

hand stretched forth as if to ward off a blow. Something, the mere inkling of the truth, creeps into her mind.

"Auntie," she repeats with desperate entreaty, "What has he done?"

"Deserted you for love of Sylvia Carew. I beg that lady's pardon, Lady Ferriam. But you had better read his letter to you, and see what kind of excuse he makes for himself. He has tried to extenuate his conduct to me, not to justify himself. He is too wise for that. But he is no more a son of mine. I have done with him for ever."

"No, no, no," cried the girl passionately, "No, you shall not renounce him for any wrong done to me. What was a mother's love meant for except to outlive all lesser love? You are his mother, and you cannot shut him out of your heart. You could not if he were steeped in sin. Where is the letter?"

She stretched out her hand almost mechanically to take the letter from the table where it lay beside her plate, as if it were the pleasantest letter in the world, instead of Cleopatra's deadly asp disguised in a sheet of Bath-post. Then with a piteous look at Mrs. Standen, she asked, "Why should he write to me—could he not tell me with his own lips? Did he think I should upbraid him?"

"He was ashamed of his dishonour, Esther, and he ran away—like a defaulting clerk. He has gone to Germany."

Again a faint cry broke unawares from the girl's pale lips—a broken-hearted cry, as of one whose palace of life has crumbled suddenly to dust and ashes. She broke the seal, and read her false lover's letter. No sense of degradation could be deeper than that which breathed in every line of that passionate letter.

"I hate—I despise myself beyond the common measure of contempt," he wrote, "but love her still. I have seen her—I need not tell you how our meeting came about—the fact is enough. I did not set myself to betray you. I did not go deliberately to my doom. As I hope for life eternal, Esther, I thought I was cured. I believed I loved you. No man could have been truer-hearted than I was that night on Cropley common when I asked you to be my wife. It was not till I stood face to face with Sylvia Ferriam, not till I was drunken with the sound of her voice, with the light of her eyes, with the fatal charm that she has for me, in every look and tone—not till then, as I live now and hope to live hereafter, did I know that the old lunacy still raged in my heart, that I had never forgotten her, never ceased to love her, never been less her slave, than I was when I first cast every consideration of self interest to the winds for her sake. Can I ask you to forgive me? No!—I am too sensible of my own infamy to entreat or to expect forgiveness. Forget me if you can. Or if you cannot quite blot out the memory of my dishonour despise me, as I despise myself. I cannot face the scorn which I have earned. I leave Dean House, in all probability, never to return to it. I accept my mother's old sentence of disinheritance. I did not deserve it when it was first pronounced, but I acknowledge its justice henceforward. I have no right to the wealth of a man who never lured me, who am stained by my falsehood to you. And now, my adopted sister—my promised wife—there is no other word between us, except farewell! If I respected you less I might come to you with my tarnished honour, with half-allegiance, and say, let us keep our engagement. At the worst there will be as much love and truth between us as there is between three out of every six couples who swear changeless love and honour. But I will not offer my pure Esther anything less than my whole heart, anything less than perfect truth and loyalty. Passion made me forget myself, and I confessed my love for the woman who jilted me two years ago. That confession, impulsive, unconsidered though it was, has dug a pit between us which I will not try to bridge over."

Thus ended the letter. Esther stood with her eyes fixed on the lines, tearless. This was that other blow which she had thought of, as a stroke barely within the bounds of possibility, ten minutes ago. It had come very quickly. Would it be as deadly as she had told herself it must be? Just at present she seemed wonderfully steeled. She calmly folded the fatal letter, she took Mrs. Standen's cold hand in both of hers, and clasped it tenderly. She kissed the rigid, resolute face, trying to kiss it into softness.

"I can forgive him, Auntie," she said. "With all my heart. Cannot you forgive him too?"

"No. I cannot forgive him. I will never forgive him for having treated you so cruelly—for having trifled with you, cheated you, deceived you."

"He deceived himself as well."

"He had no right to practise self-deception that must needs bring sorrow to you. Oh, Esther, forgive me," cried the mother, with a sudden burst of passionate tenderness, "It was my fault, in some measure my fault. I was so anxious you should be his good angel, his consoler. I was always praising you to him, always leading him on to care for you."

"I know, I know," answered Esther, quickly, with a pained look. "It all sprang from your love for me, but it was a mis-

take. Let us forget it if we can. How much better that this should happen now than later. If the delusion had lasted only a little longer, till I had been his wife, and he had found out then that he still loved that other. Think what an escape we have had."

