A DEADLY DILEMMA.

BY GRANT ALLEN, THE FAMOUS CANADIAN NOVELIST.

When Netta Mayne came to think it over afterward in her own room by herself she couldn't imagine what had made her silly enough to quarrel that evening with Ughtred Carnegie. She could only say, in a penitent mood, it was always the way like that with lovers. Till once they've quarreled a good round quarrel, and afterward solemnly kissed and made it all up again, things never stand on a really firm and settled basis between them. It's a move in the game. You must thrust in tierce before you thrust in quarte. The Roman playright spoke the truth after all. A lovers' quarrel begins a fresh chapter in the history of their love making.

It was a summer evening, calm and clear and balmy, and Netta and Ughtred had strolled out together, not without a suspicion at times of hand locked in hand, on the high chalk down that rises steep behind Holmbury. How or why they fell out she hardly knew. But they had been engaged already some months, without a single disagreement, which of course, gave Netta a right to quarrel with Ughtred by this time, if she thought fit, and as they returned down the hanging path through the combe where the wild orchids grow, she used that right at last, out of pure, unadulterated perversity. The ways of women are wonderful; no mere man can fathom them. Something that Ughtred said gave her the chance to make a half petulant answer. Ughtred very naturally defended himself from the imputation of rudeness, and Netta retorted. At the end of 10 minutes the trifle had grown into as pretty a lover's quarrel as any lady novelist could wish to describe in five chapters.

Netta had burst into perfectly orthodox tears, refused to be comforted in the most approved fashion, declined to accept Ughtred's escort home, and bidden farewell to him excitedly for ever and ever.

It was all about nothing, to be sure, and if two older or wiser heads had only stood by unseen to view the little comedy they would sagely have remarked to one another, with a shake, that before 24 hours were out the pair would be rushing into one another's arms with mutual apologies and mutual forgiveness. But Netta Mayne and Ughtred Carnegie were still at the age when one takes love seriously—one does before 30—and so they turned along different paths at the bottom of the combe, in the firm belief that love's young dream was shattered, and that they two were nothing more than passing acquaintances to one another.

"Good-by, Mr. Carnegie," Netta faltered out as in obedience to her wishes, though much against his own will, Ughtred turned slowly and remorsefully down the footpath to the right in the direction of the railway.

"Good-by, Netta," Ughtred answered, half choking. Even in that moment of parting, forever or a day, he couldn't find it in his heart to call her "Miss Mayne," who had so long been "Netta" to him.

He waved his hand and turned along the footpath, looking back many times to see Netta sitting inconsolable where he had left her on the stile that led from the combe into the Four-acre meadow. Both paths to right and left led back to Holmbury over the open field, but they diverged rapidly, and crossed the railway track by separate gates, and 500 yards from each other. A turn in the path, at which Ughtred lingered long hid Netta at last from his sight. He paused and hesitated. It was growing late, though an hour of summer twilight still remained. He couldn't bear to leave Netta thus alone in the field. She wouldn't allow him to see her home to be sure, and that being so, he was too much of a gentleman to force himself upon her. But he was too much of a man, too, to let her find her way back so entirely by herself. Unseen himself, he must still watch over her. Against her will, he must still protect her. He would go on to the railway and there sit by the side of the line under cover of the hedge till Netta crossed by the other path. Then he'd walk quietly along the six-foot way to the gate she had passed through and follow her unperceived at a distance along the lane till he saw her back to Holmbury. Whether she wished it or not he would never leave her.

He looked about for a seat. One lay most handy. By the side of the line the Government engineer had been at work that day, repairing the telegraph system. They had taken down half a dozen moldering old posts and set up new ones in their place—tall, clean, and shiny. One of the old posts still lay at full length on the ground by the gate, just as the men had left it at the end of the day's work. At the end where the foot-path crossed the line was a level crossing, and there Ughtred sat down on the fallen post by the side, half concealed from view by a tall clump of willow herb, waiting patiently for Netta's coming. How he listened for that light foot-fall. His heart was full indeed, of gall and bitterness. He loved her so dearly, and she had treated him so ill. Who would ever have believe that Netta, his Netta, would have thrown him over like that for such a ridiculous trifle? Who, indeed? And least of all Netta herself, sitting alone on the stile with her pretty face bowed deep in her hands, and her poor heart wondering how Ughtred, her Ughtred, could so easily desert her. In such strange ways is the feminine variety of the human heart constructed. To be sure, she had of course dismissed him in the most peremptory fashion, declaring with all the vows propriety permits to the British maiden that she needed no escort of any sort home, and that she would ten thousand times rather go alone than have him accompany her. But, of course, also, she didn't mean it. What woman does? She counted upon a prompt and unconditional surrender. Ughtred would go to the corner, as in duty bound, and then come back to her with profuse expressions of penitence for the wrong he had never done, to make it all up again in the orthodox fashion. She never intended the real tragedy that was soon to follow. She was only playing with her victim—only trying, woman-like, her power over Ughtred.

