

would exactly pass through the centre of his heart, and only the lateral deviation caused by his turning, saved him.

Dr. Bland hastened to see Charles Rivers the morning after he had been shot. He had, he said, been up all night by the bedside of a dying patient, and his thin and haggard looks seemed to bear witness to the truth of the assertion. Of course he was overjoyed at the escape of Charles, and horrified at the murderous attack which had been made upon him.

Dr. Bland became more assiduous in his attentions to Alice during Charles's illness. Her mother, also, once again attempted to reason out of her engagement with him, but the attempt was useless. There was a time when it might have been done with success, but that time was past. Alice had been made aware that much of what she had heard was untrue, and the chief portion of that which had a foundation in truth, greatly exaggerated. Besides this, Charles, though far from being a saint, had long forsaken a course of dissipation. She had, moreover, forgiven him; and he had already suffered enough by the partial estrangement of her affection.

It was therefore rather surprising that under the circumstances Dr. Bland so far forgot his usual sagacity as actually to propose to Alice. But he did so, and soon received his answer,—an emphatic refusal, and such a refusal too, as was a crushing blow to his pride of heart. She told him that as the professed friend of Charles Rivers he might have been discreet enough to spare her the pain of giving him such an answer as she was compelled to give, and that his knowledge of the tie which existed between Charles and her might have deterred him from exposing himself to the humiliation of a refusal.

Dr. Bland felt the justice of her words, and attempted to explain the matter; but, strange to say, his words produced no impression of truth upon the mind of Alice; and it was with some difficulty that he obtained from her the promise to keep the matter a secret from Charles Rivers. She thought it her duty to tell him under the circumstances, but at the doctor's earnest request she waived that duty.

The summer had passed swiftly away and Charles had become convalescent. By the advice of his physician he went to the Parrsboro' coast for a change of air, to enjoy the sea bathing in the clear waters of the Basin of Minas. Dr. Bland suggested that he should accompany him, which he did, and much against his brother's wish, Edward Bland went also. A couple of weeks spent on the sea coast passed pleasantly enough, and Charles was in a fair way of being restored to his usual vigor.

(TO BE CONTINUED).

It has been discovered at the General Post Office in England, that many persons in the United States are in the habit of sending over to that country sums of money, scarfs, pictures and

other articles wrapped in newspapers. In consequence of the existence of this practice American papers are now examined at St. Martins-le-Grand. It is impossible to examine every paper; but selections are made at London, and frequent seizures are the result.

## THE POISONED POSTAGE STAMP.

A SENSATION ROMANCE.

Extracted from *Fun*.

### CHAPTER I.—POETRY.

AUGUSTUS DE VERE BILLINGSBY was, as his name would divulge, the assistant in a chemist's shop. But he had a soul above *fiat mistura*—a mind that spurned *mane mend*:—an intellect that soared higher than *pillule scæ*. He wrote for all the principal magazines and papers. You will observe that I am careful in saying he wrote for them. I am compelled to admit that his efforts never went beyond that, for his articles were never printed!

Only one of AUGUSTUS'S works ever reached posterity. It was the following poem written after a visit per London, Chatham, and Dover, to the Crystal Palace, and suggested by painful, commingled with pleasant, reminiscences:—

"Little Miss Muffet

Sat at a buffet,

'Neath SPIERS-and-PONDIAN sway.

There came a young rider,\*

Who asked for some cider,

And then was unable to pay."

These verses—which BILLINGSBY used fondly to speak of as "a poem which was the fruit of much SPIERS-and-POND-ering"—was sent to various journals, but without success. But it was fated that the public should not lose it. He left a copy inadvertently on the counter, and his employer, Mr. SQUILLS, used it to cover a pot of *unguentum* for Mr. POTTERBY'S bad leg. Mr. POTTERBY opened the parcel and read the lines before he destroyed the paper. And that was a large public for BILLINGSBY!

BILLINGSBY had written a story for the (but no! Prudence forbids our mentioning the name of the periodical in question.—ED.), and one of the rules of the (periodical the name of which prudence bids us to mention.—ED.) was that no MSS. could be returned if they were not accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope (and a very good rule too.—ED.)

"Ha! Ha!" cried AUGUSTUS, as he inclosed a directed envelope (adhesive) and a stamp (ditto) to the editor, with his manuscript.

He had smeared the flap of the envelope, and the back of the stamp, which he had not affixed to the envelope, for an object which will be seen hereafter, with that most prompt and deadly poison (name suppressed for obvious reasons:—ED.).

"Ha! ha! He had better not reject my MS.!" said BILLINGSBY: