon got off upon Suffolk, and the encroachment of the sea, and the blown sands; and then the Squire insisted upon taking Hugh for a *tour du propriétaire* round the whole estate, with running comments upon the wasting of the foreshore and the abominable remissness of the Board of Admiralty in not erecting proper groynes to protect the interests of coast-wise proprietors. Hugh listened to it all with his grave face of profound sympathy and lively interest, putting in from time to time an acquiescent remark confirmatory of the wickedness of government officials in general, and of the delinquent Board of Admiralty in particular.

"Æolian sands!" he said once, with a lingering cadence, rolling the words on his tongue, as the Squire paused by the big poplar of the morning's adventure to point him out the blown dunes on the opposite shore—"Æolian sands! Is that what they call them? How very poetical! What a lovely word to put in a triolet! Æolian—just the very thing of all others to go on all-fours with an adjective like Tmolian!—So it swallowed up forty acres of prime salt-marsh pasture—did it, really? That must have been a very serious loss indeed. Forty acres of prime salt marsh! I suppose it was the sort of land covered with tall, rank, reedy grasses, where you feed those magnificent, rough-coated, long-horned, Highland-looking cattle we saw this morning! Splendid beasts: most picturesque and regal. "Bulls that walk the pastures in kingly-flashing coats," George Meredith would call them. We passed a lot of them as we cruised up stream to-day to Whitestrand.—And the sand has absolutely overwhelmed and wasted it all? Dear me! dear me! What a terrible calamity! It was the Admiralty's fault! Might make a capital article out of that to bully the government in the *Morning Telegram*.

"If you did, my dear sir," the Squire said warmly with an appreciative nod, "you'd earn the deepest gratitude of every owner of property in the county of Suffolk, and indeed along the whole neglected East Coast.—The way we've been treated and abused, I assure you, has been just scandalous. Governments, buff or blue, have all alike behaved to us with incredible levity. When the present disgraceful administration, for example, came into power'——

Hugh never heard the remainder of that impassioned harangue, long since delivered with profound gusto on a dozen distinct election platforms. He was dimly aware of the Squire's voice, pouring forth denunciation of the powers that be in strident tones and measured sentences; but he didn't listen; his soul was occupied in two other far more congenial pursuits: one of them, watching Elsie and Winifred with Mrs. Meysey; the other, trying to find a practicable use for Æolian sands in connection with his latest projected heroic poem on the Burial of Alaric. Æolian; dashes: Tmolian; abashes, not a bad substratum, that, he flattered himself, for the thunderous lilt of his opening stanza.

It was not till the close of the afternoon, however, that he could snatch a few seconds alone with Elsie. They wandered off by themselves then, near the water's edge, among the thick shrubbery; and Hugh, sitting down in a retired spot under the lee of a sheltering group of guelder-roses, took his pretty cousin's hands for a moment in his own, and looking down into her great dark eyes with a fond look, cried laughingly: "O Elsie, Elsie, this is just what I've been longing for all day long. I thought I should never manage to get away from that amiable old bore, with his encroachments and his mandamuses, and his groynes and his interlocutors. As far as I could understand him, he wants to get the Board of Admiralty, or the Court of Chancery, or somebody else high up in station, to issue instructions to the east wind not to blow Æolian sands in future over his sacred property. It's too grotesque; quite, quite too laughable. He's trying to bring an action for trespass against the German Ocean.

Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins? will ye chasten the high sea with rods?
Will ye take her to chain her with chains who is older than all ye gods?

Or will ye get an injunction against her in due form stamped paper from the Lord Chief-justice of England? Canute tried it on, and found it a failure. And all the time, while the good old soul was moaning and droning about his drowned land, there was I, just sighing and groaning to get away to a convenient corner with whom I had urgent private affairs to settle.—My own dear Elsie, Suffolk agrees with you. You're looking this moment simply charming."

"It's your own fault, Hugh," Elsie answered with a blush, never heeding overtly his last strictly personal observation. "You shouldn't make yourself so universally delightful. I'm sure I thought, by the way you talked with him, you were absolutely absorbed in the wasting of the cliff, and personally affronted by the aggressive east wind. I was just beginning to get quite jealous of the encroachments—For you know Hugh, it's such a real pleasure to me always to see you."

She spoke tenderly, with the innocent openness of old acquaintance; and Hugh still holding her hand in his own, leaned forward with admiration in his sad dark eyes, and put out his face close to hers, as he had always done since they were children together. "One kiss, Elsie," he said persuasively.—"Quick, my child; we may have no other chance. Those dreadful old bores will stick to us like leeches. "Gather ye roses while you may: Old Time is still a-flying.'"