So she sat there still, and cried and cried on, minute after minute, in an ecstacy of misery, till the sunset began to glow deeper red in the western sky, and the bell to ring the curfew in Holmbury tower. Then it dawned upon her slowly with a shock of surprise that after all—incredible! impossible!—Ughtred had positively taken her at her word and wasn't coming back at all to-night to her.

At that the usual womanly terror seized upon her soul. Her heart turned faint. This was too terrible. Great Heavens! what had she done? Had she tried Ughtred too far, and had he really gone? Was he never going to return to her at all? Had he said good-bye in earnest to her forever and ever?

Terrified at the thought and weak with crying, she rose and struggled down the narrow footpath toward the further crossing. It was getting late now, and Netta by this time was really frightened. She wished with all her heart she hadn't sent away Ughtred—if it were only for the tramps; a man is such a comfort. And then there was that dreadful dog at Milton Court to pass. And Ughtred was gone, and all the world was desolate.

Thinking these things in a tumult of fear to herself, she staggered along the path, feeling tired at heart, and positively ill with remorse and terror. The color had faded now out of her pretty red cheeks. Her eyes were dim and swollen with crying. She was almost half glad Ughtred couldn't see her just then, she was such a fright with her long spell of brooding. Even her bright print dress and her straw hat with the poppies in it couldn't redeem, she felt sure, her pallor and her wretchedness. But Ughtred was gone, and the world was a wilderness. And he would never come back, and the dog at Milton Court was so vicious.

As she walked or rather groped her way, for she couldn't see for crying, down the path by the hedge, at every step she grew fainter and fainter. Ughtred was gone, and the world was a blank, and there were tramps and dogs, and it was getting dark, and she loved him so much, and mamma would be so angry.

Turning over which thoughts with a whirling brain, for she was but a girl after all, she reached the little swinging gate that led to the railway, and pushed it aside with vague numbed hands, and stood gazing vacantly at the long curved line in front of her.

Suddenly a noise rose sharp in the field behind her. It was only a colt, to be sure, disturbed by her approach, dashing wildly across his paddock, as is the way with young horseflesh. But to Netta it came as an indefinite terror magnified ten thousand fold by her excited feelings. She made a frenzied dash for the other side of the railway. What it was she knew not, but it was or might be anything, everything—mad bulls, drunken men, footpads, vagabonds, murderers.

Oh, how could Ughtred ever have taken her at her word, and left her, like this, alone, and in the evening? It was cruel, it was wicked of him; she hated to be disloyal, and yet she felt in her heart it was most unmanly.

As she rushed along wildly, at the top of her speed, her little foot caught on the first rail. Before she knew what had happened she had fallen with her body across the line. Faint and terrified already with a thousand vague alarms, the sudden shock stunned and disabled her. Mad bull or drunken men, they might do as they liked now. She was bruised and shaken. She had no thought left to rise and recover herself. Her eyes closed heavily. She lost consciousness at once. It was a terrible position. She had fainted on the line with the force of the situation.

As for Ughtred, from his seat on the telegraph post on the side of the line 500 yards further up, he saw her pause by the gate, then dash across the road, then stumble and trip, then fall heavily forward. His heart came up into his mouth at once at the sight. Oh, thank heaven, he was near. She had fallen across the line, and a train might come along before she could rise again. She seemed to be hurt, too. In a frenzy of suspense he darted forward to save her.

It took it but a second for him to realize that she had fallen and was seriously hurt, but in the course of that second, even as he realized it all, another and more pressing terror seized him.

