

something pulled me ahead, and wouldn't let me stop.

"I went up to the bed, hauled the hangings away; there lay the girl who had warned me against Alvarez! Her dress was torn, her hair down, and the blood dripping slowly from a cut in her bare breast; the whole counterpane was soaked with it.

"I don't remember feeling much at first, only a vague wonder if she was dead, and what I could do. I set the lamp down on a bureau; I saw a couple of fine handkerchiefs there. I staunched the wound as well as I could, and while I was doing it, everything got clear to me, just as if somebody stood and whispered it all in my ears.

"The girl had been; Alvarez did listen to our conversation. When they went upstairs, he quarrelled with her, and finally, in his rage, stabbed her. Then he was obliged to finish his work, and kill her outright. I hunted about on the floor and found the dagger; it was one I had given Alvarez only the day before, because he admired it so much.

"The whole plot grew plainer and plainer. I tell you it was no working of my own brains that made it so. I first listened to something that went on telling me the story as clear as I am repeating it to you. After Alvarez had killed her, he made up the plan to drug me, steal my money and the drafts he supposed I still carried, then put me up in that room. In the morning I was to be found there and the girl dead. The story would be that I strayed in drunk, and killed her to hinder her calling for help.

"What was I to do; how got away? At that moment, the moon came out. I went to the window and opened it. I was in a room at the back of the house that looked into a narrow street. Below me there was a shed; I could drop on to that, and from there to the pavement.

"As I stood getting the air, and glad to feel it, I heard voices coming along the alley singing, and in a minute I knew they were singing the Star Spangled Banner. Then there followed three cheers such as only American sailors could give.

"I crawled out of the window and let myself down on to the shed. The steps and voices came nearer. I could make out there was a party of half a dozen or so. When they got under the shed, I called, 'Aho, mates! Look up here, to: comrade in distress!' They stopped, and I was not a second making matters clear, you may be sure. One of them climbed up to me; the rest stood and waited.

We got back into the chamber, and as we did so, there came a groan from the bed. We ran to it; the girl had stirred. She was trying to hold up one of her poor hands, muttering, 'Alvarez—husband! Don't—don't kill!' Then the hand dropped, and she lay still again. I thought this time it was surely all over—she would never move again.

"Here's a go, mate," said my companion. "Now, what are we to do? We can't 'bout ship and leave this poor girl here a dyin', now can we? That was plain enough unless we were bigger brutes than the Spaniard that had murdered her. I didn't believe there was any life left, but there might be, and we couldn't go. I thought a minute, and then we managed it. One of the other men was to come up to us; we would barricade the door, and wait while the rest of the party went in search of the police to arrest the whole gang asleep in the house.

"So my new friend crept down to his mates, and it wasn't long before he and another came back. I had gone to work over the girl again, and they helped me. We did everything we could think of to stop the blood and try to bring her to, and were so busy about it the time didn't seem long.

"The poor creature got so she could open her eyes at last, and made shift to swallow a few drops of brandy and water we mixed out of a flask one of the men carried. But she did not know what was going on; there was a film over her eyes as if she was blind, and sometimes she would try to put up her hands, and groan, 'Alvarez! don't—don't!' It was enough to turn a stout man faint and sick, I tell you; and one of the fellows, a great six-footer, just sat down and cried like a baby.

"Finally, before we'd had time to think about the party coming back, we heard an awful racket below stairs; the fellows were there and had brought the police. They were trying to get into the house. It wasn't many minutes till we heard the doors open, and voices and steps on the stairs, and passage. We pulled open the door, and in marched the police and our blue-coats.

"They'd brought a doctor to the girl, and he got her so she was conscious; but, any-how, there were enough to tell the story, even if she hadn't been able to do it. When the old woman and three men found themselves arrested, they were glad to turn against Alvarez. I was about right in my idea of it; on the idea that was put in my head, for it was none of mine. He had not meant to kill her, but he was in such a fury at finding she had let out his plots, that he struck her with the dagger, Spaniard-like, before he knew what he was at; then I supposed the devil helped him to invent the scheme to lay the murder on me, without much time lost.

