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Jim Richmond's Chance

By mutual consent that night a move had been made to the lawn, for the open air was as an invigorating tonic after the closeness of the dining-room. Cigars aglow, Jim Richmond and myself lay comfortably stretched in the garden chairs, while in the French window Jim's wife sat industriously plying her needle on some dainty little garment that augured a coming interesting event, from time to time aiding her husband in his inquisition as to my doings from the date of our previous meeting.

"But come," I said—my examination being completed to their satisfaction—"tell me something about how the world has been going with you. Three years ago I left you James Richmond, a patientless medico, and a more or less miserable bachelor. Surely some extraordinary chance that comes not to every man who dreams of fat fees and Harley Street must have lifted you into your present established position? There is no other deduction possible. Who, then, is the wealthy valetudinarian, and how did this chance come about?"

My words caused them to smile. "Your deduction is not far wide of the mark," returned Jim, after a pause, "but—that is a story my wife can tell better than I, for to her I owe everything."

"Jim exaggerates my share in the affair, I'm afraid," said Mrs. Richmond, shaking a reproving finger at her husband.

"Tell me the story, and I will judge," I said, promptly, and yielding to my persuasion, Jim commenced :—

Well, Jack, as you know, I was always keen on toxicology, and shortly after leaving the hospital, where I had made a special study of the subject, I contributed a paper to the "Lancet" on "The Effect of Certain little-known Oriental Poisons." Three days after it was published I was surprised to receive a telegram. Hastily tearing open the envelope I read the following message :—"Just read your able treatise. Shall be glad if you will dine with me to-night. My carriage will meet you at the station.—Didsbury."

"Didsbury of Elton Towers!" I cried, involuntarily, and gave a whistle of amazement. Lord Didsbury! It was a chance that the most noted of my confreres would have jumped at.

"Bradshaw" informed me that it was a three hours' journey, and dining meant staying at Elton the night. There would be just time to pack my bag and run round to acquaint Eileen with the news. Need I say that she was as excited over it as myself. Her whispered "Good luck" was ringing in my ears all through the journey.

Alighting in due course at my destination I entered the waiting brougham, and was rapidly driven to the Towers. "You are expected," said the man who took my card. "Come this way, and I will show you your room. His lordship dines at seven."

By the time I had donned my evening clothes the man reappeared and ushered me into the spacious dining-room. An old gentleman, with snow-white hair, was leaning on the mantlepiece before the fire. He turned at my entrance, and I was immediately struck with the corpse-like pallor of his cadaverous face. It needed no second glance to tell me that this man was ill.

Crossing over to him I took his extended hand. It was limp and cold, and his fingers seemed powerless to exert the slightest pressure.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Richmond," he said, weakly. "Pray be seated. Johnson, you may serve."

The dinner was perfect, and, feeling hungry after my journey, I did justice to it. His lordship, however, took nothing. He sat back in his chair breathing stertorously, his eyes glaring into vacancy, and, after attempting conversation and being answered in monosyllables that proclaimed his aberration. I gave it up. He seemed utterly exhausted in mind and body.

It was a somewhat trying experience, and I was not unthankful when I found myself assisting him back to the fireplace. He motioned the servant to leave the room.

"My lord," I said, when we were alone, "I do not know whether you wished to consult me in my professional capacity, but your condition——"

"I know it!" he interrupted, querulously. "I want you to listen. . . . Three months ago I was as hale and hearty as any man of my age. To-day I am what you see me—a physical wreck. Carter—my medical man—would have me believe it is only what is to be expected—in short that I am breaking up. He's a fool! I tell you no man understands his own body better than myself. A man does not break up in a few short weeks like this, and I have studied myself for years. It was all incomprehensible to me until this morning I read your paper. Richmond, if you had studied my case you could not have described the symptoms clearer."

His utterance came disjointedly, as if every word was an effort. To say that I was astonished would be to put it mildly.

"My lord!" I cried, amazedly; "you mean——?"

"As true as heaven's arch is over us," he whispered, solemnly, "I believe that I am being slowly poisoned."

I was not unprepared for the announcement, for, truth to tell, the suspicion had been with me as I watched him at the table.

"Pray, allow me," I said, bending towards him and taking his wrist. My examination and questioning made suspicion conviction. There was not the least doubt of it. He was suffering from the cumulative effect of a certain drug I had described in my paper.