Elsie drew back her face half in alarm. "No, no, Hugh," she cried, struggling with him for a second. "We're both growing too old for such nonsense now. Remember, we've ceased long ago to be children."

"But as a cousin, Elsie," Hugh said with a wistful look in his eyes that belied his words.

Elsie preferred in her own heart to be kissed by Hugh on different grounds; but she did not say so. She held up her face, however, with a rather bad grace, and Hugh pressed it to his own tenderly. "That's paradise, my dear," he murmured low, looking deep into her beautiful liquid eyes.

"O son of my uncle, that was paradise indeed; but that was not like a cousin," she answered with a faint attempt to echo his playfulness, as she withdrew, blushing.

Hugh laughed, and glanced idly round him with a merry look at the dancing water. "You may call it what you like," he whispered with a deep gaze into her big dark pupils. "I don't care in what capacity on earth you consider yourself kissed, so long as you still permit me to kiss you."

For ten minutes they sat there talking—saying those thousand-and-one sweet empty things that young people say to one another under such circumstances—have not we all been young, and do not we all well know them?—and then Elsie rose with a sigh of regret. "I think," she said, "we mustn't stop here alone any longer; perhaps Mrs. Meysey wouldn't like it."

"Oh, bother Mrs. Meysey!" Hugh cried, with an angry sideward toss of his head. "These old people are a terrible nuisance in the world. I wish we could get a law passed by a triumphant majority that at forty everybody was to be throttled, or at least transported. There'd be some hope of a little peace and enjoyment in the world then."

"Oh, but, Hugh, Mrs. Meysey's just kindness itself, and I know she'll let you come and see me ever so often. She said at lunch I might go out on the water or anywhere I liked, whenever I chose, any time with my cousin."

"A very sensible, reasonable, intelligent old lady," Hugh answered approvingly, with a mollified nod. "I wish they were all as wise in their generation. The profession of chaperon, like most others, has been overdone, and would be all the better now for a short turn of judicious thinning—. But Elsie, you've told them I was a cousin, I see. That's quite right. Have you explained to them in detail the precise remoteness of our actual relationship?'

Elsie's lips quivered visibly. "No, Hugh," she answered. "But why? Does it matter?"

"Not at all—not at all. Very much the contrary. I'm glad you didn't. It's better so. If I were you, my child, I think I'd allow them to believe, in a quiet sort of way—unless, of course, they ask you point-blank, that you and I are first-cousins. It facilitates social intercourse considerably. Cousinhood's such a jolly indefinite thing, one may as well enjoy as long as possible the full benefit of its charming vagueness."

"But Hugh, is it right? Do you think I ought to?—I mean, oughtn't I to let them know at once, just for that very reason, how slight the relationship really is between us?"

"The relationship is *not* slight," Hugh answered with warmth, darting an eloquent glance deep down into her eyes. "The relationship's a great deal closer, indeed, than if it were a much nearer one.—That may be paradox, but it's none the less true, for all that.—Still, it's no use arguing a point of casuistry with a real live Girton girl. You know as much about ethics as I do, and great deal more into the bargain. Only cousin's a cousin anyhow; and I for my part wouldn't go out of my way to descend gratuitously into minute genealogical particulars of once, twice, thrice, or ten times removed, out of pure puritanism. These questions of pedigree are always tedious. What subsists all through is the individual fact that I'm Hugh and you're Elsie, and that I love you dearly—of course with a purely cousinly degree of devotion."

"Hugh, you needn't always flourish that limitation in my face, like a broomstick."

"Caution, my dear child—mere ingrained caution—the solitary resource of poverty and wisdom. What's the good of loving you dearly on any other grounds, I should like to know, as long as poetry, divine poetry, remains a perfect drug in the publishing market? A man and a girl can't live on bread and cheese and the domestic offections, can they, Elsie? Very well, then, for the present we are both free. If ever circumstances should turn out differently——" The remainder of that sentence assumed a form inexpressible by the resources of printer's ink, even with the aid of a phonetic spelling.

When they turned aside from the guelderroses at last with crimson faces, they strolled side by side up to the house once more, talking about the weather or some equally commonplace and uninteresting subject, and joined the Meyseys under the big tree. The Squire had disappeared, and Winifred came out to meet them on the path, "Mama says, Mr. Massinger," she began timidly "we're going to a little picnic all by ourselves on the river to-morrow—up among the sandhills papa was showing you. They're a delicious place to picnic in, the sandhills; and mamma thinks perhaps you wouldn't mind coming to join us, and bringing your friend, the artist, with you. But I daresay you won't care to come: there'll be only ourselves—just a family party."