"The girl was his wife, as she had told me. Poor soul! she lived till afternoon the next day; and part of the time she had her senses all clear, and could talk, weak as she was.

"It was enough to make you cry to see how she tried to screen the villain. Indeed, I don't believe she would have said a word even to the priest, for she never gave a sign, when he

threatened that she couldn't have absolution without. But he tried another talk, and let her understand that an innocent man might suffer, unless she made a clean breast of it. So, what she wouldn't do for her soul's sake, woman-like, she did for somebody else's; and they made her happy by explaining to her that she had lived so long her murderer would not be hung.

"Alvarez was sentenced to imprisonment for life; but he killed himself the day the verdict was given. The other men gave up the money, when they found that would lessen their time in prison. I sailed before the week was out in the ship my new friends belonged to. I've never seen Rio since, and, as you may think, I don't want to.

"Hark! There's the whistle. That's our train! Well, I finished my yarn just in time; so, goodby, and good-luck to you."

SOMETHING TO DO.

Stay! bold enthusiast, while we lightly scan O'er all the wonders of the modern time: What can the elements more give to man To render him immortal, life sublime? The mountain's quiet! the valley's peaceful rest!

The wide Atlantic's wild incessant roar, By Goddeas of the Sciences impress'd; Tell there is yet within men's world-wide store,

Aye! in their hearts a world yet to explore.

Is it in Nature's happiest charms supreme? The gilded morn, bright harbinger of day, When rises clear the gay lark's sunny theme, And sings its glories in carolling lay. Or, is the still small voice within us sped, When merriment and pleasures joyous flow, The mazy dance, or banquet bounteous spread? They but a dream fly past in turn, and lo! Leave blanks in time, and tell us it must go.

Behold the power of yonder form of man, Amid the haunts of misery and crime, His warming heart to raise the poor now can In eloquence stir men to deeds sublime. Each in our turn an hero's work may give, By little, ply a life of lasting fame. 'Tis not for self alone, for future strive To give to men truth, love, and virtue's fame, Blessing ourselves with an angelic theme.

J. G.

MUSCULAR STRENGTH OF INSECTS.

It is an interesting study to compare the motive power of birds and insects, and recent experiments prove that they are superior in this respect to quadrupeds, especially when the possibility of aerial navigation is taken into account. In a few minutes the condor will soar many miles in height; the swallow is not weary of describing its rapid and graceful curves for fifteen hours at a time. It has been calculated that the eagle, with its rapid flight, produces an effort sufficient to raise and bear up its own weight equal to twenty-six horse power.

Insect organization is as full of wonders as that of the bird. The energy which lives in these curious little creatures may well excite the wonder of an observer. "If you compare their loads with the size of their bodies," said Pliny, in speaking of ants, "It must be allowed that no other animal is endowed with such immense strength in proportion." Sir Walter Scott suggested the same idea. When a beetle is placed under a candlestick, it will move it in its efforts to escape; which is relatively the same thing as a prisoner in Newgate shaking the building with his back. Linnæus remarks that an elephant having the force of a horn beetle would be able to move a mountain.

M. Felix Plateau, a young Belgian naturalist, and a son of the celebrated physician, has lately tried some very delicate experiments to measure the muscular strength of insects, as others have done with man and the horse. The strength of the last two is estimated by the aid of a machine called a dynamometer, where the tension of a spring is counterbalanced by an effort exercised for a very short time. A man, it is found, has a power of traction equal to five-sixths of his weight; a horse, only the half of two-thirds of his weight; but this is very small in comparison with the strength of insects, many of which can draw forty times that amount.