"It's true, then?" he said, reading my face. "Pshaw! I know it, man. I have known it for weeks. Good heavens! It is horrible. I am, and always have been, an abstemious man. When the certainty forced itself upon me I surreptitiously took samples of my food and drink and had them analyzed. Three times I did so, but nothing deleterious could be found. It is baffling—it is fiendish! I know that someone about me is murdering me, and yet I am impotent. It is driving me mad . . . I fear to eat . . . I dare not drink . . . For Heaven's sake, I adjure you, prevent this crime!"

"Calm yourself, my lord," I said, quietly. "Excitement in your present low condition is dangerous. Will you leave this matter to me?"

My quiet manner reassured him, and he fell back in his chair with a feeble gesture of assent. I touched the bell. "Pray be good enough to order a conveyance," I said to him. "I wish to go to the nearest druggist."

The man appeared and received the order. With a parting word of encouragement I went out, and was rapidly driven to the town. The coachman was inclined to be communicative, and ere I re-entered the Towers I had learned that for some two years or more his lordship had lived the life of a recluse.

"A reg'lar 'ermit!" said the man; "don't seem to 'ave the 'eart for anything. It was diff'rent when 'er ladyship was alive—before Lady Flora went away. She was 'is only child—made what they call a runaway match—eloped with Captain Dugard. Dessay you read about it? The old man thought a powerful lot of 'er and the business nearly broke 'is heart, for 'e knew the Captain for what 'e was—nothing more nor less than an adventurer. They visit occasionally—for there was some sort of reconciliation, I believe, when 'er ladyship died—but it's very rarely; the last time was three months ago, as near as no matter . . ."

The man's chatter gave me food for reflection.

I found his lordship sitting as I had left him. Pouring out a dose of the mixture I had obtained from the chemist I watched him drink it.

"If it be what we think, your lordship," I said, "that is the antidote; but plainly I must tell you the administering of it cannot be prolonged indefinitely. The bane must be discovered." I rang the bell. "His lordship wishes to retire," I said to the man, and assisting him up the stairs I saw him safely into bed, where, almost immediately, he fell asleep. Leaving him, I stole downstairs and, dropping into a cosy chair, gave myself up to thought. The solemn-visaged butler placed the tantalus and cigars at my elbow and proceeded to replenish the fire. It struck me that he was taking an inordinate time over the business, and suddenly looking up I found him gazing intently at my face. Anxiety was plainly apparent in his look.

"His lordship seems far from well, Johnson," I said.

"Sorry I am to see it, sir," he returned, "for a truer gentleman never breathed. Thirty years I've been in his lordship's service. Only a year ago I've seen him come back after a day with the guns as keen on his food as the best of 'em. It breaks my heart to see him like this, sir. He eats nothing. It seems almost as if he was afraid to touch the food."

"I suppose his daughter's marriage upset him terribly?" I suggested.

"Yes; it was a bad business that, sir. She was always a headstrong, flighty girl, and the Captain's just the sort of a man to attract such a one as her ladyship was. Absolutely impecunious he was. It's common talk that he married her for the fortune he knows some day will come to her. There's queer tales about him. They say he spends most of his time at some gambling casinos on the Continent, only showing up here occasionally to bleed the old man for more money. He takes care to be most assiduous in his attentions while he's here. A rank bad lot sir, if I may be excused for saying it."

"His lordship, I understand, is of a studious disposition?"

"Yes, sir. Spends most of his time in the library. Most punctilious, too; and a regular stickler for trifles. Only yesterday he discharged a maid because she had forgotten to set out a new pen and clean stationery on the table."

He rambled on for some time, rising to the bait of my questions, until having ascertained all that I wished to learn from him, I picked up a book and, taking the hint, he withdrew.

After he had gone I lay back and revolved the whole of the circumstances in my mind. The man had informed me that Dugard had seen service in India previous to leaving the army, and the conviction forced itself upon me that he, hoping to hasten the old man's death, was the culprit. The deduction seemed the only possible one in view of my knowledge of his antecedents and the peculiar means employed. By some means he was even then administering the noxious drug to his victim. But how? It could not be through the medium of his food. That idea could be dismissed at once. How, then? It struck me that the solution could only be arrived at by someone who had the opportunity of observing his lordship's daily routine.

It was impossible for me to remain, for my doing so would only arouse suspicion, and defeat the end. Provided with the antidote the old man would be safe for some days.

