

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

the donor's face. Words passed, ending in a challenge. One of them left and went to buy a pair of pistols, and then hurried to say farewell to a lady friend before making his way to the selected battle ground. While doing so a sneak thief penetrated to the room and was about to make away with the gentleman's overcoat, which hung against the wall. At that precise moment the woman opened the door, perceived the robber and gave the alarm, whereupon the robber, with one of the pistols in question, fired upon her, and she fell fatally wounded. The firearm, recently discharged and still smoking, was found opposite her. No one had seen the thief enter or go out, though the shot had been heard. The gunsmith who had sold the pistols fully identified them, and said that the purchaser had asked him to load them carefully on buying them, and it was only after the greatest difficulty that the unfortunate victim of circumstantial evidence was enabled, if not exactly to prove his innocence, at least to cause sufficient doubt in the minds of the jury to justify a verdict of what the Scotch would call "not proven."

WORKING ON THEIR FEELINGS.—An old fellow, who gave his name as Charles H. Slosson, was called up in Judge Wright's court on the charge of drunkenness. He was a remarkably seedy-looking specimen, arrayed in a dirty check shirt and a pair of loose, baggy trousers, which were prevented from falling off by a leather strap knotted about his waist. He was shivering and trembling from the effects of a debauch, and hardly had the strength to stand upright. When the judge asked him if he had anything to say, he rose up in a sort of disjointed way and demanded a jury-trial, which was granted, and when his turn came he advanced and began:—"Gentlemen of the jury, I stand here to-day less a defender of my own personal debasement than an example of human depravity, which, like a beacon light, should warn you from the rugged rocks of intemperance. A man in my condition is like a rude signpost I once saw in Tennessee, which pointed up a road over which the green grass was beginning to wave. On the sign was the inscription 'Small-pox,' and the index finger of a hand pointing westward. If any of you in travelling along a highway saw such a sign as that, you would pause upon the brink of deadly danger, and turn backward (sensation). In me you behold such a sign; and if by looking upon me any one of you can be turned back from destruction, I shall think that God in his infinite mercy has allowed

me to fill a sphere of usefulness which shall enable me to bear with fortitude the imputation constantly hurled upon me by my own conscience, that I have lived in vain. Gentlemen of the jury, as you peruse the pages of the poets you will see how they have deified the wine-cup. They have wreathed it with the flowers of fancy, surrounded it with the halo of song, and peopled its bloody depths with the creatures of their own bright imaginations, until one might almost believe it to be the well-spring of human happiness, when bitter experience tells us in very different language that it is the fountain-head of misery, the abode of the demon that destroys our very lives. There is something which comes up in the fumes of the cup that fools call inspiration, but it is a cunning reptile, which, crawling up from the dregs of the grape, enters the window of the brain, and steals away, like a thief in the night, with our reason fast in its embrace. There is a hand in the wine-cup which, at any moment, may put forth its felon grip upon your throats and strangle you as a strong man might a babe. Gentlemen of the jury, I have not long to stay. Two mighty miners are delving on this lode—Time and Death. They are daily at their posts, working together side by side as one eternal shift, clearing away the rubbish of waste cork and pushing along the ledge. Before long I shall be gathered into the vast laboratory of Death, a piece of useless porphyry, to be cast into the waste dumps of hell." Here he pulled from his pocket a red handkerchief and began to sob. The old miners and the jury, moved by his forcible simile, broke forth into a simultaneous sob, in which the court, spectators, and prosecuting attorney joined. The jury were obliged to find him guilty, but recommended him to the mercy of the court. He was accordingly fined five dollars, which the jury paid on the spot, and the old man slid out of the door with the remark, "I knew I'd ketch 'em. Blast my buttons, didn't I work up the briny, though, didn't I!" A subsequent investigation led to the discovery that the bummer was an ex-actor from Frisco.—*Virginia City Chronicle.*