Hark! What was that? He listened and thrilled. Oh, — too horrible — it must be—the railway! He knew it. He felt it. Along up the line on which Netta was lying he heard behind him—oh, unmistakable, unthinkable, the whirr of the express dashing madly down behind him. Great heavens, what could he do? The train was coming, the train was almost this moment upon them. Before he could have time to rush wildly forward and snatch Netta from where she lay, full in its path, a helpless weight, it would have swept him resistlessly, and borne down upon her like lightning.

The express was coming—to crush Netta to pieces.

In these awful moments men don't think; they don't even realize what their action means; they simply act and act instinctively. Ughtred felt in a second, without even consciously feeling it, so to speak, that any attempt to reach Netta now before the devouring engine had burst upon her at full speed would be absolutely hopeless.

His one chance lay in stopping the train somehow. How, or where or with what he cared not. His own body would do it if nothing else came. Only stop it, stop it. He didn't think of it at all at that moment as a set of carriages containing a precious set of lives. He thought of it only as a horrible, cruel, devouring creature rushing headway on at full speed to Netta's destruction. It was a senseless wild beast to be combated at all hazards. It was a hideous, ruthless, relentless thing, to be choked in its mad career in no matter what fashion. All he knew, indeed, was that Netta—his Netta—lay helpless on the track and that the engine, like some madman, puffing and snorting with wild glee and savage exsultation, was hastening forward with fierce strides to crush and mangle her.

At any risk he must stop it—with anything—anyhow.

As he gazed around him, horrorstruck, with blank inquiring stare, and with this one fixed idea possessing his whole soul, Ughtred's eye happened to fall upon the dismanteled telegraph post, on which but one minute before he had been sitting. The sight inspired him. Ha, ha! a glorious chance. He could lift it on the line. He could lay it across the rails. He could turn it round into place. He could upset the train. He could place it in the way of that murderous engine.

No sooner thought than done. With the wild energy of despair the young man lifted the small end of the ponderous post bodily up in his arms, and twisting it on the big base as on an earth-fast pivot, managed by main force and with a violent effort to lay it at last full in front of the advancing locomotive. How he did it, he never rightly knew himself, for the weight of the great bulk was simply enormous. But horror and love and the awful idea that Netta's life was at stake seemed to supply him at once with unwonted energy. He lifted it in his arms as he would have lifted a child and, straining in every limb, stretched it at last full across both rails, a formidable obstacle before the approaching engine.

Hurrah! hurrah! he had succeeded now. It would throw the train off the line, and Netta would be saved for him.

To think and do all this under the spur of the circumstances took Ughtred something less than 20 seconds. In a great crisis men live rapidly. It was quick as thought. And at the end of it all he saw the big log laid right across the line with infinite satisfaction. Such a splendid obstacle that. So round and heavy! It must throw the train clean off the metals! It must produce a fine, first-class catastrophe.

As he thought it, half aloud, a sharp curve brought the train round the corner close to where he stood, great drops of sweat now oozing clammily from every pore with his exertion. He looked at it languidly, with some vague, dim sense of duty accomplished, and a great work well done for Netta and humanity. There would be a real live accident in a moment now—a splendid accident—a first-rate catastrophe!

And then, with a sudden burst of inspiration, the other side of the transaction flashed in one electric spark upon Ughtred's brain. Why—this—was murder! There were people in that train—innocent human beings, men and women like himself, who would next minute be wrecked and mangled corpses, or writhing forms, on the track before him! He was guilty of a crime—he was trying to produce a terrible, ghastly, bloody railway accident!

Till that second the idea had never even so much as occurred to him. In the first wild rush of horror at Netta's situation he had thought only of her. He had regarded the engine only as a hateful, cruel, destructive living being. He had forgotten the passengers, the stoker, the officials. He had been conscious only of Netta and of that awful thing, breathing flame and steam, that was rushing on to destroy her. For another invisible second of time Ughtred Carnegie's soul was the theatre of a terrible and appealing struggle. What on earth was he to do? Which of the two was he to sacrifice? Should it be murder or treachery? Must he wreck the train or mangle Netta? The sweat stood upon his brow in great clammy drops at that dread dilemma. It was an awful question for any man to solve. He shrank aghast before that deadly decision.