The way in which M. Plateau has measured these powers is ingenious. He harnessed the insect by a horizontal thread, which was passed over a light, moveable pulley; to this was attached a balance loaded with a few grains of sand. To prevent the insect turning aside, he made it walk between two bars of glass on a board covered with muslin, so as to afford a rough surface; exciting it forward, he gradually poured fresh sand into the balance until it refused to advance any farther; the sand and the insect were then weighed, and the experiment was repeated three times, in order to arrive at a correct conclusion as to the greatest effort that each could make. The tables which give the results of these trials seem clearly to demonstrate that in the same group of insects the lightest and smallest possess the greatest strength; or

that the relative force is in inverse ratio to the experiments in flying and pushing, as well as to drawing.

This law, assuredly very curious and interesting in the economy of nature, has been confirmed by trying a dozen individuals of various species in order to obtain results more approaching to the truth. These have been very successful in confirming previous experience—for example, the drone is four times the weight of the bee, yet it can only drag a weight fifteen times greater than its own; whilst the bee easily draws twenty-three or twenty-four times its own bulk. In flying, it can raise a weight very little inferior to its own, whilst the drone can only transport in this manner half its own weight. The law in question appears also to apply not only to the species which belong to the same etimological subdivision, but in a certain measure to the entire class of insects. It is true that if the species examined are arranged by the increasing order of their weight, the corresponding relations which express the relative force are not always exactly progressive. There are exceptions, which may be explained by the difference of structure. The law holds good if they are divided into three groups, comprising, respectively, the lightest insects, those of a middle size, and the heaviest. In this way the relative force is represented for the first group by twenty-six; for the second, by nineteen; for the last by nine. This relates only to the power of traction; if that in flying be taken into consideration, the lightest can far surpass the heaviest; the first being equal to one and one-third; the last is but one-half. The strongest insects appear to be those familiar to the naturalist, which live on lilies and roses, such as the *Crioceræ* and *Trichies*. These little beings can draw a weight about forty times superior to their own, and one, an athlete of the tribe, drew sixty-seven times its own weight. A small beetle of the tribe *Anomalæ* has executed the same feat. Another more remarkable fact is related of a horned-beetle, which held between its mandibles, alternately raising and lowering its head and breast, a rod of thirty centimetres long, weighing four hundred grammes; its own weight was but two grammes. At the side of the insect, what are the acrobats who can carry a table between their teeth! Such examples show to what an extent insects are superior to the larger animals in the strength of their muscles. Dry and nervous, they can, in proportion to themselves, move mountains. In addition to this, they are ingenious; when an obstacle does not yield to them, they know how to turn it aside. One day, in a garden, a small wasp was trying to raise a caterpillar, which it had just killed. The caterpillar was at least five or six times heavier than its conqueror, which could not gain its end. Six times successively, weary of the war, and despairing of success, it abandoned its prey, and sadly placed itself at some distance. At last a bright idea saved it from its embarrassment; it returned, placed itself across the caterpillar, as if on horseback; with its two middle feet it embraced the body of its victim, raised it against its breast, and managed to walk on the four feet which were at liberty. Thus it soon crossed a walk of six feet wide, and laid its prey against a wall.

RUSSIAN AGRICULTURISTS.

A Russian paper publishes a very depressing article on the condition of the agricultural classes of the Empire. "These classes," it says, "pay no less than 274,000,000 roubles to the Government in taxes, and if we consider that since 1856 the country has been at peace, that the number of recruits levied yearly has been comparatively small, that serfage has been abolished and labor has been emancipated from the dues which formerly restricted its activity, and that the empire has been provided with a huge network of railways which enables corn to be rapidly transferred from fertile districts to barren ones, it would seem that there must be an increase in the general prosperity. But instead of this we are assured by all who are well informed on such subjects, that, with a few individual exceptions, our peasants are, on the average, no better off now than they were thirty or forty years ago. * * * The great mass of our people live like a horde of savages in smoky huts; young and old, covered with dirty sheepskins, sleep together with their domestic animals on the same boards. There are whole districts where bathing is unknown, and change of linen is regarded as a luxury. Black bread, mixed with all sorts of foreign ingredients, cabbage-soup, and milk, are the regular food of our peasantry. As for the cattle, everyone who has travelled in the interior of the Empire, knows that they have enormously diminished in numbers. We have, as has been wittily said, more Councillors of State than cows. That the

physical condition of the masses has deteriorated, and the muscular power of the average peasant is less than it was, is shown at each levy of recruits. * * *

There was a time when we used to boast of the gigantic strength and robust healthiness of our peasantry; but no one has such illusions now. Since there have been surgeons and trained nurses in our villages we know they are nests of disease, how fearful is the mortality, and how few of our peasants ever attain advanced age."