"My tastes are catholic," Hugh answered jauntily. "I love all innocent amusements—and most wicked ones. There's nothing on earth I should enjoy as much as a picnic in the sandhills.—You'll be coming too, of course, won't you, Elsie?—Very, well, then. I'll bring Relf, and the *Mud-Turtle* to boot. I know he wants to go mud-painting himself. He may as well take us all up in a body."

"We shall do nothing, you know, Winifred cried apologetically. "We shall only just sit on the sandhills and talk, or pick yellow horned-poppies, and throw stones into the sea, and behave ourselves generally like a pack of idlers."

"That'll exactly suit me," Hugh replied with a smile. "My most marked characteristics are indolence and the practice of the Christian virtues. I hate the idea that when people invite their friends to a feast they're bound to do something or other definite to amuse them. It's an insult to one's intelligence; it's degrading one to the level of innocent childhood, which has to be kept engaged with Blindman's Buff and an unlimited supply of Everton toffee, for fear it should bore itself with its own inanity. On that ground, I consider music and games at suburban parties the resource of incompetence. Sensible people find enough to amuse them in one another's society, without playing dumb crambo or asking riddles. Relf and I will find more than enough, I'm sure, to-morrow in yours and Elsie's."

He shook hands with them all round and raised his hat in farewell with that inimitable grace which was Hugh Massinger's peculiar property. When he left the Hall that afternoon, he left four separate conquests behind him. The Squire thought this London newspaper fellow was a most sensible, right-minded, intelligent young man, with a head on his shoulders, and a complete comprehension of the rights and wrongs of the intricate riparian proprietor's question. Mrs. Meysey thought Elsie's cousin was most polite and attentive, as well as an extremely high-principled and excellent person. (Ladies of a certain age are always strong on the matter of principles, which they discuss as though they were a definitely measurable quantity, like money or weight or degrees Fahrenheit.) Winifred thought Mr. Massinger was a born poet, and oh, so nice and kind and appreciative. Elsie thought dear darling Hugh was just the same, sweet, sympathetic old friend and ally and comforter as ever. And they all four united in thinking he was very handsome, very clever, very brilliant, and very delightful.

As for Hugh, he thought to himself, as he sauntered back by the rose-bordered lane to the village inn, that the Squire was a most portentous and heavy old nuisance; that Mrs. Wyville Meysey was a comic old creature; that Elsie was really a most charming girl; and that Winifred, in spite of her bread-and-butter blushes, wasn't half bad, after all—for an heiress.

The heiress is apt to be plain and forbidding. She is not fair to outward view, as many maidens be. Her beauty has solid, not to say strictly metallic qualities, and resides principally in a safe at her banker's. To have tracked down an heiress who was also pretty was indeed, Hugh felt, a valuable discovery.

When he reached the inn, he found Warren Relf just returned from a sketching expedition up the tidal flats. "Well, Relf," he cried, "you see me triumphant. I've been reconnoitring Miss Meysey's outposts, with an ultimate view to possible siege operations. To judge by the first results of my reconnaissance, she seems a very decent sort of little girl in her own way. If sonnets will carry her by storm I don't mind discharging a few cartloads of them from a hundred-ton-gun point-blank at her outworks. Most of them can be used again, of course, in case of need, in another campaign, if occasion offers."

"And Miss Challoner?" Relf suggested, with some reproof in his tone. "Was she there too? Have you seen her also?"

"Yes, Elsie was there,' the poet answered languidly, as he rang the bell for a glass of sodawater. "Elsie was there, looking as charming and as piquante and as pretty as ever; and, by Jove! she's the cleverest and brightest and most amusing girl I ever met anywhere up and down in England. Though she's my own cousin, and its me that says it, as oughtn't to says it, as oughtn't to say it, she's a credit to the family. I like Elsie. At times, I've almost half a mind, upon my soul, to fling prudence to the winds, and ask her to come and accept a share of my poor crust in my humble garret.—But it won't do, you know—it won't do. *Sine Cerere et Baccho, friget Venus.* Either I must make a fortune at a stroke, or I must marry a girl with a fortune ready made to my hand already. Love in a cottage is all very well in its way, no doubt, with roses and eglantine—whatever eglantine may be—climbing round the windows; but love in a hovel—which is the plain prose of it in these hard times—can't be considered either pretty or poetical. Unless some Columbus of a critic, cruising through reams of minor verse, discovers my priceless worth some day, and divulges me to the world, there's no chance of my ever being able to afford anything so good and sweet as Elsie.—But the other one's a nice small girl of her sort too. I think for my part I shall alter and amend those quaint little verses of Blackie's a bit—make 'em run:

I can like a hundred women;
I can love a score;
Only with a heart's devotion
Worship three or four."

