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BICYCLE CLUB, ST. JOHN, N. B.

in the garden on the day of her death and they had some talk together, she being more friendly than she had shown herself towards him for a long time. She related to him, as something she had never mentioned before, and as a secret he must never divulge, the nonsense about the spirit of her husband having returned to earth and taken up his abode in the ape's skin, where it intended to remain and haunt her until she repaid him all the money he had hoarded there during his lifetime, and of which she had possessed herself. She was in great trouble, because, although she was able to repay the claim in question, her money was sunk in such a way she could not touch it, and that since her husband's spirit was growing more and more angry every day there was nothing for her, even though it cost her her life, but to find the money and appease it. "I couldn't make anything of her wild talk," said Chiffinch, "and while I was persuading her to return to the house, she suddenly turned and ran towards the well. Her craziness seemed to give her more strength than she has shown for years, and she was so quick I could not overtake her until she reached the well. She ran round and round it to prevent me taking hold of her, which accounts for her footprints and mine being so numerous at the spot, and her cap came off and got trod in the mud. I never dreamt that it was her intention to jump in, or I should have called out for help. But all in a moment she did jump in, striking her head against the side and sinking like a stone. Then it rushed to my mind that I might be suspected of murdering her. It would be said that we were unfriendly, and my having been seen with money had robbed her of it, and that had given rise to a quarrel between us. So, like a fool, I resolved to say nothing about it."

As might have been expected, counsel for the prosecution ridiculed Chiffinch's "explanation," and spoke of it as preposterous and unworthy a moment's serious consideration. And the judge unmistakably leaning to the same

opinion, had no hesitation in finding a verdict of guilty against Christopher Chiffinch, who was condemned to death.

And hanged he undoubtedly would have been but for a very singular accident. As need not be said, the water in the old well was no longer used for domestic purposes, but was good enough for cattle.

The water was drawn up in a large stable pail, which, being old, sprung a leak, which was temporarily stopped with a large putty plaster. This was one day being let down by a boy, and the weight proving too much for him, and losing control of the windlass, the bucket fell plump to the bottom. When it was hauled up, lo and behold! there were six sovereigns sticking to the putty!

Amazed at this seeming miracle, the experiment was repeated; at the second cast two more "gold fish" were brought to the surface. Once again, and four more came up.

There was a stir then. A steam pump was procured and the well pumped dry, and rich, indeed, was the mud and clay which formed the well's bottom. Carefully washed and sifted, it yielded no less than eleven hundred and forty sovereigns.

This turned a new light on the Krumiser mystery, and it seemed that Chiffinch's story might after all be true. The old woman, according to him, had told him she had money enough to meet the claim her dead husband's spirit had made on her, but "it was sunk in such a way she couldn't touch it," but get at it she must though she lost her life in the effort. Then she ran to the well and threw herself in.

Which may have been her mad way of "finding" the gold she herself had "sunk." This was the pith of the petition sent to the authorities, praying for a reprieve for the condemned man. As to how deceased, not having the use of her arms and hands, carried the gold to the well, three witnesses had seen her with money in her mouth, and she might so have conveyed it there and dropped it in. Any-

way, the strange discovery threw a grave doubt on Chiffinch's guilt, and he was reprieved, and a very few months afterward received a free pardon.

[THE END.]

### Insomnia.

Quiet, with weary limbs relaxed, I lie,  
And weary eyelids closed, awaiting sleep,  
That holds aloof; for thronging fancies keep  
Unwearied watch, and restless phantoms fly  
About the empty mind. Within the eye,  
Instinct with memory, dead summers steep  
Forgotten scenes with light; dead faces leap  
To light again. . . . But now, with querulous cry,  
A sparrow breaks the silence; clattering feet  
Of early toilers echo down the street;  
The frosty light grows warmer on the wall,  
And dims the luminous visions of the night.  
Over the drowsy watcher's swimming sight  
Relenting slumber draws a dreamless pall.

—MUNROE SMITH in *The Cosmopolstan*.

### Snowbirds.

Along the narrow sandy height  
I watch them swiftly come and go,  
Or round the leafless wood,  
Like flurries of wind-driven snow,  
Revolving in perpetual flight,  
A changing multitude.  
Nearer and nearer still they sway,  
And, scattering in a circled sweep,  
Rush down without a sound;  
And now I see them peer and peep,  
Across yon level bleak and gray,  
Searching the frozen ground,—

Until a little wind upheaves,  
And makes a sudden rustling there,  
And then they drop their play,  
Flash up into the sunless air,  
And like a flight of silver leaves  
Swirl round and sweep away.

—ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN in *The Atlantic Monthly*.