

## THE BRAINGLESS FOOTMAN;

NOT

By the Author of the "Headless Horseman."

## CONTINUATION OF CHAPTER III.

Within 10 yards and 23 inches of the barricade, and quite close to the blackened conspirators, the boiler of the magnificent engine suddenly exploded, blowing the driver into 997 pieces, and the fireman into the same number of portions, bar 12. The eight conspirators were also all sent aloft, and when their scattered remains were collected, they numbered in the aggregate 5,420, or an average of  $677\frac{1}{2}$  each. On such solemn occasions we like to be exact in these interesting statistics. The fate of Blondina B. was also sealed. The force of the explosion threw the cars off the track, and the heroine of our story was found imbedded in the ruins—alas! no more. The explosion had been too severe for her system. She was even past Radway's Ready Relief. Alphonse had fortunately been able to weather the blow up, and might have been seen by a casual observer, withdrawing his hand from the pocket of the mangled one, who had risked so much on his account. Oh! for the depravity of the brute creation!

## CHAPTER IV.—THE CONCLUSION.

Our task becomes comparatively light. The characters of our romance having been blown out of our story and elevated into the ethereal atmosphere of the azure sky, it only remains for us to dispose of our hero, Alphonse, the Brainless Footman.

Two months subsequent to the harrowing circumstances of the above-mentioned catastrophe, Alphonse might have been seen late one night issuing from beneath the portal of a respectable but hardly aristocratic-looking residence in the purlieus of the Quebec suburbs. His eyes were rolling wildly, and his hands were covered with clotted blood: whilst in his dexter fist he grasped an axe of the kind ordinarily used for splitting cordwood. From his excited manner it was quite evident that he had been splitting something else than cordwood. *He had. HE HAD JUST DEMOLISHED HIS WIFE!!*

Before many hours were over, the bloodhounds of the law were on his track, and that evening he was lodged in gaol. In due time he was brought to trial, found guilty by an intelligent jury, and sentenced to be hanged. His astute lawyer, however, having perceived that one of the jurymen during the long and impartial trial had fallen asleep, obtained a new trial, without the slightest difficulty or delay, under a writ of error. A second time he was brought up for trial: a second time found guilty and a second time sentenced to be hanged. A second time he was respited; but on this occasion it was because some one in the Court had handed a newspaper (which contained an account of the opening of the Victoria Bridge) to one of the jury when they were retiring to consider their verdict. This objection was of course deemed valid, and a third time he stood his trial, was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. A third time he was respited because his counsel was able to prove incontestably that the Judge had taken one glass of sherry too much! It is the last feather that breaks the camel's back!

Alphonse himself at last became tired of all this shilly-shallying, and bethought himself of an easier system of putting a stop to all this uncertainty. A nail in the wall, and his suspenders were enough. He availed himself of their valuable services, and, the morning following his third trial, was found in his cell, dead as a coffin-nail!

He died game! His appetite on the morning of his suicide was unexceptionable, and, owing to the extreme liberality of the gaol authorities, his last breakfast consisted of an unlimited quantity of beefsteak, the whole of which he devoured

ravenously. He was accordingly buried, as our readers will readily believe, with a stake in his inside!

Our tale is told. As for the moral of it—it may be more easily imagined than described.

## THE FIREMEN OF MONTREAL.

Quite right, *Daily Witness!* Quite right, Mr. Alfred Perry! DIOGENES figuratively pats you on the back. It is a shame that the Firemen should be expected at all times to risk their lives for the paltry pittance of \$300 per annum; less than is given to juvenile clerks, who have only themselves to keep, or to policemen who frequently have little to do but to wear the Corporation uniform and perambulate the streets. Have nine-tenths of the public any idea in what the duties of these men consist? If not, DIOGENES will tell them. They have day and night to be fully prepared by the aid of one element to repel the attacks of another, and it is only those who have faced a conflagration in all its fury who know the arduous nature of a fireman's calling. These ill-paid and hard-working men may be summoned at any moment, any night, and often every night, to answer the fire alarm and confront the danger of perishing in the flames, or of being crushed by falling walls, while they are gallantly attempting to save life and property. Frequently they are deluged with water from the hose, and are compelled to work indefatigably for hours, encased in icy clothing, with no possibility of obtaining a change. Often, too, after returning to their quarters they are obliged to turn out again to another fire in a different part of the city.

The readers of DIOGENES may think that this picture is highly colored, but do not our cemeteries contain the bodies of several of these devoted men who, within the last few months, have died at their posts,—hose-branch in hand?—As regards the \$300 a year, of course the answer of the Corporation is, "We can get men to face the danger for this despised sum; why then should we give more?" True, quite true, you can; but why trade on the necessities of poor men by offering so paltry a remuneration? Imagine yourselves, if you can, in the position of these firemen, and then ask of your own consciences whether the sum of \$300 per annum is an adequate "compensation" for services so valuable. Your answer must be in the negative; and now that a new year is at hand,—a season when the heart involuntarily opens to the sufferings and wants of others,—let simple justice be done by increasing the insignificant pay of these brave Firemen.

## FREE TRANSLATION BY AN AMERICAN.

*In Vino Veritas.* Brandy peaches.

DIOGENES is no croaker—but he observes with some anxiety the proportions of the "*point noir*" on the horizon of the South East corner of Europe. A late telegram leaves no doubt that the Turkish Government, goaded to madness by the conduct of Greece during and after the Cretan rebellion, has now concentrated troops on the Thessalian frontier; while the advisers of the Hellenic King, positively refuse to yield anything to the protests of England and France.

The success of our New Year's festivities is closely dependant on the happy and judicious amalgamation of *Turkey* and *Greece*;—and any one must see that the torch of war once ignited in such a locality can only be extinguished with great difficulty. But on the other hand, when one bears in mind how "*continual dripping wears away stone*," one cannot be surprised that the patience of the Ottoman Government has at length been worn out by the incessant "*splurgings*" of *Greece*.