Unexpectedly a word spoken by the butler recurred to my mind, and like a flash the way revealed itself to me. Next morning, after a conversation with his lordship, who seemed a new man, I left the Towers, and four hours afterwards was revealing my plan to my love. Without demur she agreed to aid me, and—By Jove! there goes the bell. Eileen, I must leave you to finish the story.

Jim here rose and went to answer the summons. With a smile his wife took up the tale :—

You will, of course, have guessed Jim's plan. I was to take upon myself the duties of parlour-maid in his lordship's household. Though somewhat doubtful as to my capabilities for the post, the thought that I might assist him in his career decided me, and the next train carried me to my situation. Lord Didsbury was apprised of my coming, so the ground was made easy for me.

I must have played the part well, for no suspicion as to my real character entered into the minds of my fellow servants. My explicit instructions were to discover how the poison was administered, and immediately on my arrival I set my woman's wits to work to read the riddle. Association with the servants convinced me that none of them were taking a hand in the dastardly business.

The scheme had been devised by some more subtle brain. His lordship gave me every opportunity, but though I observed him closely for three days I could discover nothing, and every day he had been compelled to have recourse to the antidote.

On the fourth day Captain Dugard arrived on one of his flying visits. The wife was indisposed, he said, and he had left her at Mentone. His manner with his lordship struck me as like nothing else than that of a cringing hound, but there was that in his face when he watched the old man tottering about the room that made me insensibly think of a tiger stalking its prey.

He left in the evening with a smile on his face. Previous to his going, however, he approached Johnson, the butler, in the hall and, slipping a small package into his hand, said: "You might see that this is placed on the old man's table, will you? They're his special nibs. You know what a faddist he is over them. Won't write with anything else. I forgot to give them to him."

The incident seemed trivial at the moment, and almost immediately it passed out of my mind. It was the next morning when his lordship came into the library and, sitting at his desk, took up his pen that its significance dawned on me.

It was the duty of the maid to see that fresh stationery was laid out every day, and, forgetting his punctiliousness in the matter, I had neglected to insert a new nib in his penholder. With an ejaculation of annoyance he drew the old one out of the pen and replaced it with one taken from the open box. Then, unconsciously, he placed it in his lips to moisten it, as one naturally is in the habit of doing to cause the ink to flow easily.

Like an inspiration sent from Heaven the solution of the mystery revealed itself to me, and I dashed forward to arrest his hand.

"The pen! the pen!" I gasped. He regarded me in silent amazement.

"What do you mean?" he said, presently.

"The secret is out at last," I cried; "I believe those nibs are poisoned!"

He started back in alarm and the pen dropped from his nerveless fingers on to the table.

"Merciful Heaven!" he quavered, staring wildly at the box.

Five minutes later the wire was flashing its message to Jim. His analysis fully confirmed my supposition. Every nib in the box had been immersed in a deadly poison. Its tastelessness had precluded discovery. Through the medium of his habit Lord Didsbury had unconsciously assimilated into his system a daily modicum of the drug.

That night his lordship wrote to his son-in-law. What he wrote is known only to himself and his would-be murderer.

Some months afterwards the body of a suicide bearing a strange resemblance to the Captain was exposed for indentification in the Paris Morgue. It was never claimed.

Lord Didsbury was not unmindful of the part Jim had played in plucking him from the jaws of death, and with him many things were possible. That is why the dream of "fat fees and Harley Street" has become such a pleasing reality.—London Tit-Bits.

SCREWS YOU CAN'T SEE.

The minuteness of some of the screws made in a watch factory may be measured by a statement that it takes nearly 150,000 of a certain kind to weigh a pound. Under the microscope they appear in their true character—perfectly finished bolts. The pivot of the balance-wheel is one two-hundredth of an inch in diameter, and the gauge with which pivots are classified measures to the thousandth part of an inch. Each jewel hole int[illegible] is about [illegible] an inch [illegible] the pivot to permit sufficient play. The finest [illegible] for a small [illegible] watch has a thread of 260 [illegible] to the inch and weighs little one hundred [illegible] thousandth of a pound. Jewels [illegible] into slabs on[illegible] thick, and are shel[illegible] so that they [illegible] broken off, [illegible] center and a depression made in the convex side for [illegible] weighs one one-hundred[illegible] and fifty thousandth of a pound. The roller jewel a little more than one two hundred and fifty-six thousandth. The largest round hairspring stud is one twenty-fifth of an inch in diameter and about nine one-hundredths of an inch in length.

