

WATER-CRESS TRAGEDY.

here to look at Signor Vanucci's mosaic, that every step would be the death of me. Look here! I tell you what I tell every doctor I see. I'll give twenty-five thousand francs to the man who will rid me of this...

But there is nothing perfect. That road from Naples to Bari had really seemed strewn with flowers, as all the way back, Guido's fancy painted for him the first time...

"Hold up, signor," said Vanucci, roughly but cheerfully. "Love, smoke and a cough are hard to hide. Irene, give Signor Merrick a dose of wine, and me, one of your empty casks that make a noise. What! Guido Fioriani—back again? Take a dose yourself. And to whose health shall I drink? To Captain Fioriani? Or to Fioriani, primo tenore of San Carlo? Or to the great poet Fioriani? It'll be something great, to be sure, if I said, with what seemed rather an overdose of affected blundering, 'Irene, the real thing.'"

"A doctor! Ah! And a young doctor! Then maybe you have heard something new," he said in the ghost of a voice which nobody could interpret without the fear of breaking it to pieces altogether. "I am an Englishman; my name is Merrick—Albert Merrick. I am a rich man. I have seven thousand pounds a year. I'm rich, and I'm a doctor. And why? All because of an obstinate cold. Yes, you may well look at me. Though I say it that shouldn't, I don't believe there ever was a case like mine. I've baffled every doctor for years. I've consulted every doctor, famous or not famous, in London, Paris, Vienna, New York—everywhere. And they're humbly, one and all. Consumption, indeed! I've tried Algeria, Madeira, South Africa, Davos—places that cure consumption. So mine can't be consumption, or else it would have been cured long and ago. I've been advised to try the air of the Adriatic, and upon my soul I believe I am better. It's gasped, with a sort of sob, 'Irene. Better—but you see I want to get well. It's really important that I should get well. You look too young to be rich, so you don't know what it means to have a lot of poor relations, a lot of wretched, waiting for your shoes. It's important I should live to disappoint 'em, every one. I want to marry and have a family of my own. I don't want to feel, when I'm coming

could outweigh a solid lump of lire every year. However, the rough salutation brought him back to the life that had to be lived with or without Irene; and he found himself alone in the traitoria but for one man apparently a few years his senior, with whose face, though he could not recall it, he did not feel wholly unfamiliar. It was not, however, a face that was easily forgotten—not handsome, by any means, but while grave and thoughtful, amazingly keen, with brilliant black eyes which seemed to be everywhere at once, in an anything but comfortable manner for any duster or for anybody who had anything to hide. And there was this peculiarly about the whole face, that these same eyes, though so full of light and movement, had not the slightest smile in them, even though the lips and the voice expressed easy good nature; their touch of wildness, in conjunction with otherwise homely and commonplace features, gave them the odd effect of belonging to some other man.

"What!" he went on, with a light laugh at Guido's evident want of recognition. "Don't you remember Saverio Calò?" "Cappelli!" exclaimed Guido. "Why, to think that you should remember me after all these years! But I thought you'd left Bari for good—" "For everybody's good, I hope. And how have things been going without me? Not very well, I should say, if you are a specialist. You look as if there'd been a dozen indigestions in that ragout."

"I have not been Bari three hours, after being away three years," said Guido bitterly—in anything but the tone in which one greets an old friend. "If that isn't a coincidence! why, I've been away six years and back six hours. And what have you been doing all this while? Yes, I've been faithful to my first love, who'll be my last—science! Here's her health, in what's left in your bottle. I fell in love with her, if you remember, that day when, as high as this table, we saw that Dulcamara fellow at the fair. Do you remember how I used to operate upon every creature that came in my way, even down to an amateur dog of the kind leg of my grandfather's favorite ambaiah? Well, I've gone through the whole thing since then; I've walked the hospitals in Paris, and I'm now full-blown into doctor of medicine. No! I don't think of practicing in Bari. A physician with a French degree must waste himself on the Adriatic. Perhaps Naples, perhaps Florence, perhaps Rome. I'm ambitious, my dear friend. When you get ideas; I must try them on all sorts of kinds of men. I may even go back to Paris—no much chance, perhaps, where good physicians are as common as blackberries; but think of the cases one sees and studies—the number, the variety! If I had but ten thousand francs I'd go back to Paris, and never leave it more. Waiter, bring me a bottle of science, my dear friend. The very best, my friend is from Naples, where they know. And one can't have less than a ragout when one thinks of a hundred and seventy thousand lire—a hundred and seventy thousand lire a year! 'Tis true they're another man's, as yet; but what will be, will be—and who knows?"

