

News of the Week.

**THE DOMINION.**—The rumoured dissolution of Parliament was announced in a *Gazette* extra last week. The writs for the new elections are returnable on the 21st proximo, with the exception of those for British Columbia, Manitoba, Gaspé, and the Saguenay district, which are returnable on the 12th of March.—It is currently reported that Attorney-General Irvine will be offered a seat on the Bench of the Court of Appeal.—The Hon. John Young has been appointed to the Montreal Flour Inspectorship.

**UNITED STATES.**—The examination of the "Virginus" survivors has had no result. They all agree in saying that they had no knowledge that the vessel was on a filibustering expedition. From the similarity of their statements, there is no doubt that there was a secret understanding among the survivors as to a statement to be made. The question has been raised by the Spanish Government, through Admiral Palo, whether the sinking of the "Virginus" does not cancel the second part of the protocol.—It is reported that President Grant has stated that he will not under any circumstances consent to be a candidate for a third term.

**UNITED KINGDOM.**—The English court of enquiry into the "Ville du Havre" disaster have exculpated Captain Robertson, of the "Loch Earn" from all blame in the matter.—Thirty-two lives were lost by the foundering last week of the steamship "Elbe," from London to Hamburg.—The Department of Immigration of New Zealand have extended an invitation to Mr. Joseph Arch to visit that country, to examine and report upon its resources.

**FRANCE.**—The French Admiralty Court has pronounced judgment, declaring the manoeuvre of the steamer "Ville du Havre" to have been blameless, and gives the bad management of the "Loch Earn" as the cause of the disaster. The court eulogised Captain Surmont.

**GERMANY.**—The health of the Emperor has considerably improved.

**AUSTRIA.**—It is expected that Baron Schwarz Serborn, Director of the Universal Exposition, will be appointed Ambassador to Washington.

**RUSSIA.**—The treaty between Russia and Bokhara is published. It gives Khibyan territory on the right bank of the Armandian river to Bokhara, who in return agrees to abolish slavery, and establish mutual trading facilities with Russia.—The Duke of Edinburgh has arrived at St. Petersburg.

**HOLLAND.**—Another engagement has taken place in Acheen, in which the Dutch troops are reported to have been very successful.

**SPAIN.**—President Castelar's Government was defeated on two votes in the Cortes, on Saturday, whereupon General Pavía, a friend of the President, occupied the palace of the Cortes and all the public buildings with a force of some 11,000 troops, and dissolved the Cortes. There was great excitement and the streets were filled with people, but no blood was shed. A new Ministry has been formed with Marshal Serrano as President. It is stated that England, France, Prussia and Italy, are pledged to recognize Serrano as President, on the same basis as they have recognized the President of the French Republic.—The Government has relieved General Burrel of the command of the Eastern Department of the Island of Cuba, because in his proclamation, he attacked the existing Administration of Spain. He has been ordered to appear at Madrid to answer charges preferred against him in this matter. Captain-General Gouvillar insists that the Government shall accept his resignation unless he is granted in full the extraordinary powers enjoyed by his predecessors. The Government has conceded the increased powers, but they are restricted by certain conditions.

**AFRICA.**—Advices from Cape Coast Castle, December 15, report that the Ashantees were driven across River Pra, re-entering their own country in great disorder. They left a large number of dead and wounded on the bank of the river. Sir Garnet Wolseley was in pursuit with 500 sailors. Troop-ships "Himalaya" and "Tamar" had arrived, and everything was ready for an advance upon Coomassie. The Gold Coast was very unhealthy.

Oddities.

"Transactions in Hair," is the heading by a Detroit editor to an account of a street fight.

A Jersey paper describes a man as being "as sociable as a batch of candidates two weeks before election."

One advantage of living in Troy is that one can go to any hydrant, any day, and get an eel for dinner, and no extra charge.

Georgia Item—"Bill Bridges, of Dooley County, attempted to knock down a pine tree with his horse, and killed the latter."

A Maine man has sued a paper for slander for calling him an indefatigable genius, and a local paper says a jury has awarded him \$212 damages.

A young lady of Logansport recently sent a young man four quarts of butter-nuts as a token of acknowledgment for having saved her from drowning.

