

tinels of the sky, which appear as the eyes of the Omnipotent ever gazing on our world, had come forth to perform their nightly vigils. The shining of the stars, the murmur of the ocean, and the quiet of the earth, seemed as the voice of Mercy uttered in the low cadence of eternal love, to invite the sinning man to repent, and refrain from his evil purpose.

Bent on mischief, and on gain, the voice of Heaven uttered through the medium of nature fell unheeded on the gypsy, and he passed on until he reached the town of Folkestone, and through its quiet streets to the residence of Charles Freeman. In answer to the summons of the house bell the servant appeared, to whom he delivered the note, with the strict injunction that it should be immediately placed in the hands of the person to whom it was addressed. While passing the note to the girl the messenger placed himself in such a position that his face could only partly be seen, but his livery appeared clearly. Giving expression to a few of those familiarities peculiar to themselves, which servants from different families indulge in when they meet, he nimbly withdrew from the door, leaving the servant standing and smiling at the pleasanties he had uttered. Faithful to her charge the girl immediately delivered the note to Charles Freeman, who on receiving it withdrew from the apartment.

Entering his study he again perused the note, and as he read his mind became agitated. Repeatedly did he read it, and then placing it on the table looked at it from a distance as though to assure himself that it was reality. There could be no mistaking the writing; but what had Sir Harry been doing to her he loved to produce such an unusual request. This question now occupied his thoughts, and made him forget any danger which might threaten himself in his apprehension for the welfare of Clara.

Bitterly did Charles Freeman lament that Clara should be shut up as with a lion in his den, beyond the power of human sympathy and aid; and with a fierceness of manner unusual to him did he denounce the cowardice of the baronet, who refused to meet himself as a man, and assail him either by word or deed, giving to him the opportunity to explain or to defend himself. Still he would respond to the note; as in obeying her request it was all that at present he could do to solace her, and taking the note he placed it in his bosom.

Having thus taken care of the document, as though that missive uttered a warning voice, the thought entered his brain that possibly the request might be the trap of an enemy set for his destruction; but this feeling he quickly rejected as being too cowardly to be entertained. He prepared for starting; but the thought again intruded, and more to satisfy this feeling arising from it than from any reasonable consideration, he drew forth from his desk a brace of pistols. He smiled at his own apprehension as he looked on the weapons, and having made them ready for use, he placed them in his pocket.

Soon after the messenger had left the camp with the note, Jethro might have been seen exercising the edge of his knife on a piece of tough wood he had cut from an adjoining copse. Having shaped it according to design, he notched the ends, and fastening a piece of strong cord to them put the machine in his pocket. Coiling up other pieces of cord, he also placed them about his person, that they might be ready for immediate use. Matters being thus arranged to the satisfaction of the gypsy chief, he placed a brace of pistols in his belt, and calling to him three stout fellows who lay on the grass awaiting his signal, the four left the encampment.

"You'll not use those bull dogs!" said Rachel, as she stood at the entrance of the chief's tent as the men passed.

"Only to wing him with, or in self-defence," was the short reply of Jethro.

The beautiful daughter of the gypsy also stood at the tent door, but without condescending as much as to look at her father, she drew herself up proudly, and walked away stately, in another direction. That girl had no heart for the cunning cruel work of a gypsy, and disgusted with her associates she sought retirement. Sitting upon the grass, beneath the branches of a majestic oak, whose thick foliage shut out the star of evening, which had already taken its place in the sky as the herald of approaching night, the gypsy girl wept. What would she not have given at that moment to put a stop to the execution of a plot destructive to the happiness of those who had never sought her harm. For an instant she had been flattered with the praises of her tribe for her success; but now that reflection had taken possession of her mind, she appeared an object of loathing to herself, and the tears she shed were those of reproach and shame for what she had done. That the gypsies were hated by the house-dwellers she felt to be no excuse for her conduct, and that they were hated she felt to be richly deserved. Had it been possible for that beautiful girl to persuade herself that Clara Chillington would have been her friend and protector, she would willingly have dared the wrath of her tribe to explode the plot now about to be reduced to practice; but her education was against such an idea. She had been trained to think that every man's hand was against them; and such being the case, it was right that the hand of the gypsy should be against every man.

On leaving the camp the men took their course for the place where Charles Freeman

had been invited to meet the messenger from the Priory; and having reached the spot, they now lay secreted in a thicket that skirted the edge of the cliff, noiselessly and anxiously awaiting his approach.