They were innocent, to be sure, the people in that train. They were unknown men, women and children. They had the same right to their lives as Netta herself. It was crime, sheer crime, thus to seek to destroy them. But still—what would you have? Netta lay there helpless on the line—his own dear Netta. And she had parted with him in anger but half an hour since. Could he leave her to be destroyed by that hideous, puffing thing? Has not any man the right to try and save the lives he loves best, no matter at what risk or peril to others? He asked himself this question, too, vaguely, instinctively, with the rapid haste of a life and death struggle; asked himself with horror, for he had no strength left now to do one thing or the other—to remove the obstacle from the place where he had laid it or to warn the driver. One second alone remained and then all would be over. On it came, roaring, flaring, glaring, with its great bulls eyes now peering red round the corner—a terrible fiery dragon, resistless, unconscious, bearing down in mad glee upon the pole—or Netta.

Which of the two should it be—the pole or Netta?

And still he waited; and still he temporized. What, what would he do? Oh, Heaven! be merciful. Even as the engine swept, snorting and puffing steam, round the corner, he doubted and temporized. He reasoned with his own conscience in the quick shorthand of thought. So far It wouldn't be murder of malice prepense. as intent was concerned he was guiltless. When he laid that log there in the way of the train he never believed—nay, never even knew—it was a train with a living freight of men and women he was trying to imperil. He felt to it merely as a mad engine unattached. He realized only Netta's pressing danger. Was he bound now to undo what he had innocently done—and leave Netta to perish? Must he take away the post and be Netta's murderer?

It was a cruel dilemma for any man to have to face. If he had had half an hour to debate and decide, now, he might, perhaps, have seen his way a little clearer. But with that hideous thing actually rushing, red and wrathful, on his sight—why—he clapped his hands to his ears. It was too much for him—too much for him.

And yet he must face it and act or remain passive, one way or the other. With a desperate effort he made up his mind at last just as the train burst upon him, and all was over.

He made up his mind and acted accordingly.

As the engine turned the corner the driver, looking ahead in the clear evening light, saw something that made him start with sudden horror and alarm. A telegraph pole lay stretched full length, and a man, unknown, stood agonized by its side, stooping down, as he thought, to catch and move it. There was no time to stop her now; no time to avert the threatened catastrophe. All the driver could do in his haste was to put the brake on hard and endeavor to lessen the force of the inevitable concussion. But even as he looked and wondered at the sight, putting on the brake, meanwhile, with all his might and main, he saw the man in front perform, to his surprise, an heroic action. Rushing full upon the line, straight before the very lights of the advancing train, the man unknown lifted up the pole by main force, and brandishing its end, as it were, wildly in the driver's face, hurled the hugh black bulk, with a terrible effort, to the side of the railway. It fell with a crash and the man fell with it. There was a second's pause, while the driver's heart stood still with terror. Then a jar—a thud—a deep scratch into the soil. A wheel was off the line; they had met with an accident.

For a moment or two the driver only knew that he was shaken up and hurt, but not severely. The engine had left the track and the carriages lay behind slightly shattered. He could see how it happened. Part of the pole in falling had rebounded on to the line. The base of the great timber had struck the near side wheel and sent it off the track in a vain effort to surmount it. But the brake had already slackened the pace and broken the force of the shock. The possible damage was very inconsiderable and they must look along the carriages and find out who was hurt. And, above all things, what had become of the man who had so nobly rescued them? For the very first thing the engine driver had seen of Ughtred as the train stopped short was that the man who flung the pole from the track before the advancing engine was knocked down by its approach, while the train to all appearance passed bodily over him. For good or evil, Ughtred had made his decision at last at the risk of his own life. As the train dashed on, with its living freight aboard his native instinct of preserving life got the better of him in spite of himself. He couldn't let those innocent souls die by his own act—though if he removed the pole and Netta was killed he didn't know himself how he could ever outlive it.

He prayed with all his heart that the train might kill him.

The guard and the driver ran hastily along the train. Nobody was hurt, though many were shaken or badly bruised. Even the carriages had escaped with a few small cracks. The Holmbury smash was nothing very serious.

But the man with the pole? Their preserver their friend. Where was he all this time? What on earth had become of him?