LADIES AS MATCH MAKERS

SOME OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ON RECORD.

Queen Louise's Three Charming Daughters—Empress Catharine's Way.

Perhaps the most brilliant and successful match-maker amongst royal ladies was the late Queen Louise of Denmark. No mother ever made more brilliant matches for her own daughters than did the consort of the aged King of Denmark, and, it must be added, no mother ever had three more charming daughters for whom to find husbands, says London Tit-Bits.

As everybody knows, the flower of the family, Princess Alexandra, is now Queen of these realms; her sister, Princess Dagmar, was united to the late Emperor Alexander III. of Russia; and another sister, Princess Thyra, found a husband in H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland.

But the late Queen of Denmark did not confine her match-making to members of her own family, for she loved nothing better than to scheme to bring together any young couple whom she considered suited to each other. In these matters her sound common sense, great experience, and singularly keen perception of character proved of the utmost service. Indeed, it is common knowledge in the Danish capital that many of the happiest and most successful marriages in the country—not only among the higher classes—were brought about by the tactful Queen Louise.

The present Queen of Portugal's marriage was brought about by the pretty scheming of her mother, the late Comtesse de Paris, and Mme. de la Ferronayes. When the Crown Prince, as the King then was, refused to marry an Austrian Princess the Comtesse determined to bring about a union between him and her daughter, Princess Amelie. To this end she sent to her accomplice at Lisbon, who was often visited by the Crown Prince, a large framed portrait of

THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS,

which was placed in a conspicuous position in the drawing-room, where it would be certain to attract the attention of the royal visitor. It had not been there long before he wanted to know whose portrait it was, and, needless to say, his hostess gladly enlightened him. In due course she had the satisfaction of seeing the artful match-making scheme of the Comtesse become an accomplished fact.

When the shrewd Empress Catharine of Russia undertook the delicate task of selecting a wife for her Paul from among several German Princesses, she proceeded on somewhat original lines. On the occasion of a trio of them paying her a visit, she carefully observed their general deportment and the manner in which they alighted from their travelling coach. The eldest of the three Princesses was careless and slipped, the youngest showed such a lack of dignity as to bounce out of the carriage without making use of the steps, while the last to alight alone stepped gracefully to the ground. The Empress at once decided that only the last mentioned Princess was eligible for her son's hand and heart and in due course she became his wife, for no other reason than that she knew how to bear herself with grace and dignity.

In regard to the late Queen Victoria, it may be mentioned that no royal lady had a hand in bringing about her marriage to the very amiable and popular Prince Consort who predeceased her by more than thirty-nine years. That was one of the happiest achievements of King Leopold I. of Belgium, who must have been a match-maker of no mean abilities, considering the number of other eligible suitors who were aspirants for

HER MAJESTY'S HAND.

Respecting the late Queen herself, she was known to be an ardent match-maker, and did not confine her operations in this character exclusively to royal circles. A very amusing story is told of the way in which she found a wife for the rather eccentric Lord Palmerston, who can scarcely be described as a ladies' man.

The then Premier, Lord Melbourne, was a widower, and, Lord Palmerston occupying the post of Foreign Minister, difficulties seemed in store regarding the reception of the wives of the various Ambassadors. This prompted Her Majesty to ask Lord Palmerston why he refrained from taking to himself a wife, and the Foreign Minister pleaded that he did not know anyone who would have him. Queen Victoria replied that there need be no difficulty about that, and calmly undertook to produce a lady who was ready and willing to become his wife. His lordship could do nothing under the circumstances but acquiesce, and Lady Cowper was accordingly brought home from Rome to become Lady Palmerston. Her husband would have been the first to acknowledge that never was there a happier match, and it was also a good example of the late Queen's fine judgment.

In the years when the present German Emperor was a somewhat impetuous young Prince, it was desired by his mother that he should marry and settle down. Accordingly an album full of portraits of Royal Princesses who were open to engagement was put in his way, and every effort made to induce him to indicate his choice. Indeed, it was said that the Prince was not allowed a moment's peace; and in a fit of desperation one day he dashed into his mother's boudoir and thus delivered himself: "Look here, mother, for Heaven's sake select out of that album any woman you consider fit to be your future daughter-in-law, and I'll marry straight off, for with all the eternal nagging I have had for the past three months I am almost insane." The Empress Frederick was surprised as well as pleased, and the present Empress was suggested there and then.

"HE WANTS THE EARTH."