"It is time he made his appearance, if he means to come at all," whispered one of the watchers.

"He'll come presently," was the answer returned.

"Cease your talking!" peevishly exclaimed Jethro, who was not without unpleasant thoughts lest his scheme should fail. Having commanded silence, he placed his ear on the ground, and lay attentively listening.

Not a sound reached the ear of the gypsy as he lay stretched upon the ground; the stillness of the night was unusual, and every noise appeared hushed in silence. Again he placed his ear upon the ground to listen, and again arose with disappointment and vexation written upon his countenance. Pausing awhile, he once more pursued the same course; and this time the sound of approaching footsteps were heard.

"He is coming," whispered Jethro, "prepare for action; but let no more violence be employed than is necessary for securing him."

All unconscious of the danger awaiting him, and expecting every moment to meet the messenger from the Priory, Charles Freeman came walking on.

"It is strange the messenger does not appear!" he quietly exclaimed. "It is past the hour appointed, and I have already reached the place named in the note. Perhaps some incident occurred which prevented the person starting exactly to the minute. Peace! unquiet thought. The note was too plainly written for it to be a deception. I would stake my life upon its genuineness. I will walk as far as the stile, and sit there and wait."

Following out this resolve he started at a quicker pace; but before he had proceeded a dozen yards he was seized upon from behind and nearly hurled to the ground. On feeling himself touched he sprang forward, and forcing himself free, stood confronting his adversary. Not a word was spoken on either side, but a flash from the pistol of Charles Freeman sent a bullet in the direction of the gypsies. In his excitement he aimed too high, the shot passed over their heads, and before he could repeat the firing they had seized upon him.

Charles Freeman fought desperately, and succeeded in again getting free; but fearing that he would now escape them, one of the men rushed upon him, and with a blow from the butt of a pistol fetched him senseless to the ground.

"That's a quietus," said Jethro, as he saw the form of the man stretched on the ground in a state of unconsciousness. These were the first words spoken during the affray; for as the result of the pride and vigor of manhood one side had refused to cry for help, and it was not in the interest of his opponents to make a noise.

While Charles Freeman lay senseless at their feet the men bound him hand and foot, and drawing the gag he had made from his pocket, Jethro employed it for further security. At a signal from the gypsy chief the boat from the *Nancy* came quickly to the shore, and receiving her apparently lifeless freight, she pushed off to the larger vessel.

For a long time Charles Freeman remained unconscious of his condition, and when his senses returned finding himself at sea, and surrounded by the smuggler crew, the conspiracy became patent. On placing their captive on board the *Nancy* the gypsies had released him from the gag, and things which bound him, so that his limbs were now free.

As the light from the binnacle lantern fell on the countenance of the smuggler skipper, the prisoner saw the type of character among whom he had fallen, and that it was useless to expect any commiseration from them. In the pride of his nature he scorned to solicit any favour, and he arose and walked the deck in silence. It was plain from appearances that a carousal had been indulged in on board the *Nancy*, for bottles broken and entire were lying upon the deck. Secretly Charles Freeman picked up an empty bottle, and having employed it for his own purpose, he then sought to reduce his feelings to the level of his condition.

The wind which had been gently blowing from the east as the evening began, had freshened considerably during the night, and under full sail the vessel soon reached the shores of France.

The dawn was breaking and casting its oblique rays across the expanse of water as the smuggler came to an anchor. Quickly the canvas ran down the well-shaven mast of the *Nancy*, and the little boat which brought the prisoner aboard was hauled again alongside. In company with Jack Pegden he was commanded to leave the vessel, and they both were rowed to the shore. As the boat struck the beach Charles Freeman was delivered up to two men, one in the decline of life, the other in the prime and strength of youth, and entering a *voiture* he was borne away. Having seen him secured Jack Pegden returned to his vessel, and the prisoner became lost to the world.

(To be continued.)

THE Prince Edward Island Legislature was opened recently, and among the Government measures promised is one to diminish the cost of the administration of justice, and one to abolish the Legislative Council.