They looked along the line. They searched the track in vain. He had disappeared as if by magic. Not a trace could be found of him.

After looking long and uselessly, again and again, the guard and the driver both gave it up. They had seen the man distinctly—not a doubt about that—and so had several of the passengers as well. But no sign of blood was to be discovered along the track. The mysterious being who, as they had believed, risked his own life to save theirs had vanished as he had come, one might almost say by a miracle.

And, indeed, as a matter of fact, when Ughtred Carnegie fell on the track before the advancing engine he thought for a moment it was all up with him. He was glad of that, too, for he had murdered Netta. It would dash on now unresisted and crush his darling to death. It was better he should die, having murdered Netta. So he closed his eyes tight and waited for it to kill him.

But the train passed on, jarring and scraping, partly with the action of the brake though partly, too, with the wheel digging into the ground at the side; it passed on and over him altogether, coming, as it did so, to a sudden standstill. As it stopped a fierce cry rose uppermost in Ughtred's soul. Thank Heaven, all was well. He breathed once more easily. He had fallen on his back across the sleepers in the middle of the track. It was not really the train that had knocked him down at all, but the recoil of the telegraph post. The engines and carriages had gone over him safely. He wasn't seriously hurt. He was only bruised and sprained and jarred and shaken.

Rising up behind the train as it slackened, he ran hastily toward the off side, toward where Netta lay unconscious on the line in front of it. Nobody saw him run past; and no wonder either, for every eye was turned toward the near side of the obstruction. A person running fast by the opposite windows was very little likely to attract attention at such a moment. Every step pained him, to be sure, for he was bruised and stiff; but he ran on none the less till he came up at last to where Netta lay. There he bent over her eagerly. Netta raised her head, opened her eyes and looked. In a moment the vague sense of a terrible catastrophe averted came somehow over her. She flung her arms around his neck. "Oh, Ughtred, you've come back!" she cried in a torrent of emotion.

"Yes, darling," Ughtred answered, his voice half choked with tears. I've come back to you now, for ever and ever."

He lifted her in his arms and carried her some little way off up the left-hand path. His heart was very full. 'Twas a terrible moment, for as yet he hardly knew what harm he might have done by his fatal act. He only knew he had tried his best to undo the wrong he had unconsciously wrought, and if the worst came he would give himself up now like a man to offended justice.

But the worst did not come. Blind fate had been merciful. Next day the papers were full of the accident of the Great Southern express; eventually divided between denunciation of the miscreant who placed the obstruction in the way of the train and admiration of the heroic, but unrecognizable stranger who had rescued from death so many helpless passengers at so imminent a risk to his own life or safety. Only Ughtred knew that the two were one and the same person. And when Ughtred found out how little harm had been done by the infatuated act—an act he felt he could never possibly explain in its true light to any other person—he thought it wisest on the whole to lay no claim to either the praise or the censure. The world could never be made to understand the terrible dilemma in which he was placed—the one-sided way in which the problem at first presented itself to him—the deadly struggle through which he had passed before he could make up his mind, at the risk of Netta's life to remove the obstacle. Only Netta understood; and even Netta herself knew no more than this, that Ughtred had risked his own life to save her.

A Dress of Spiders' Webs.

Mrs. White mentions as a great curiosity the dress made from spiders' webs presented to the Queen by the Empress of Brazil in 1877. Most certainly it is, and to most British minds such a thing might seem incredible; but if your correspondent were to visit Fiji—which is famous for its magnificent spiders—he might, perhaps, have less cause for wonder. The web made by the big yellow spider here is very large and strong; but in addition to the web proper, in which flies, mosquitoes, etc., are caught, it spins a cocoon of orange-colored, silky, gossamer-like stuff, which, if taken up in the fingers, requires quite an effort to break. This stuff, I can conceive, might be woven into material for a dress. Might not the dress in question have been composed of similar material made by the Brazilian spiders?

I can hardly, even now, believe that it could have been composed of what we understand to be the ordinary spider's web. I can quite imagine, however, that such a material might be of some commercial value as one frequently hears complaints at the present day of a want of fineness in fibers or materials used for scientific purposes.