ANTI-MICROBE SHAVING.

In Jermyn street is what is said to be the only antiseptic, microbe-proof barber shop in London, England. The first impression is rather grimly suggestive of a private operating surgery. The walls are tiled. There is no upholstery anywhere. The chairs are of metal, with head subjected to frequent disfection. The basins are made with pedal taps to avoid the contaminating touch of human fingers. Everything your eyes rest on seems to say: 'There are no germs on me.' The barber is clad in sterilized overalls. He explains that that is to prevent any of his own personal and private stock of microbes from migrating to you. Before beginning to operate on you he dips his hands in some germ-destroying solution, and he assures you that the razor is sterilized afresh for each customer. From a capsule he empties into a sterilized vessel just enough soap powder to supply the lather needed for the shaving job. It seems that danger may lurk in soap that has been used to shave some other fellow. The price charged for the operation is sixpence.

ELECTRIC BATTERY IN A MAN.

Anybody who shakes hands with Henry Longman, of Summerville, Pa., gets an electric shock of considerable power. Three years ago, while peeling tanbark he was struck by lightning and has ever since possessed the queer power of transmitting an electric shock to everything he touches. By passing a blade of a knife between his thumb and first finger during the process of a storm he charges the metal so strongly that heavy weights can be lifted. When flies alight upon him they drop dead, and when he is in a dark room his eyes shine like incandescent lights. Whenever a storm approaches Longman becomes so strongly charged with electricity that it is dangerous to touch him. He says he feels no inconvenience except that he dare not go near a moving locomotive for fear of being drawn against it and killed.

Piles To prove to you that Dr. Chase's Ointment is a certain and absolute cure for each and every form of Itching, bleeding and protruding piles, the manufacturers have guaranteed it. See testimonials in the daily press and ask your neighbors what they think of it. You can use it and get your money back if not cured. 60c a box, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.
Dr. Chase's Ointment

DAN'S ARGUMENT.

"Dan," said a contractor to one of his trusted employes, "when you are seeing about the lime this morning, I wish you to mention to Dempsey that I would like to have that bill paid. You needn't press it, you know; but just mention it to him in an off-hand manner."

"Yes, sorr."

"I got the money from Dempsey," said Dan on his return.

"I'm very glad. You merely alluded to it in an off-hand way, I suppose?"

"Yes, sorr. I handed him the bill and told him if he didn't pay it I would let off my hand and give him a black eye that he wouldn't forget for a month, and he paid it at wanst."

FOR ENGLISH VISITORS.

Some of the leading men of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York, have raised a fund to set apart for five years the best pew in the church for the English visitors who, Sunday by Sunday, find their way to the scene of Henry Ward Beecher's historic ministry. An English flag has been placed under a glass cover, and a plate bearing the words, "Reserved for English visitors," has been attached to the pew. As is well known, a pew in St. Margaret's Westminster, is thus reserved for American visitors.

40,000 Syrians reside in the United States.

SOME CURIOUS ROMANCES

ASSOCIATED WITH UNFORTUNATE POSSESSIONS.

A Ring That Killed a Bride.—The Prince Imperial's Sad End.

Some of the most weird and curious romances are associated with possessions which appear to have no other purpose than to bring misfortune and trouble on those who own them. A tragic instance of this is related in connection with the Lindsey family. According to the legend, Colin Lindsey, a former Earl of Balcarres, was quietly eating his breakfast when he should have been awaiting his bride at the altar. When reminded of the fact he hurried off to church, and, forgetting the indispensable ring, borrowed one from a friend, which he duly placed on the bride's finger.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the newly-made countess took a glance at the ring and, on seeing that it bore a grinning death's head suddenly fainted away. The incident affected her to such an extent that, on recovering consciousness, she expressed her conviction that she was destined to die within twelve months. And, sure enough, in less than that period her life came to an end.

Napoleon III. was the possessor of two rings, which he constantly wore and which had belonged to his predecessor, Napoleon I., who was a fatalist in the fullest meaning of the term. When Napoleon III. died it was proposed that these rings should be removed from his finger; but the Prince Imperial

REFUSED TO HAVE THEM.

They were accordingly buried with his father at Chislehurst, and, so far from regarding them from the same point of view as the Prince, the Emperor's servants firmly believed that he would come to an untimely end for discarding the rings. And when, in 1879, the unfortunate young man met his death at the hands of the Zulus, against whom he was fighting for his country, they saw in this deplorable event the realization of their fears.