# FEEDING ON AIR.

Schwackheimer wanted my opinion the other day about fasting, *à propos* of a newspaper paragraph concerning the controversy between certain doctors on this subject. My friend had just been favoring me with his company at dinner, and had done justice to the meal, as he always does—when the meal is a good one; and as we sat in the library subsequently, lazily burning certain vegetable productions, and watching the circling wreaths of smoke wind upward till they lost themselves in the dim shadows the student's lamp threw on the ceiling, I suppose his heart warmed towards the unfortunate people who had to do without their dinners. He is not himself more abstemious than is necessary for his own good. He is a very earnest student, and will spend hours poring intently over a volume of metaphysics—German, at that—to all appearances quite oblivious of sublunary affairs; but when feeding his brain he never forgets his stomach, and the meal-time summons never break upon his ear unheeded. He holds the theory that a man cannot do justice to his mental powers if he neglects physical sustenance, and he practices what he preaches.

So, I suppose it was not without a sense of pity for suffering humanity that he started talking about Dr. Hammond and his controversy with professing fasters. A certain Miss Faucher, it was claimed, could and did abstain from food for several weeks. Dr. Hammond had mildly expressed his opinion that she was a fraud, and offered to give her \$1,000 if she could show herself able to endure an extended fast under careful watching; but her friends would not agree to this proposition, because the presence of a nature so gross and material as his would have a bad effect on the young lady, and hinder the success of the experiment. Then a doctor out west took up the subject, and declared that he could fast forty days, on the same principle that bears hybernate during the winter season. Dr. Hammond made him, also, the same proposition—giving him a chance to earn \$1,000 by thirty days' fasting—provided only he would submit to be watched. Up to date the offer had not been accepted; and it was in referring to this controversy, as detailed in a newspaper, that Schwackheimer wanted to know what I thought about it.

What about it? Well, I am prepared to believe a great many wonderful things; but when it comes to living for thirty days without a particle of solid food or a drop of liquid, I feel somewhat like the New York doctor and would prefer seeing it before believing. Not that the western medico who boasts of his abstemious capabilities propounds any novel doctrine. There was an enthusiastic Rosicrucian some centuries ago—John Heyden by name—who professed to believe that men could fast as long as they lived, even though they should reach the age of Methuselah. There was "a fine foreign fatness" in the very air, he held, which ought to suffice for most people; though gross and material natures might be allowed the occasional application of a cooked meat poultice to the epigastrium.

Did he try the experiment on himself with any degree of success?

I could not say; the record is silent on this point.

Ah! quoth Schwackheimer, I was thinking that, perhaps, he had tried it with the same success that befel Duncan McGirdie in his experiment on his mare, of which the valiant Eusign Maccumbich tell us. "He wanted to use her by degrees to live without meat, and just as he had put her on a straw a day the poor thing died."

Perhaps so; but if you want to hear about people who were supposed to have lived on little or nothing for a long time you have only to read Dr. Hammond's little book on "Fasting Girls," where many of the notable cases are recorded. Some appeared to live on decidedly low rations. There was a lady named Lidiane who fell ill in 1395, and remained an invalid till her death thirty-three years later; for the first nineteen years her food consisted of a piece of apple no bigger than a wafer daily, with a swallow of water, or beer, or milk, and by this means she so accustomed herself to dispense with victuals that for the last fourteen years of her life she took nothing at all. St. Joseph of Cupertino kept seven forty-day fasts every year, during which he ate only on Thursdays and Sundays, and even then nothing but bitter herbs and dried fruits. St. Nicholas of Flue—certainly no relation to Santa Claus—when he embraced a monastic life abandoned all food save the Holy Eucharist. And the ecclesiastical records tell of other holy personages—St. Peter of Alcantara, St. Rose of Lima, St. Catharine of Siena and the nun of Leicester—who were also able to live on the sacramental bread alone. Then we are told of one Mary Woughton, of Wigginton, in Staffordshire, who lived on a spoonful of milk and water a day, with a bit of bread the size of a half-crown, or a piece of meat as large as a pigeon's egg; of Christina Michelot, a French girl, who for four years lived on water, and then returned to her normal diet; of Ann Walsh, of Harrowgate, who for thirteen months subsisted on a daily allowance of a third of a pint of wine and water. Of course, when you get down to such a small quantity of food you can easily go a step further, and accept the record of cases wherein food was dispensed with entirely. Margaret Weiss, a girl of ten, near Spire, lived for three years without food or drink—during which time she was carefully watched by the parish priest and Dr. Bucoldianus. Apollonia Schreier, a virgin in Berne, was examined by the magistrates, who certified that she was