A boy at Portland, Me., applied at the police headquarters the other day to be sent to the reform school. He was told that he could not go unless he was naughty, and that he must not be naughty.

Douglas Jerrold, at a party, noticed a doctor in sober black walking with a young lady who was dressed in a silk of brilliant blue. "As I live!" exclaimed the wit, "there's a blue pill dancing with a black draught."

It was bad enough for the Boston *Advertiser* to say of Wilkie Collins as a lecturer: "The Loudon intonation is noticeable in a flattening of the vowels." But it was worse when a Western compositor made it read "a flattening of the bowels."

A genius was explaining the utility of an India rubber ship which he was inventing, when an old salt exclaimed: "No, no; it will never do. An India rubber ship would rub out all the lines of latitude and longitude, to say nothing of the equator!"

An old seaman, at a religious meeting recently held in New York, in relating his experience, stated that when at sea in storms and tempests, he had often derived great consolation from that beautiful passage of Scripture, "Faint heart never won fair lady."

The Boston *Traveller* says: "Positively frightful! Are our liberties to be insulted? They propose to raise the tax on whiskey to one dollar a gallon! Do they forget a hundred years ago? Send a cargo of whiskey here with a dollar a gallon tax on it, and see how quickly, in the garb of 'first offenders,' some one will take care that it is all poured into the harbour—or somewhere else."

A man who had recently been elected a major of militia, and who was not overburdened with brains, took it into his head on the morning of parade to exercise a little by himself. The field selected for this purpose was his own apartment. Placing himself in a military attitude, with his sword drawn, he exclaimed: "Attention, company! Rear rank, three paces, march!" and he tumbled down into the cellar. His wife hearing the racket, came running in, saying, "My dear, have you killed yourself?" "Go about your business, woman," said the hero, "what do you know about war?"

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Write upon pages of a single size,  
Cross all your T's and neatly dot your I's;  
On one side only let your lines be seen;  
Both sides filled up announce a Verdant Green.  
Correct, yes, re-correct all that you write,  
And let your ink be black, your paper white;  
For spongy foolscap of a muddy blue  
Betrays a mind of the same dismal hue.  
Punctuate carefully, for on this score  
Nothing proclaims the practised writer more.  
Then send it off, and, lest it merit lack,  
Enclose the postage stamps to send it back;  
But first pay all the postage on it, too,  
For editors look black on "six cents due,"  
And murmur, as they run the effusion o'er,  
"A shabby fellow and a wretched bore."  
Yet ere it goes, take off a copy clean;  
Poets should own a copying machine.  
Little they know the time that's spent, and care,  
In hunting verses vanished—who knows where?  
Bear this in mind, observe it to the end,  
And you shall make the editor your friend.

TAKEN AT THE FLOOD.

A NEW NOVEL.

By the Author of "Lady Audley's Secret," "Strangers and Pilgrims," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"SO FAIR A FORM LODGED NOT A MIND SO ILL."

Sylvia had been married six months. February, the weariest month in a cold, cheerless winter, was dragging slowly to its dismal end. Bitter gusts of north-east wind shook the casements of Perriam Place. The leafless trees in the long avenue tossed their ragged branches as in the writhings of despair, as if they ejaculated hopelessly, "When is warmer weather coming?" "When are we going to bud?" Only the cedars stood up, grimly stern, and defied the north-easter.

Very dreary had been that long winter to Lady Perriam. After the half-dozen dinner parties given in her honour at the Manor House, Granges, and Towers within fifteen miles of Perriam Place. There had been no further gaiety of any kind. Even her solitary airings in the yellow chariot had been curtailed by the inclemency of the weather, there had been nothing for her to do but walk about the spacious old house, with its vast, empty, useless rooms, and speculate what it might have been under a different master.

"If fortune had given Edmund and me such a house, with Sir Aubrey's wealth, how delightful we would have made it. We could have filled these dismal corridors with pleasant people, and made that vault-like dining room brilliant with light and fire, and bright eyes and jewels, and splendid dresses. Every day would have brought some new pleasure."