One of the best known public men in New Zealand, a wealthy resident of Hokianga, North Island, recently travelled all the way to St. Louis, Mo., in a fruitless endeavor to have an idol cremated which had cast an evil spell over him.

The heathen idol had come to him as part of a legacy from his grandfather, to whom it had been presented by a Maori chief. Said its owner, "I have travelled 10,000 miles with the image, and it has brought disaster after disaster upon me. I have often endeavored to destroy it, but without avail.

"I once threw it under a train, and in running to get out of the way, fell and broke one of my fingers. Then I was arrested for endangering the lives of passengers. When in London three months ago I threw it into the Thames, and a drunken sailor who fished it out brought it back to my rooms, and in his rage at not receiving a reward

ALMOST BEAT ME TO DEATH.

"While in San Francisco I tried to chop it to pieces with an axe, when the axe, rebounding, struck me on the forehead with almost fatal effect. The wood is so hard that an ordinary fire will not destroy it, and I am afraid to get rid of it otherwise because of the evil results."

The image was a crude figure in rosewood and ebony, and about two feet long. Failing to get it cremated in St. Louis its owner started for New York, where he was determined to have it destroyed at whatever cost.

Buried in the shadow of Diamond Head Volcano, at Honolulu, is a violin known as the "Violin of Death." In the space of a few months two persons who had owned it took their own lives and a third mysteriously disappeared. The last victim of this weird instrument was George H. Scott, a sergeant of the U.S.A. Sixty-sixth Coast Artillery. This victim killed himself at the barracks at Camp McKinley, but a few days before doing so he realized the evil influence of the violin and buried it as above stated.—London Tit-Bits.

A SURE SIGN.

In a Scotch rural district two boys were one day discussing what sign it was when the cuckoo is heard for the first time in the year. One of them said it was getting married, while the other said it was a sign that they were going to be rich.

A farmer, overhearing them, said: "That cannot be true, because I have heard it many times, and I am not married yet, and I am certainly not rich."

Just then a local worthy, known as Jamie, was passing by, and the farmer said:

"Jamie, can you tell us what sign it is when you hear the cuckoo for the first time?"

"Yes," said Jamie, as he took the pipe from his mouth. "It's a sign you're not deaf."

CANAL WORKED BY A MODEL.

A most ingenious system is employed by which the director of the Suez Canal can tell at a glance the exact position of all vessels passing through it. A model is placed in the office of Port Said, and the whole canal is worked from headquarters by means of the telegraph, the position of each ship being marked by a figure on the model. It is thus quite easy to arrange for vessels passing each other.

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SOME STARTLING TRIALS

ODD EXPERIMENTS FOR TESTING INVENTIONS.

Sixteen Hours in a Submarine Boat in 30 Feet of Water.

A diver, though supplied with air from the surface, and in communication with his crew in a boat above him, rarely remains under water for more than four hours at a time. The French naval authorities recently determined to subject their new submarine, the "Morse," to a submersion of sixteen hours on end, says London Answers.

The "Narval," a previously built boat of the same type, had been submerged for twelve hours, and her crew had suffered frightfully. But the "Morse" was said to be better fitted with air-renewing apparatus. The boat was sunk in harbor one gloomy winter day, and lay at the bottom of nearly 30 feet of water. The cold was intense, as it was impossible to

SPARE SUFFICIENT AIR

for any kind of fire. The silence, of course, was absolute, and the four men who composed the crew were as cut off from their fellows as though they had been in another world. The air became heavily charged with fumes of poisonous carbonic acid gas, and the men were obliged to frequently inhale oxygen, and rub their nostrils and lips with a pomade made of lime.

"Minutes," said one of them afterwards, "seemed like hours."

But the time at length elapsed, and the "Morse" pumped out the water from her tanks, and rose again to the surface, with all aboard safe and sound.

In their efforts to give the public confidence in their novel inventions, inventors frequently make startling trials of their apparatus. Mr. Probst, of Geneva, has devised a wonderful life-saving suit, which is made of indiarubber, and so buoyant that half the body of the wearer remains out of water. Air-tight pockets hold water, food, even tobacco and matches, a trumpet for signalling, a torch, and a big knife with which to

FIGHT OFF SHARKS

or similar man-eaters. Nothing could be more thorough than the trial to which Mr. Probst has subjected his invention. He has spent seventeen days consecutively in the open sea off Havre, eating, and even sleeping, among the tumbling wave-crests.