Relf laughed merrily in spite of himself.

Massinger went on musing in an undertone; "Not that I like the first and third lines as they stand, at all; a careful versifier would have insisted upon rhyming them. I should have made "devotion" chime in with "ocean" or "lotion," or "Goshen," or "emotion," or something of that sort, to polish it up a bit. There's very good business to be got out of "emotion," if you work it properly; but "ocean" comes in handy, too, down here at Whitestrand. I'll dress it up into a bit of verse this evening, I think, for Elsie or the other girl.—Winifred's her Christian name. Hard case, Winifred. "Been afraid" is only worthy of Browning, who'd perpetrate anything in the way of a rhyme to save himself trouble. Has a false Ingoldsby gallop of verse about it that I don't quite like. Winnie's comparatively easy, of course: you've got "skinny" and "finny," and "Minnie" and "spinney." But Winifred's a very hard case indeed. "Winnie" and "guinea" are good enough rhymes; but not quite new: they've been virtually done before by Rossetti, you know. But I doubt if I could even consent to make love to a girl whose name's so utterly and atrociously unmanageable as plain Winifred.—Now, Mary—there's a name for you, if you like; with 'fairy' and 'airy,' and 'chary' and 'vagary,' and all sorts of other jolly old-world rhymes to go with it. Or if you want to be rural, you can bring in 'dairy'—do the pretty milkmaid business to perfection. But 'Winifred'—' bin afraid'—the thing's impossible. It compells you to murder the English language. I wouldn't demean myself—or I think it ought to be by rights demean myself—by writing verses to her with such a name as that. I shall send them to Elsie, who, after all, deserves them more, and will be flattered with the attention into the bargain.

At ten o'clock he came out once more from his own room to the little parlor, where Warren Relf was seated "cooking" a sky in one of his hasty seaside sketches. He had an envelope in his hand and a hat on his head. "Where are you off?" Relf asked carelessly.

"On, just to the post," Hugh Massinger answered with a gay nod. "I've finished my new batch of verses on the ocean—emotion—potion—devotion theme, and I'm sending them off, all hot from the oven, to my cousin Elsie.—They're not bad in their way. I like them myself. I shall print them, I think, in next week's *Athenæum*."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Czar of Russia.

Stung by the taunts of his cowardice, when he made a visit to Moscow, the Czar insisted upon walking alone through a crowd of twenty or thirty thousand people, without the slightest protection but his own sword. The walls of the city had two nights before been mysteriously decorated with posters announcing that the end of Alexander's reign had come; that he had been tried and found wanting, that the "committee" had declared his death for refusing to give the people a constitutional government.

When the morning of the day on which the Czar's death was to occur arrived, he announced his intention of attending mass at the Church of the Annunciation, within the walls of the Kremlin, and a quarter of a mile or so from the palace. The Czarina and the other members of his family implored him to take no such risk; they begged him to have mass sung in the chapel of the palace, but he declined, and even ordered that the police guard should be withdrawn. He said that if his time to die had come he was ready, that he would not die like a coward in seclusion, but he would die like a soldier with his uniform on and his sword in his hand, in the presence of his people; and so he left the palace alone, clad in the uniform of a field marshall, resplendent with gold and silver lace, and walked across the parade ground to the church.

The news of his rashness spread quickly among the people, who were naturally on the *qui vive*, owing to the mysterious proclamation of the Nihilists, and before the mass was over the area within the Kremlin walls was crowded with all sorts and conditions of men, twenty or thirty thousand in number. After mass was sung, and he had committed his soul to God, the Czar, with his gloves in his hand, left the church and entered the throng, which opened to make passage for him, but one so narrow that he could touch the bodies of those who stood on either hand. No bomb was required on such an occasion; a pistol, or even a knife, would have done the business, but with his head erect, and bowing to those who had saluted him, the Emperor walked the entire distance. The crowd were silent and almost breathless. Every man present expected something would occur, but the only break in the Czar's walk that morning was when he reached the steps of the palace, stopped, turned his face to the people and spoke to them.