THE WORKINGMEN'S PEACE ASSOCIATION.

The third annual general meeting of the above association was held on Saturday at the office, Buckingham street, Strand, London, England; Mr. Worley in the chair.

Mr. W. R. Cremer, the secretary, read the report of the council, which stated that during the last year, that body had devoted itself to obtaining the co-operation of large organized bodies of workingmen, and resolutions and petitions in favor of Mr. Henry Richard's motion in Parliament in favor of the international arbitration.

Several members having addressed the meeting, the report was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Babb moved the following resolution—

"That this meeting rejoices in the progress which the principle of international arbitration has made during the past year, as evidenced amongst other things, by the fact that nearly a million of persons have petitioned the House of Commons through the agency of the association, in favor of Mr. Henry Richard's motion, and the unanimity with which workingmen's organizations have taken up and advocated the cause, and it urges the Council to continue its efforts until the principle has been adopted by the House of Commons.

Mr. West seconded the resolution, which was agreed to.

Mr. Howard Evans moved the following resolution—

"That the meeting expresses its strong condemnation of the conduct of those persons who are raising money in the country with the avowed object of aiding hostilities against the existing Government of Spain, and thus producing the horrors of civil war in that country."

Mr. Stainsby seconded the resolution, which was also agreed to.

LABOR PROTECTION LEAGUE.

Four or five of the East-end branches of the League held a demonstration on a small scale in Hyde Park, on Good Friday afternoon. The chair was taken by Mr. Haley, the secretary of No. 3 branch, who explained the meeting had no political object whatever. Its sole purpose was to protest against the injustice and hardships of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Masters and Servants Act, and the law of conspiracy as they effect the workingclasses. He contended that the first of these Acts was objectionable, inasmuch as it made a special offence of intimidation practised by one workman against another, instead of leaving it to be dealt with by the common law of the land. In respect to the second, he asserted that its operation was most unequal, because, while it exposed to three months' imprisonment a workman who left work in the middle of a week for the protection of a comrade, if left a master who suddenly discharged a workman for insufficient cause to be dealt with exclusively by the civil courts.

Mr. Keene proposed a resolution condemnatory of the laws we have mentioned, and authorizing the chairman to sign a petition to Parliament for their repeal or modification. The resolution was seconded by Mr. Sexton. It was, of course, carried unanimously.

JIM SMITH'S MENAGERIE.

A party of boys at Jim Smith's house were playing a game that they called menagerie. All the boys who never played it before were turned into the hall, and then, being called into the sitting-room one by one, asked to tell what particular animal they most wished to see. One boy wished to see a hippopotamus, another an elephant, others tigers and lions; but they were one and all led up to the looking-glass and pointed to their own reflection, and told that there was the animal they had expressed a desire to see. This game the boys thought very funny; and they laughed heartily at the last boy who was admitted into the menagerie; for he had asked to see a monkey, and looked very much "taken down" when shown his own self.

"Out here is old drunken Tom Cathbone," said one of the boys, looking from the window: "let's call him in, and let him have a peep at an ugly-looking animal."

So poor old Tom, the drunkard, was called, into the room, and told to tell what animal he wanted to see.

"Oh! show me the worst looking wild beast you've got," said he. "Come, show it to me; show me the best?"

"All right, then!" said the boys, and pushed Tom right in front of the looking-glass. He stood for a moment looking into the glass with a silly drunkard's smile; but presently such a look of horror and sorrow passed over his face, that the laughter of the boys was checked; and they could not help but pity him as he sank into a chair and covered his face with his hands.