I may add that our cockroaches are huge, too; but, by a merciful dispensation of Providence, our spiders are in proportion. The particular enemy of the cockroach here is not the big yellow spider above mentioned, but a long-legged, formidable-looking brown spider, called the "hunting-spider." I can not find out that this species spins any web, but apparently depends upon its great activity for securing its prey. I know, however, that it can bite pretty sharply, as I once saw one draw blood from the finger of a doctor friend of mine who was capturing it for me. It is often to be seen hugging a large, flattened, circular, cream-colored bag, which, I take it, contains its eggs. We never kill spiders in Fiji.

The Ruling Passion.

A tiny tot of only three,
Sweet as the dew the rose inhales,
I gayly dance upon my knee
The while I tell her fairy tales,
Unclouded is her placid brow;
"No care," muse I, "such lives distress!"
"Dear me," says she, "I wonder how
I'd better make my dolly's dress."

A fair young bride in queenly gowns
Comes down the grand cathedral aisle:
The mighty organ sweetly sounds,
And on her lips a saintly smile.
And in her heart a prayer—not so,
For truthfully we must confess
She's thinking this: "I'd like to know
What folks are saying of my dress."

A matron near the gates of death,
With weeping kindred at her side,
All fearful that each fleeting breath
Will bear her soul across the tide.
She tries to speak! She faintly clasps
The kindly form that bends above,
And with her dying breath she gasps:
"See that my shroud is ruffled, love!"

If all the Scriptures say is true,
There'll be more women, ten to one.
In that sweet by-and-by, where you
And I may meet when life is done,
But all the joys designed to bless—
Bright crowns and harps with golden strings—
Won't please the women there unless
Each has the nicest pair of wings.

The prudent sees only the difficulties, the bold only the advantages, of a great enterprise; the hero sees both, diminishes those, makes these predominate, and conquers.

LATE FOREIGN NEWS

Since the Franco Prussian war Germany has spent two thousand two hundred million dollars on her army and navy.

Reports from the State of Georgia indicate that the watermelon acreage this year is about 20,000. At the usual average the total product will be about 9,000 car loads.

The stockmen of South Dakota have recently imported from Tennessee a number of Russian wolf hounds to help in the extermination of wolves, which have of late been killing numbers of calves and colts.

A company has been formed at Christiania, Norway, to reproduce an exact model of the old Viking boat that was discovered some years ago in an ice floe.

Prof. Michael Mahon of Dundas, Minn., has a flying machine that resembles a Chinese bark. On the top and sides are two air wheels that are used to lift and steer the machine. It is said that the model has carried two and a half times its weight.

The Osage Indians are said to be the richest community in the world. They are but 1,509 in number, but they have $8,000,000 deposited to their credit in the Treasury at Washington, on which they draw $100,000 interest every three months, and they own 1,470,000 acres of the best land in Oklahoma. Most of them wear blankets, despite their wealth.

At the late election in Victoria the Labor party made great efforts inspired by a feeling of great confidence. Of the thirty-six candidates they put up, eleven were elected, and only four of them were actual workingmen.

The measles bacillus, discovered in Berlin by Dr. Canon, varies from a three-thousandth to one one-thousandth of an inch in length, and possesses characteristics said to be "different from those of any other bacillus known."

Dr. Landousy, member of the French Academy of Medicine, says that the depopulation of France owes more to tuberculosis than to alcholism, syphilis, and malthusianism put together. Two thousand babies under two years old die annually in Paris from tuberculosis.

There is now playing in Paris a Russian horn band each horn being capable of producing a single note only. So perfect is the training that the band produces the effect of one equipped with ordinary instruments, and even running scales with the rapidity and precision of a violin.

A new cure for hydrophobia has been tried by Prof. Murri at the Pasteur Institute in Milan. Hydrophobia developed on a man who had undergone the Pasteur treatment, with paralysis from the waist downward, and Prof. Murri made a subcutaneous injection of the virus in its "fixed form." A complete cure followed.

The Government of the Tyrol has passed a bill imposing heavy fines on persons who may be caught while selling samples of the beautiful and rare Alpine flower called edelweiss, which has been pulled up by the roots on the mountains to such an extent that there is danger of the plant becoming extinct. The people complain that tourists are rapidly killing out that and other Alpine plants, and persons bent on money making have helped on the destruction by gathering the plants for travellers.