The close, ill-favored air of the inner room of the traitoria was not in itself provocative of appetite; but even had Guido brought any hunger with him, it would have vanished before words which had already conveyed a dreadful thought into his mind. Why should Signor Vanucci be taking no interest in another man's money? Why had that other man, such a creature could be called a man—been so ostentatiously left alone with Irene? It was surely not to examine mosaics that so feeble a wretch had climbed so many stairs, and not, as was pretty evident, for the first time.

"I don't know how to make sure of things, he had no time to lose. 'Sir,' said he. 'I do not yet possess a hundred and seventy thousand lire a year, which, indeed, is a great deal too much for anybody. But I have an honorable profession, which may lead a man anywhere. I have a fair measure of talent; I have not the worst characters; I have youth, strength and ambition; and I love Irene more deeply and faithfully than ever was woman loved before. I want nothing with her but herself, and that she, God bless her, is willing to give me; and so—'

"Eh? what?" asked Vanucci, holding a huge lump of ragout suspended in mid-air, with surprise. "You're after Irene too? Ah! I remember now. Yes, of course, you used to write her sonnets when she was a little girl. I know I used to feel just like that, often and often, when I was your age. But it doesn't last, more's the pity. How many pretty girls have you said the same things to in Naples, eh? No need to blush; if you do that, you'll never make a lawyer. I'm glad you've a kindness for my girl; you'll help us with a better will. You see, things stand thuswise. Business is bad, very bad. I don't know how it is; but though I take more time over my work than any other artist in the trade, and never set to work without long or thought than anybody else would want to turn out a bushel of rubbish, the perverted taste of the day is against me. Here sit I, Fabio Vanucci, starving on turnip-tops and vinegar, while even a dolt like Reggini, who'll think nothing of scrambling through in a week what would take me a year to put my mind upon, is feasting on oysters and champagne. As if genius, which has to wait for inspiration, could be expected to come at a 'pat,' like Beppo there—no, Beppo; it's 'pat' that's wanted, it's inspiration; but, as you've come instead, may bring another flask; and better than your last, this time. So, thus it stands. How can things be settled so, that if a man marries and dies, his widow may be his heir?"

"No!" exclaimed Guido, starting from his chair. "It is impossible—it is horrible! Irene—the wife of—"

"Per Bacco! If it isn't Guido Fioriani!" Guido started at a smart slap upon the shoulder, as if he were suddenly roused from a nightmare. And, indeed, it was really little less. For he had been sitting in a daze, blind to the bustling departure of Vanucci, and to all save the ghastly vision of his Irene standing before the altar with such a bridegroom. Fool that he had been, to think that a woman could be won by faith and constancy,—that the love of a life

NOT GENERALLY KNOWN. Bits of Information Which Nearly All of us Have Forgotten. Each time we reach the end of December says Chambers's Journal, we should think with satisfaction that we have got over the most dangerous month, since in this country more deaths are said to occur in December than at any other time of the year. A subject for serious reflection is the thirty-five millions of people die every year—few of these from old age. In a doctor's opinion, nearly as many people shorten their career by over-eating as from excessive drinking; while in England alone three hundred persons are annually cut off through accidental poisoning.

It seems that we have a choice of two hundred and seventy religions in the United Kingdom; and our taste for sensational novels is shown when thirty per cent. of books published belong to that class. Some of the best steel pens of the three and a half millions said to be daily used all over the world are wielded by the fictionists.

In this country, it appears, we have one horse for every twelve persons, and only an average of four hours of daily sunshine in which to ride or walk. A celebrated aeronaut asserts, after his investigation, that the ninth day of the month is the most rainy of the whole twenty-eight, and four o'clock in the afternoon the rainiest hour of the day.

It may not be generally known that four men in every six use tobacco; yet a medical man in Vienna asserts that diphtheria is thrice as prevalent amongst smokers as those who deny themselves the luxury of the weed. We are told that children's hair grows more quickly than that of adults. Scientists say that light-haired people are longer lived than their brethren with dark locks, which is not so consoling to the latter, since more than half of the inhabitants of this country have dark-brown hair.

As a rule women require one hour of sleep more than men. Few of the latter reach the age of fifty; that of the former, but afterwards the sterner sex has the best of it. It has also been found that single women live longer than single men, while married women on an average live two years longer than single ones. A woman's chance of getting married is calculated to be only two per cent. As there are still more men than women in the United States, more of the fair sex should emigrate; as it is, four women to every three men. There is said to be only one sudden death amongst women to eight amongst men. A medical man tells us that the habit among women of biting the thread when sewing is the chief cause of blood-poisoning. It seems that twenty-five per cent. of the women of this country earn their own living; but one would scarcely believe that there are nearly three hundred and fifty female blacksmiths in England, which, however, sounds no stronger than the statement that women may now be seen driving cabs in New York.