This was the drift of Sylvia's fancies very often as she paced the long music room—which knew not the sound of music—on wet afternoons, when there was not one gleam of brightness in the leaden sky, hardly a glimmer of hope in her own life.

She had thought to taste all the pleasures of the world as Sir Aubrey's wife. With the baronet newly subjugated, and at her feet, it had seemed such an easy thing to rule him. She had hoped for a slave, and she had found a master; a stricter master than her father, for beneath his sway she had been able to do pretty much as she pleased, so long as she administered to all his wants and gave him a well-cooked dinner. With Sir Aubrey for her master, she had her own way in hardly anything.

He was not unkind to her, and that made her bondage seem all the worse. She had no ground for complaint. Against that smooth tyranny, rebellion was almost impossible. He forbade this, he advised that, but he was always suavity itself. He narrowed her life into so small a circle that a squirrel in a cage might have known as much of liberty. Friends or acquaintance she had none; for the county people who had been willing to take her by the hand had all fallen away, receiving no encouragement to be civil.

That severe winter tried Sir Aubrey's somewhat feeble constitution. He had a good deal of illness, and the stately gentleman who had seemed such a model of old-fashioned gallantry that warm summer afternoon in Mr. Hopling's orchard, was restless, fretful, and peevish when afflicted with influenza, or a mild attack of bronchitis. At these times Sir Aubrey preferred the ministrations of Jean Chaplain to those of his young wife, yet expected that Sylvia should spend a good deal of her time in the sick room, and liked her to read the political articles and foreign correspondence in the *Times* for his edification. She performed all her duties with a tolerable grace, but weariness was in her heart nevertheless.

But if Sir Aubrey's society was at times a burden almost too heavy for impatient youth to bear, Mordred Perriam's dullness was still harder to be endured. He was a more fatiguing companion than his brother, inasmuch as he talked a great deal more. He was fond of talking, and the chief deprivation of his life hitherto had been the lack of listeners. He found Sylvia courteously attentive to his discourses. She did not wish to be rude to her husband's brother; and he at once seized upon her as the long-desired listener. He had just sense enough to perceive her intelligence, and he told himself that his dryasdust discourse would expand and improve her mind.

"You are not like ordinary young women, my dear," he said, when Sylvia confessed her desire to learn Latin, and to know something of the classic writers, "You can take an interest in great subjects."

Day after day, evening after evening, he twaddled on in the same dull, dry way, shedding no ray of light from his own intellect upon the pages he por'd over, and whose contents it was his delight to recapitulate. He was always finding little bits in his daily studies which he thought would interest her, and the little bits were usually the dullest passages in the prosings of some third-rate philosopher—the tritest axioms of morality, inflated into importance by grandiloquent language.

When the baronet was confined to his room, which happened often during that doleful winter, Mordred Perriam and Sylvia took their meals *à la tête* in the gloomy dining-room. The mild old bookworm would even desert his beloved kitchen garden to take his constitutional in Sylvia's company, shambling up and down the Italian garden, never ceasing from that even flow of prosiness. There were moments when Lady

Perriam was wicked enough to wish him a sharer in that tranquil silence which ruled among the rest of his race in that hallowed ground below the terrace.

Mordred's health was very little better than his brother's, but being a person of secondary importance, the household took less notice of his ailments. He grumbled a little about himself from time to time; complained of pains here and twitches there; now pointed to his chest, and now to his head; but received little more attention from any one than if he had been some piece of household machinery slightly out of order.

"I know I shall die suddenly when my time comes," he said one day to Lady Perriam. "It may be many years hence—"

"I dare say it will," returned Sylvia, with an involuntary sigh.

"Or it may be much sooner than any one expects; but I feel a conviction that I shall go off without a moment's warning. There are a great many cases on record of men who had a prevision as to the manner of their death. I have my prevision. So many twitches and pains as I suffer must have some significance. It may be that my heart is wrong, or the seat of disease may be in the brain. When you consider the delicate functions which the spinal marrow has to perform in relation to the cerebral matter, you can hardly wonder that the brain is apt to get out of order. When you look at the heart as a complicated pumping apparatus which is never permitted to rest, and not subject to repair, you cannot wonder that the machinery is liable to collapse. I have received warning from both directions, and I am prepared for the worst."