The burdens put upon German industry as the result of the workmen's insurance are heavy. In the mining industry more than 26,000,000 of marks were paid into the sick fund during 1890. 12,000,000 being contributed by the masters, and the contributions for 1891 are still greater. In 1891 about 6,500,000 marks were paid into the accident insurance fund. The old age insurance fund required 5,500,000 marks, the owners being obliged to pay half. The employers, therefore, having to subscribe more than $5,000,000 for the benefit of the workmen, or $13 a head.

Before the terrible explosion of last Monday night which blew up the wine shop where Ravachol was arrested in Paris, the proprietor and the waiter who helped to capture the dynamiter had reaped a golden harvest through the sudden fame they achieved. Hundreds of people visited the shop who had never heard of it before, insisted that L'Herot should wait upon them, and presented him with twenty-franc pieces on their departure as a reward for his "heroism." Very was making several hundred francs a day clear profit, and it is said that his waiter on some days received as much as 500 francs.

The oldest newspaper in the world, of course, is in China. It is the King Pan, is the official journal of the empire, and was founded in 911. Originally it was published intermittently, but after 1361 it appeared regularly every week. In 1804 it was converted into a daily, and now issues three editions a day and sells at about a cent a copy. The morning sheet, printed on yellow paper, is devoted to commercial news. It has a circulation of about 8,000 copies. The midday issue contains official documents and general news. The evening edition, printed on red paper, gives the latest intelligence and extracts from the two previous editions. The paper is conducted by six literati appointed by the State.

The highest priced newspaper in the world is the Mashonaland Herald and Zimbesian Times, printed at Fort Salisbury in Mashonaland. It costs a shilling a copy, is the size of a sheet of foolscap, and is issued daily. The printing is done by the useful hektograph, the printing machine evidently not yet having penetrated into this interesting region of South Africa. A recent issue announces the arrival of the telegraph at Fort Salisbury, and this region, only two years ago wholly occupied by savage peoples, is now within an hour of London. The newspaper complains of the absence of any banking facilities, and says the community is oversupplied with educated men who are "just now seeking suitable work—some work of any sort."

Senhor Marianno Carvelho, the Portuguese ex-Minister of Finance, had a singular adventure on Monday. A stranger called at his residence in Lisbon, desiring to see him privately, and was ushered into his presence. On the servant withdrawing, the visitor suddenly drew a revolver and pointing it at the statesman's head demanded immediate payment of 500 milreis (about £110). Senhor Carvalho, thinking he had to deal with a madman, handed the stranger part of the amount demanded, and said the remainder would be forwarded to any place he might appoint. The visitor consented to this proposal, took the amount offered, and left the house. Senhor Carvalho, at once informed the police, and the robber was arrested.

The wise man has his follies no less than the fool; but herein lies the difference—the follies of the fool are known to the world, but are hidden from himself; the follies of the wise are known to himself, but are hidden from the world.

THE AERONAUT'S FUN.

Some of the Remarkable Things He Sees and Feels in a Balloon.

At a height of 200 feet the air, rushing past with tremendous velocity, gives one the impression of leaning out of the car window of a limited express, the sounds of earth die away in a murmur, and it is then that the balloon seems stationary, the earth falling away from it.

Looking down from the height, all surfaces appear level, mountains and valleys are alike, and the world looks as if spread out and flattened by a rolling pin. Roads and rivers resolve themselves into narrow ribbons; forests, fields, and meadows are clumps of green, red, and black, with green as the dominant color. At two miles earth is lost to view, as in a fog. Presently the balloon begins to sail, driven by an air current. There is now no apparent motion. The aeronaut experiences a feeling of oppression; the air, deprived of its vital principle, exhausts at each inspiration; ringing sounds are heard in the ears, and one can, so to speak, hear the stillness. The breath comes in quick, successive gasps, that do not satisfy the lungs. It is like going to one's death.