Few blue-eyed people are said to be colour-blind, and we are told that women as a rule have better eyesight than men; but, on the other hand, three women have false teeth to every two men that wear them. This, we take it, is owing to their greater regard for personal appearance, than that of the men. It is not without interest to note that not a few people living have double rows of natural teeth; while we are assured by an artist that only one person in four thousand eight hundred has a perfect nose.

Though we are told that blindness is on the decrease, it is said to reflect that three hundred thousand people in Europe suffer from this dreadful affliction. Spain appears to be the greatest sufferer in this respect. An oculist tells us that scarcely one in twenty of watchmakers suffer from weak eyes; and we learn from a doctor that stammering is almost unknown in the peninsular. It is, in fact, one of the penalties to pay for civilisation; it would seem that nearly a quarter of all cases of insanity are hereditary, and animals are not free from this visitation.

We hear, on the authority of a recruiting sergeant, that few men have legs of equal length, and that in every thousand men in the British army only eighteen are over six feet in height, which our national vanity prompts us to remark seems a small number. The conclusion is arrived at, that a man's full potential power is not reached before the age of twenty-five, and the development of talent is most marked between the ages of thirty and forty-five years.

Those who notice the rapid growth of their finger-nails should be happy, for it is considered to indicate good health. Yorkshire is said to be the most healthy county in England; but it is a reflection when we are reminded that Great Britain is the yearling loss in wages through ill-health of eleven millions sterling, and it is estimated that forty per cent. of those who start in business fail, March being considered the slackest month for business. Yet, as a set-off to this disconcerting intelligence, it is affirmed that the average length of life is considerably longer in this country than in France, for example. Is this because nearly three times as much meat is eaten by us as by the French? No wonder the average Britisher is as strong as two Hindus. Quakers are said, we know not with what truth, to be unusually long-lived.

this is the country in which we are told suicide is less prevalent than in any other which speaks volumes for France's heartedness. It has been noticed how women mostly commit suicide by drowning, and men by shooting. By the way, suicide is less common amongst miners than any other class of people; and self-destruction, strangely enough, is said to be most prevalent amongst soldiers. Speaking of the military, it may be mentioned that there are eight soldiers located in Ireland to one in Scotland, and that over twenty boys under eighteen years of age have won the Victoria Cross.

Each person in this country sends on an average forty-four letters yearly through the post, which only lets twenty go astray out of every million letters which go through it. It may not be uninteresting to mention that one person in every nine is left-handed, or that clergymen come next in number to mechanics under the head of inventors. Edison states that very few people know the sound of their own voices.

Sad is the thought that an average of three British seamen lose their lives every day by drowning, and that three hundred British steamers and sailing-vessels are lost at sea yearly. It is a subject for congratulation to this country that the total number of ships which annually pass through the Suez Canal, nearly eighty per cent. of the British flag. The speed of our fastest ocean steamers is now greater than that of the express trains on Italian railways. Express trains in Russia rarely travel faster than twenty-two miles an hour. These are very rapid, indeed, to ours, yet a railway guard assures us that the fastest trains are always the safest. It is said that in forty-five million passengers were killed by a railway accident.

Mad with Jealousy. Francal, a man from Marseilles, who has made a determined attempt to murder his wife in Paris, enjoys a transient notoriety by reason of the extraordinary trouble which he took for the purpose of putting his criminal project into execution. His wife is a hard-working person, who left him about two years ago and took a situation as domestic servant in a family at Bois-Colombes, outside Paris. Francal repeatedly wrote to the woman asking her to return to him, but she turned a deaf ear to his entreaties. Her energetic refusal inflamed the hot Southern blood of her husband, and he resolved to kill her. Armed with a knife and a revolver, he accordingly set out about a fortnight since from Marseilles and walked to Paris. On arriving in the capital his conduct was worthy of his crime. Unlike a cool-brained criminal of the North, he did not lie in wait for his wife, but burst in on Monday at noon to the house where she was employed. Madame Francal was serving the family at table at the time of the interruption, and was horrified at seeing a haggard, travel-stained man advancing towards her with a revolver in his hand. She had hardly time to recognise her husband in the stranger when he fired five shots at her. The woman received one of the bullets in the breast, but had strength and courage enough to hustle her terrible husband out of the room, and to lock the door against him. Francal went away from the house, and it was thought that he had left the town. Some moments afterwards, as two young friends of the family in which Madame Francal acted as servant—were taking the wounded woman to the shop of a neighbouring chemist, the blood-thirsty tramp from the South emerged from a hiding-place at the corner of a street, and made a determined attack on the party with his knife. He succeeded in again wounding his wife in the breast and stabbed one of the young men in the hand. Before he could effect any more mischief he was overpowered and carried—kicking, struggling, and swearing—before the District Police Commissary. When examined by this official the violent Southerner expressed disappointment at his failure in not despatching his wife, and announced his determination to make another murderous assault on her when free. He will not, however, be able for a considerable length of time to carry out his sinister design, as he is safely under lock and key, without the least prospect of an immediate release. Madame Francal, although attacked with fury, will eventually recover from her wounds.