able to live without eating anything. Katherine Binder, of the Palatinate, lived on air for nine years; and Eva Fliegen, of Meurs, we are assured on the authority of the local magistracy and clergy, "took no kind of sustenance for the space of fourteen years together." Many other cases are recorded, nearly all being women or children. But sometimes men were able to show as much self-denial as women; such, for instance, was John Scott, the Faster, a Teviotdale man, who in 1531, took sanctuary in the abbey of Holy rood House, where he remained some forty days without food, and then was imprisoned in the Castle for thirty-two days, at the end of which time the bread and water left in the cell with him were found untouched. Subsequently, Scott went to Rome where he gave an exhibition of abstinence to the truth of which Clement VII. certified. Returning to England, he got into trouble by preaching against Henry VIII., and was sent to jail again, where he remained for fifty days without eating. Alberghati investigated this fasting phenomenon at his own house, and after a trial of eleven days came to the conclusion that Scott really possessed the power he claimed.

I was about referring to some more of these wonderful cases; but I said that Schwackheimer was anxious to deliver himself of some ideas, so I let him. He has been meditating on matrimony of late, and is, therefore, disposed to speculations of an economical nature. So I was not surprised to hear him say he thought it would be a great saving in the way of butcher's and baker's bills if a family could be run on this principle. The head of the household, of course, have to live after the usual fashion; but water and air would be a cheap diet for children, if only sufficiently fattening. He had always been of the opinion that the observations of the old Hebrew writer about Ephraim feeding on wind, and following after the east wind, were to be taken in a metaphorical sense; but if these stories were true it would justify one in supposing that there was an abundant supply of nutriment in the atmosphere. Perhaps, if people would take the air into their stomachs as well as their lungs it would serve all the purposes of a rarified soup. After solemnly advancing this idea, which I was not prepared to controvert, my friend wanted to know if the neighbours of any of these fasting girls were ever curious enough to watch them and see if they took a surreptitious bite.

Oh, yes! sometimes, for example, at the beginning of the present century, one Ann Moore, of Sudbury, in England, professed for several years to be able to do without food, and made considerable money out of the bounty of visitors who came to see her. She was watched, but succeeded in deceiving the watchers for three weeks by her daughters giving her food when kissing her, or by washing her face with towels dipped in milk or gruel and squeezing the liquid into her mouth. A second set of watchers were keener, and when she found herself, as she thought, near dead from starvation she made a full confession. In 1852, Elizabeth Squirell, of Shottesham, Suffolk, managed for a time to fool a number of doctors, preachers, and "members of the aristocracy," and make them believe that she lived for three months without eating; but she was detected at last. Thirteen years ago, the case of Sarah Jacob, the Welsh fasting girl, attracted considerable notoriety. She was ten years old; had been subject to epilepsy, and, according to her parents, lost her appetite, eating gradually less and less till she got down to nothing at all. On this diet she was said to have existed for a couple of years to the great profit of her people, who derived a respectable income from the credulous visitors. In 1867, a fortnight's systematic watch was undertaken; but as some of the watchers got drunk, and others slept, their inspection of the case was not to be depended on. Finally, in December of that year, four female nurses from Guy's Hospital were sent to take charge of the case. She gradually sank, and after eight days died—starved to death undoubtedly. Other cases are said to have been carefully watched with a different result; but, of course, there is always the possibility of collusion. It is much easier to report that a thing has been done, than to do it over again.

But, quoth Schwackheimer, viewing the subject in the light of these illustrations it does not appear that healthy activity and this low diet are at all compatible. When a person wants to live on these exceedingly low rations he—or she usually—has to go to bed and be for all practical purposes dead. That's what you call "suspended animation," I suppose.

Nearly so; in some cases altogether so, and there is no doubt that in true cases of "suspended animation" life may be protracted for a long time without food. Hybernating animals are evidences of this; but whether it is possible to make men hybernate is another question. St. Augustine, in one of his books, tells of a priest who could withdraw himself from life so far as to become insensible to pain and incapable of motion, though not entirely unconscious for he could hear the voices of those around him; but let me get down this book on the shelf over your head and read you a wonderful story told with a minuteness of detail that gives it a flavor of veracity, and yet so startling that I will not press you to believe it. Here it is. It purports to be the account by the Hon. G. W. Osborne, Military Secretary to the English Mission at the Court of Runjeet Singh in 1838, of what he actually heard respectable witnesses say. In his report he tells of an interview with an Indian fakir who had a great reputation for his miraculous power of living under very adverse cir-