"Mere fancy, I daresay, Mr. Perriam," said Sylvia, with the serenity that springs from indifference.

"No, my dear, it is not fancy. But I am prepared for the worst. I have made my will."

"Indeed," murmured Sylvia, with a shade more interest. She thought it just possible that Mordred intended to reward her endurance of his dullness by the bequest of his worldly substance.

"Yes. I bequeathed my library—nearly five thousand volumes of solid and instructive literature—to the Mechanics' Institute in Monkhampton. I also bequeath my estate, now yielding two hundred per annum, but likely to improve with the lapse of years, to trustees, for the benefit of the same institution. They will build a wing for the reception of the books, they will from time to time, as funds accrue, collect other books, always of a like character. They will furthermore employ a librarian for the care of the aforesaid books and any further collection, as heretofore mentioned, at a salary of fifty pounds per annum."

Mordred was quoting verbatim from the will, a document which he kept in his own possession, and perused frequently, with enjoyment.

"I have sometimes thought," he added, graciously, "that such a situation would suit a man of studious habits, like your father."

Christmas had been in no wise different from other seasons at Perriam. There was some customary dole given to the poor, but this was done unobtrusively through the hands of the housekeeper, so that the blessings of the recipients reached not Sir Aubrey's ears. Christmas Day seemed an extra Sunday in the week, and that was all.

It was now two months after Christmas, and Sir Aubrey had been more or less ailing all the time. The Monkhampton surgeon who attended him declared there was no cause for alarm. The severe weather had been trying; Sir Aubrey was a little out of sorts; and so on; but with the coming of spring he would doubtless be himself again. Lady Perriam must not feel uneasy.

This, Mr. Stimpson, the surgeon, an elderly man who enjoyed high repute in Monkhampton, said to Lady Perriam herself, in a cheery confidential tone.

"There is no danger, then?" asked Lady Perriam, in a thoughtful tone.

"None, whatever; a temporary derangement of the system, nothing more."

"I am glad to hear that," said Sylvia, almost mechanically. "I have sometimes thought that Sir Aubrey must be seriously ill. His memory seems to fail him a little, now and then. He repeats things two or three times, and does not seem to know that he has said them before."

Mr. Stimpson looked a little grave at this, but speedily recovered himself. It is a doctor's duty to be cheerful. He brings to bear an amiable gaiety, by way of contrast to the gloom of sickbeds and incurable diseases.

Sylvia sat alone, absorbed in deepest thought for some time after the doctor had left her. Sometimes, out of this illness of Sir Aubrey's, piercing the doleful shadows of the sickroom, there had arisen, pale with distance, the star of an unholy hope. What if the end were nearer than she had ever deemed possible? What if her husband were doomed to die ere very long, and leave her free to marry Edmund Standen?

In her young life Death had been, as yet, a stranger. She could not think of that dreadful presence as calmly as some to whom the fatal visitant has grown a familiar guest. She thought, with a shudder, of the dark gulf, the mysterious, impenetrable grave, which lay between her and liberty. Sir Aubrey had been a tyrant, but at the worst an unconscious despot. He had never been intentionally unkind. He had tried to shape the young, bright life to fit his own dull even existence, had stifled all the natural aspirations of joy-loving youth, had made Sylvia's days a burden to her; yet, after his own fashion, he had been kind. It seemed almost impossible that she should wish for his death.

"I do not wish him dead," she said to herself, when that possible release presented itself like a hope, "but, if he dies, I shall win my love back again—my first and only love. I will make him forgive me, though I have sinned against him so deeply. I will make him trust me again, although I have been so false. I know that I have power to win him back."

CHAPTER XXXV.

STRIKEN DOWN.

In the first day of March Sir Aubrey left his room. He was now pronounced well enough to spend a few hours in the saloon daily, and even to take a short drive in the yellow chariot on a sunny day, when the wind was in a genial quarter.

He was very glad to avail himself of these privileges, and made haste to abandon his invalid habits, dressed himself as carefully as ever, and re-appeared with that gracious and pa-