Almost equally alarming was a test made recently of a new mechanical brake, for which its inventor, an engineer named Meares, claimed that it would stop a train travelling at fifty miles an hour within twenty yards. To test it, an old line leading to a disused colliery in Lancashire was utilized. The rail was continued to the very verge of the pit-mouth, so that, if the brake failed, nothing could save the inventor from falling headlong into the depths beneath.

A large number of people gathered to watch the test. A light engine, with Meares alone as passenger, driver, and stoker, was worked to full speed and came roaring along the track. To those who watched it seemed beyond belief that it could be pulled up in the given space. But, just as it seemed on the point of crashing into the black gulf, the inventor moved a handle, and, as if by magic, the engine stopped, with its front wheels not ten feet from the pit-mouth.

To prove that his newly-invented motor-cycle was the most powerful yet built was the reason of Mr. Lockinge's recent attempt to ride up the Penton Pass, in

THE AUSTRALIAN ALPS.

The pass is nearly three thousand feet in height, and in places only eight feet wide, with a drop of three or four hundred feet to the torrent below. Had the motor failed to work in such a place, rider and machine would probably have fallen headlong over the unprotected edge. As a matter of fact, the motor did fail, but fortunately in a spot where the road was wider. So Mr. Lockinge managed to dismount in safety.

The terrible airship tragedy of May last was the result of an inventor putting too great confidence in the product of his brain and hands. It was on Monday, May 12th, that the people living in the Avenue du Maine, in Paris, were aroused from sleep by a most appalling crash, followed by a glare of flame. Rushing out, they found the street blocked with the tangled remains, steel plates, and broken cordage. Among the ruins lay two crushed and mangled forms, those of Senhor Severo, of the Brazilian Parliament, and Suchet, his engineer.

Shortly after five o'clock that morring the inventor had started from Vaugirard in his brand new airship "Pax," for a first

TRIAL OF ITS POWERS.

At a height of 1,500 feet above the city the great balloon suddenly exploded, and it and its passengers shot downwards through the air. The test was the more foolish because the inventor had hardly ever been in a balloon before, and had only finished work upon his machine a few minutes before it was inflated.

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION.

"Spontaneous combustion" was the medical verdict upon the case of Charles Page, a workman, who was found in flames at two o'clock in the morning in the streets of Geneva. He was known as a heavy drinker, and there were no traces of pipe, tobacco, or matches among the debris of charred clothing.

RATS IN A POST OFFICE.

From Tunis it is reported that the post office there has lately been infested by thousands of rats, which gnaw at and destroy the letters. A troop of cats introduced by the authorities have not succeeded in driving the rats away, and the postmaster advises the public to inclose their letters in small metalic tubes.

The microbe of consumption has been known to remain alive on a book for 103 days.

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Dreadful Case of Itching Piles

Doctor Wanted to Burn the Skin With a Red Hot Iron—Patient Was Cured by Dr. Chase's Ointment

Mr. Alex. Sheridan, Tarbot Vale, N.S., writes:—For two years I worked as sectionman on the Dominion Coal Company's Railroad between [illegible] Sydney and [illegible] during that time I was exposed to all sorts of weather. Gradually my health failed, and I became a victim of protruding piles. At first I did not know what my ailment was, but consulted a doctor, and though he treated me for piles, they only grew worse.

I was forced to give up work and return to my home. My suffering could scarcely be described. I could not walk or lie down, but while the rest of the family was sleeping I would be groaning and aching from the excruciating pains.

Again I decided to consult a doctor. This one stripped me, and said the piles would have to be burned with a red hot iron. I shivered at the thought of burning the flesh, and told him I could not think of undergoing such an operation, so he gave me some salve, for which he charged me two dollars, but it did not do me any good.

"I was in a desperate condition and had given up hope of ever being freed from this dreadful suffering when a friend told me about Dr. Chase's Ointment. He said he had seen so many cases that it had cured that he would pay for it himself if it failed to cure.

"My experience with Dr. Chase's Ointment is that the first application did me more good than did the two doctors, and it has made me as well and as free from piles as any man. Since being cured I worked during the winter in the lumber woods and experienced no return of my old trouble. I am not putting it too strong when I say that Dr. Chase's Ointment was worth $100 a box to me. You are free to use my testimonial, for the benefit of others, as I feel it my duty to make known this great ointment."

Dr. Chase's Ointment, 60 cents a box, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.