"Escape," repeated Mrs. Standen gloomily, "How can you talk of escape when he has left you for the sake of that false, wicked woman, when he has gone headlong to his ruin?"

The open Bible lay under her hand. She turned to Ecclesiastes, and read in a stern voice, solemn as the utterance of an antique sybil, "And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, her hands as bands; whose pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her."

(To be continued.)

Oddities.

One way to get out of a scrape—Let your beard grow. The sight of a drunkard is a better sermon against that vice than the most elaborate that was ever preached upon it.

"This engine won't work," said a fireman to the chief of the fire department. "No wonder," was the reply; "it was made to play."

An obituary notice in a Connecticut paper concludes with the announcement that "the deceased leaves two infant daughters, both girls."

Josh Billings says, "I have often been told that the best way is to take the bull by the horns; but I think in many instances I should prefer the tall hold."

A student at a veterinary college being asked, "If a broken-winded horse were brought to you for treatment, what would you advise?" promptly replied, "To sell him as soon as possible."

A German enthusiast, while Carlyle's "Frederick the Great" was issuing from the press, bought a house in London and embarked in the heroic enterprise of rendering it into German. He perished.

An editor, who speaks with the air of a man who has discovered a new fact by experience, says that the new way to prevent bleeding at the nose is to keep your nose out of other people's business.

TIT FOR TAT.—"Why do you spend so much money on your wife's funeral?" asked a man of his neighbour. "Ah, sir," was the reply, "she would have done as much for me, and more too, with pleasure."

The following epitaph is offered to the medical faculty at Philadelphia, to be inscribed over what is left of the remains of the Siamese twins, when they finish cutting and carving them: "They were not lovely in their lives, and in death they were divided."

Said Lord John Russell to Hume, at a social dinner, "what do you consider the object of legislation?" "The greatest good to the greatest number." "What do you consider the greatest number?" continued his lordship. "Number one, my lord," was the commoner's prompt reply.

A Frenchman, condemned to death for murdering his wife and child without extenuating circumstances, demurred to the sentence, because capital punishment had been abolished in France for political offences, and he had killed his wife and child for no other reason but because they were Legitimists.

They tell of the urbane President of a local legislature out West, who remarks persuasively, "Gentlemen, I call you to order," and then hurls bricks at every man in the room. The locality will become civilized in due time, however, and we have no doubt that those dangerous articles will be dropped for something less rude and uncouth.

A crossing sweeper was trying to get a gratuity from an excessively dandified individual, who, in resting, urged that he had no change, nothing but a twenty-dollar bill. "I can get it changed for you," said the youngster. On seeing the dandy hesitate as if from fear of trusting him with a twenty-dollar bill, he put it again, "If yer doubts my honour, hold my broom."

Jeremy Taylor says of him who jests with Scripture: "He had better part with his eyes in a jest, and give his heart to make a tennis-ball." Doctor Johnson, in his own peculiar manner, thus admonished a young man guilty of this fault: "Idle application of words of Scripture is a mode of merriment, sir, which a good man dreads for its profaneness, and a witty man disdains for its coarseness and vulgarity."

The travellers' book at an inn in Switzerland contains the following epigram:

THE TWO TRAVELLERS.
"I've lost my portmanteau!"
"I pity your grief."
"All my sermons were in it!"
"I pity the thief."

A cross-eyed man cast a gloom over a Detroit street car, last Wednesday, by asking one of seven men and strangers, on the opposite seat, "if he had any chewing tobacco handy." First the seven strangers looked at each other; then the seven hands went pocketward; and, observing this motion, each of the seven supposed his neighbour the one spoken to, and the seven hands returned empty. The cross-eyed man cast a ricochet glance of indignation along the line, and, with the remark, "A sweet-scented lot of generous roosters," took a chew of his own tobacco.

A very Daniel of a judge lives in Memphis. He came to judgment the other day in a case about a goose. This graceful fowl fell into the river, and it was rescued by a man and brother nigger, who claimed salvage from its owner, an Italian. The latter wouldn't pay it, and produced a persuasive pistol, whereupon the coloured person marched off with the goose and got a warrant for assault. Then did the goose's owner take out an answering warrant for the goose. The judge, perplexed, fined both of them, and kept the goose himself.