Our Flour Interests. In view of the fact that there appears to be a movement among certain farmers to establish mills, Mr. Meldrum, Peterboro', at last week's meeting in Toronto of the Dominion Millers' Association, said he thought that the cost of producing a barrel of flour would be better understood. In the old days when the flour was made by stones, a large proportion of the shorts was placed in about four. Four bushels and one-third would then produce a barrel of flour. The cost of production then was from 20 to 25 cents per barrel, because it required much less machinery and much less flour. It was proved, however, by actual figures, that in a roller mill which turned out 50,000 barrels during the past year the cost of manufacture was 36 cents per barrel, not including the package. He moved a resolution setting forth that according to the roller system, it requires four and two-thirds bushels of wheat to make a barrel of flour, and that the average cost of production, exclusive of the package, was 35 cents. The resolution was adopted.

During the discussions at the meeting on other resolutions that were offered, it transpired that farmers in a great many instances were cutting green wheat in order that better feeding straw might be obtained. The result was that such wheat was useless for feeding. It was proposed that bulletins should be issued to the farmers showing the evil results of cutting green wheat.

The reports of the delegates from the various sections showed that the wheat of the country, as a whole, was exceptionally good and of a better milling quality than that of last year. With few exceptions, the crops are fully equal to those of last year, and in some districts there is three times the acreage of fall wheat this year that there was last. In the province of Quebec the yield is extremely large, even larger than last year, which was the greatest since confederation.

The Cause of it. "George!" she screamed. "My neck!" "What's the matter?" "There's a pill-casser!" "A what?" "A tappickiller!" "What in the world do you mean?" "Oh, dear," she moaned, as she clutched him frantically. "A kitterpaller! You know, George! A paterkiller!" "Oh!" said George, with evident relief, and he proceeded to brush the future butterfly away.

Georgia took in \$500,000 on watermelons this season. Artesian wells spouted in the years before the Christian era.

What a Friend Is. The London Tit-Bits recently offered a prize for the best definition of "What a Friend Is." This is the prize definition: "The first person who comes in when the whole world has gone out."

The following are some of the best definitions submitted: "One who is ready to supply confidence, counsel, sympathy, help, and love." "One who considers my need before my deservings." "The triple alliance of the three great powers, love, sympathy and help."

One who understands our silence. "A level, whose lustre the strong acids of poverty and misfortune cannot dim." "One who smiles on our fortunes, throws on our faults, sympathizes with our sorrows, weeps at our bereavements, and is a safe fortress at all times of trouble."

One who, gaining the top of the ladder, won't forget you if you remain at bottom. "One who in prosperity does not toady to you, in adversity assists you, in sickness nurses you, and after your death marries your widow and provides for your children." "The holy of life, whose qualities are overshadowed in the summer of prosperity, but blossom forth in the winter of adversity." "He who does not adhere to the saying that 'No. 1 should come first.'"

A watch which beats true for all time, and never "runs down." "All insurance against misanthropy." "An earthly minister of heavenly happiness." "A friend is like ivy—the greater the ruin, the closer he clings." "One who to himself is true, and therefore must be so to you."

The same to-day, the same to-morrow, either in prosperity, adversity or sorrow. "One who combines for you alike the pleasures and benefits of society and solitude." "One who is a balance in the sea saw of life."

One who guards another's interest as his own and never flatters nor deceives. "A nineteenth century rarity." "One who will tell you of your faults and follies in prosperity and assist you with his hand and heart in adversity." "One truer to me than I am myself."

The Woman of These Times. Woman—a capital letter—should by now have ceased to be a specialty. There should be no more need of 'movements' in her behalf and agitations for her advancement and development, considered apart from the general good of mankind, that the abolition of negro slavery in the United States. "For what a man—and presiding woman—'hath, doth he yet after?" "With the world of knowledge opportunely thrown open to her, it is little for her ambition and less for her ability to grasp cardinal principles, to elect to build fancies about her reserve, and expend time and forces in patting precincts nobody cares to attack." "I glad the question for discussion does not contain the word 'woman,' a member of a celebrated literary club, an awfully of the pretentious class, and satiated with incessant twaddle, 'woman's progress,' 'woman's woman,' and the ninety and nine upon the one string. By this time we to there if we are ever to arrive at a half-sick of womanhood! I want human being."—[Marion Harland.]

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