Looking upward, the horizon is bounded by the big black ball—the balloon—dark against the milky opaqueness of the atmosphere. The airship is swaying and swinging, while the clouds, floating in a contrary direction, produce a vague giddiness. There is, however, no time for tremors. Seconds seem hours, the

MIND AND MEMORY

traveling with electric flight. Conjectures, recollections, and retrospection flash across the bewildered brain as one reels through space. Suddenly the top of the balloon comes in contact with a cloud; there is a slight jar, and the next instant all is enveloped in fog, from which the æronaut emerges soaked with spray. And now for the spectacle! Sublime, dazzling. Mountaine of iridescence, fleecy white clouds tinged with creamy pink, like the plumage of the cockatoo. Swirling combinations of color, blending and shifting as in a gigantic bubble. Golden greens, that melt into purple and bronze and crimson, with the sun dissolving and overflowing on their tops. Wonderful tints, such as an artist never dreamed of. To comprehend color it is necessary to have seen the magic canvases of the clouds. The balloon sails on and drops slowly away from this panorama once more into the colorless atmosphere.

With the descent, the earth appears to rise and the balloon to remain fixed: and now the operator is occupied with one idea—speculation as to where and how he will reach earth, for distance is incalculable and perspective a myth. The balloon is the sport of chance, and is liable to deposit its passengers anywhere from the top of a church steeple to the bottom of a ditch. The aeronaut takes his life in his own hands when he ascends with the airship. Should it take fire,

BURST IN MIDAIR,

or cool off too suddenly in striding a cold current, the result is collapse and disaster, for there is no safety valve to the fire balloon.

The aeronaut is invariably an enthusiast until he meets with an accident, after which discretion becomes the better part of his valor, and he is content to rally substitutes for an ascension. After a few years he is apt to retire altogether, and leave to others the hazardous occupation. Up to a period of six years ago there numbered but twenty aeronauts in this country, and they were in great demand at country fairs, settlers and soldiers reunions and upon legal holidays, rural celebrations being considered incomplete without the daring balloonist, who, for the time being, was of more importance than the President and entire Senate, and it may be added that no occupation is more conducive to conceit and self-sufficiency than that of the aeronaut. There is less profit in the business now than formerly; the novelty of the ordinary balloon ascension no longer exists for Americans. Realizing this, nearly every aeronaut now makes the sensational parachute descent.

On reaching the desired altitude this is effected by cutting the connecting rope. There is a rapid fall, the resistance of the air forcing open the parachute, which is nothing more than a ribless umbrella, 18 feet in diameter. The operator, on cutting loose, darts downward, as if fired from a catapult, until within a few hundred feet of the earth, when he is sustained by the parachute. Should this fail to operate, death is inevitable.

Mr. Gladstone in Speech.

The Evening Post published at London thus describes Mr. Gladstone as he looked and spoke in the debate on the Clergy Discipline bill on Thursday evening:

"The right honorable gentleman was in excellent voice. It is trite to say so, but for years he has not spoken with so much resonance, with so much of that rich, fruity tone, so peculiarly his own, as he did last night. The sense of hearing was delightful. His gesticulations, too, were remarkably dramatic. He emphasized his points by sweeps of the arm, by striking the papers on his despatch box, by swaying of the body in a mannner that would have been a lesson to a past master in the art of gesture. He lived again in his youth. His back was as straight as that of an officer of the guards; his figure as lithe as that of a Greek athlete, and, as his intellect heated with thought, his face glowed with radiating expression, and his voice grew in volume, ripeness, and charm of tone. The House filled up, and he held all intellects as by a spell. His vitality is marvellous.

"If we ask what is the secret of his wonderful voice the answer is obvious. It is in the possession of an exceptional organism. His chest is of extraordinary depth, even now. Though when he is walking across the floor of the House he seems bowed and shrunken with age, when he is speaking his chest expands and his shoulders are squared—an actual physical transformation takes place before one's eyes. Another obvious explanation of the quality of his voice is the rapidity and vividness with which his ideas trooped into his mind clad in instructive language. With a mind liquefied with ideas and a physique which had defied age, it is no wonder, after all, that his voice should be so finely effective. Last night's speech was indeed a triumph, and none cheered more heartily than the political opponents with whom, for once, he was in cordial agreement."

Discovery of Sapphires in Queensland.

The Government Geologist of Queensland confirms the recent reports as to the valuable discoveries of sapphires as Withersfield, on the Central Railway line, in that colony. He states that the stones are equal to the finest gems in the mineralogical cabinets of Europe, and believes that diamonds will also be found. The assees have refused an offer of £[illegible] for the property.