The Professor of Natural Philosophy in a certain college gave the class a problem to think over during the night and answer the next day. The question was this: "If a hole were bored through the centre of the earth, from side to side, and a ball dropped into it, what motions would the ball pass through, and how would it come to a state of rest?" The next morning a student was called up to solve the problem. "What answer have you to give to the question?" asked the professor. "Well, really," replied the student, "I have not thought of the main question, but of a preliminary one. How are you going to get that hole through?"

News of the Week.

THE DOMINION.—Mr. Joly and Mr. E. G. Penny have been nominated to the Senate. A bill has been introduced into the Albany Senate to permit Canadian Insurance Companies to transact business in that State, on condition of their depositing Canadian securities with the Superintendent of the Insurance Department. Judge Sanborn has been appointed Judge in the place of Judge Badgley, resigned, and Mr. Loranger as Judge ad hoc, in lieu of Judge Monk. A meeting was lately held in London, Ontario, for the purpose of endeavouring to organize an association similar to the American Granges. The idea was not very cordially taken up.

GREAT BRITAIN.—Lord Northbrooke, Governor-General of India, says the Government will have to maintain three million persons for three months. The expenditure on account of the famine to the end of February has been seven million and a half dollars. A diplomatic dispute in consequence of the arrest of a British subject, has arisen between England and Turkey. It is understood that Mr. Gladstone has declined the active leadership of the Opposition during the coming session. Dispatches to the 7th ult. from Ashantee state that Commanche had been burned, and the British troops were returning to the coast unhindered. A later despatch of the 9th, says a message had arrived requesting a treaty of peace, and General Wolseley was to remain till the 13th to negotiate for the same. The remains of Dr. Livingstone are to be transported from Africa to England at the public expense. A monster demonstration is being prepared, to take place in Hyde Park, London, on the 15th inst., favouring an amnesty to the incarcerated Fenians. On the 5 inst. the New Imperial Parliament assembled. Right Hon. Henry Bouverie Brand, Speaker of the last House of Commons, being unanimously re-elected.

UNITED STATES.—The Police Commissioners of Columbus, Ohio, have asked the City Council to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors within corporate limits, pledging themselves to see the law enforced. Whiskey dealers are already beginning to feel the effects of the movement. A despatch from Wilkesbarre says great consternation has been caused by an extensive cave in at the Empire Mine. Families are leaving the vicinity. A petition has been presented to the Washington Senate from New York merchants representing \$500,000,000 of capital, condemning the late issue of notes, and asking for its immediate retirement. Four Government bonded warehouses in New York have fallen through the falling off in imports since the September panic. Four convicts, in attempting to escape from Sing Sing, were re-captured, one of them being mortally wounded by the guards. Despatches from Upper Lake ports show there is nothing to prevent the passage of steamers to the upper end of Huron River, and boats will commence their regular trips. Ex-President Fillmore is dead.

FRANCE.—A demonstration is anticipated in Paris on the 16th inst. in favour of Napoleon the Fourth, who becomes of age to govern on that day, and it is said that the ex-Empress Eugenie is in Paris plotting a Bonapartist manifestation.

SPAIN.—Don Carlos does not mean to levy contributions on the people of Bilbao, when that place is taken. On his entrance to the city he will proceed to the Cathedral and be crowned King of Spain. The Carlists continue the bombardment of Bilbao vigorously, throwing 200 shells into the city daily. The people are so alarmed at the aggressive measure of the Carlists that they have offered their aid to Government in putting down the rebellion.

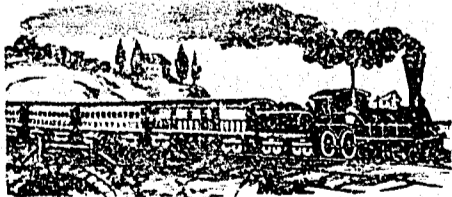
GERMANY.—The Bishop of Trèves has been imprisoned.

RUSSIA.—Serious rioting is reported in Eastern Poland. The military were obliged to be called out at one place, and seventy of the rioters were killed and wounded.

CUBA.—The report of the death of Ex-President Céspedes is confirmed. Three Cubans, who had secreted themselves on board the S. S. City of New York, in order to escape the Spanish draft, were taken back and landed again.

SOUTH AMERICA.—Cholera still continues at Buenos Ayres. There is every prospect of a war between Brazil and the Argentine States.

JAPAN.—The insurgent forces before Nangasaki, have been totally defeated by the Government troops, and are said to have disappeared.



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1874. Winter Arrangement. 1874.

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