He said that he had been told that he should have trouble if he came to Moscow; that since he had arrived he had been warned by mysterious enemies, whose motive he could not understand, that the present day was to be his last. He had therefore done as all men should do who expected danger—gone to church to ask forgiveness for his sins, and protection from on high. This protection was not denied him. His body, like his soul, was in the hands of God, and man had no power to injure him without the Divine decree. He therefore feared nothing, and believed that as long as he governed the Empire with wisdom he should be allowed to live. Then, thanking the people with hearty words for their loyalty, he bowed and entered the palace.

There had been silence till then, but as the Czar disappeared the crowd broke into a cheer that almost reached the sky.

Blood Letting in Persia.

In Persia blood letting is the same panacea for well-nigh all fleshly ills to-day that it was with our ancestors in the days of bluff King Hal. In the spring every Persian hies him to the barber surgeon to have that professional phlebotomist relieve him of, say, half a pint of blood. One sunny March morning I sat upon the bala Khana of a village chapa house and watched the barber bleed a goodly share of the whole male population. With his arms bared to the elbows, a bunch of raw cotton in lieu of lint beneath his arm, and his keen-edged razor inserted beneath his cap, the travelling tonsorial artist took up his position on the bank of the irrigating ditch that ran through the village of Lasgird. Candidates for his services soon began crowding about him. Each sturdy ryot bared his right arm to the shoulder, and got one of his neighbours to bind a handkerchief tightly just above the elbow. He then presented himself to the barber. The tonsorial artist pressed out with his thumb and forefinger the small vein he wished to slit, and with the air of a man who knows his profession and its importance, deftly inserted the point of his razor. The blood spurted out in a tiny stream; villagers squatted down on their haunches and watched it bleed, occasionally working the elbow joint to stimulate the flow. Half a pint is considered about the correct quantity for an adult to lose at one bleeding; the barber then completes his services by binding on a small wad of cotton. Many prefer being bled in the roof of the mouth, instead of in the arm. I observed that these were old men mostly, and judged them to be knowing customers, who had wise theories of their own as to why the mouth bleeding was preferable to the others. I have seen as many as thirty or forty of the Persian barber's patients squatting in a low row on the bank of a stream or ditch, each one letting the little stream of blood from arm or mouth spurt into the water.

Pain Cannot Stay

Where Polson's Nervoline is used. Composed of the most powerful pain subduing remedies known, Nerviline cannot fail to give prompt relief in rheumatism, neuralgia, cramps, pain in the back and side, and the host of painful affections, internal and external, arising from inflammatory action. A 10 cent sample bottle of Nerviline will give sufficient proof of its superiority over every known remedy. Try Nerviline. Large bottles 25 cents; trial bottles only 10 cents.

A Mere Misconception.

When Lord Wolseley said their was nothing to prevent 100,000 men, well handled, getting possession of England, he evidently overlooked the home forces. According to a recent return Great Britain has 360,000 soldiers, consisting of volunteers, militia and yeomanry. She has also the regular army reserve of 50,000 men. Surely 400,000 men, actuated by patriotism, should be able to hold their own against an invading force of one-fourth of their number.

What Ails You?

Do you have obstruction of the nasal passages, discharges from head and throat, sometimes profuse, acrid and watery, at others, thick, tenacious, mucous, purulent, bloody, putrid and offensive; dull, heavy headache most of the time, with occasional "splitting headaches"; are your eyes weak, watery, or inflamed; is there ringing in the ears, with more or less deafness; do you have to hack, cough and gag, in your efforts to clear your throat in the morning; do you expectorate offensive matter, scabs from ulcers, perhaps tinged with blood; is your voice changed and is there a "nasal twang" to it; is your breath offensive; are your senses of taste and smell impaired? If you have all or any considerable number of these symptoms, you are suffering from that most common and dangerous of maladies—chronic nasal catarrh. The more complicated your disease has become, the greater the number and diversity of symptoms. No matter what stage it has reached, Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy, which is sold by druggists at only 50 cents, will cure it. The manufacturers of this wonderful remedy offer, in good faith, $500 for a case of this disease which they cannot cure.

Mosery follows the spendthrift, but dwells with the miser.

Detectives Wanted,

to ferret out and discover, if they can, a single case where Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery has been used for torpid liver, indigestion, impure blood, or consumption in its early stages, without giving immediate and permanent relief; provided, of course, that the directions have been reasonably well followed.

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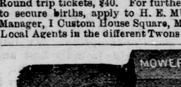

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