"We didn't mean to hurt your feelings," said Jim. "We did the same thing to all the boys. And, just before you came in, Dick Willoughby asked to see a monkey; and we showed himself."

But the poor fellow looked up with a mournful look in his bleared eyes, and said: "I am worse than a beast; worse than a beast!"

And, after he had left them, the boys watched him going down the street, and from their hearts did they pity poor old Tom Cathbone; and so do we; and much we hope that none of the dear boys whom we now know and love may ever come to be such as he is to-day.

—The Gem.

JOSH BILLINGS ON THE CURSED MUSKETO.

DEAR SMITH,—Yure letter kame safe unto hand last nite bi mail, and i hurry tew repli.

The best musketers now in market are raised near Bergen point, in the dominion ov Nu Jersey.

They grow there verry spontaneous, and the market for them is verry unsteady—the grate supply injures the demand.

Two hundred and fifty to the square inch iz considered a paying krop, altho they often beat that.

They don't require any nussing, and the poorer the land the bigger the yield. If it want for musketers i don't know what sum people would do there tew git a living, for there iz a grate deal ov cultivated land there that wont raise ennything else at a profit.

The musketer iz a short lived bug, but don't waste enny time; they are alwuz az redly for bizness az pepper sass iz, and kan bight 10 minutes after they are born just az fluently az ever.

There iz people in this world so kontrary at heart, and so ignorant, that they won't see enny widadim in having musketers around; I alwuz pity such pholks—their edukashun has been verry sorely neglected and ain't level.

Wisdom iz like duk eggs—if yu git them, yu hav got tew search for them—there ain't no ducs in these benighted days that will cum and la eggs in yure hand—not a duk, Mr. Smith, not a duk.

The musketo is a sosial insect; they liv verry thick amongst each other, and lov the society ov man also; but don't kontrakt any ov hiz vices.

Yu never see a musketer that was a default-er; they never fail to cum'to time, altho thousands lose their lives in the effort.

The philosophers tell us that the musketers who kan't sing won't bight; this information may be ov grate use to science, but ain't wuth much to a phellow in a hot nite where musketers are plenty.

If there ain't but one musketer out of ten that kan bight good, that iz enuff to sustain their reputashun.

The philosophers ar alwuz a telling us sumthing that iz right smart, but the only plan they kan offer us tew get rid ov our sorrows iz to grin and bear them.

They kant rob one single musketer ov his stinger, by argument. I say bully for the musketer!

The musketer is the child of circumstances in one respekt—he kan be born or not, and liv and di a square deth in a loresum marsh, 1,600 miles from the nearest nabor, without ever tasting blood, and be happy all the time; or he kan git into somebody's bed room thru the key hole, and take his rashuns reglar, and sings sams of praze and glorificashun.

It don't kost a musketer much for hiz board in this world; if he kant find enny bobby to eat, he kan set on a blade of swamp meadow gras, and liv himself to deth on the swamp fog.

The musketer is a gray bug and laz 6 legs, a bright eye, a fine busst, a sharp tooth and a redly wit.

He don't waste enny time hunting up hiz customers, and alwuz lights onto a baby fust if there iz one on the premises.

I positively fear a musketer.

In the dark, still nite, when everything iz az noiseless az a pair ov empty slippers, to hear one at the further end ov the room slowly but surely working hiz way up to you, singing the same hot old hissing tune of theirs, and harking to feel the exakt lokate, iz simply premeditated sorrow tew me; i had rather look forward to the time when an elephant waz going tew step onto me.

The musketer haz no friends, and but phew associates; even a mule despizes them.

But i hav seen human beings who want actually afraid ov them; i have seen pholks who had rather have a musketer lite onto them; i have seen pholks who were so tuff against anguish that a musketer mite lite onto them enny where and plunge their dagger in up tew the hilt in vain.

Dear Smith, pardon me for saying so much about the cursid musketer, but ov all things on this arth that travel, or set still, for deviltry, there aint enny bug, gnuv beast, or enny beastness, that i dred more and hav less than i do this same little gray wretch, called cursid musketer.