

THE CANADIAN

Vol. I.—No. 16.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1873

PRICE } FIVE CENTS,
OR SIX CENTS, U.S. GR.

For the Favorite. ROUNDOABOUT.

BY C. I. CLEVELAND

Reigh-ho! the time when we were small,
And starting out for school each morn,
Would stop to scale the old stone wall,
And get our garments soiled and torn;
Would straggle through all turns and crooks
The farthest from the straight road out,
As though the only way to books,
Was that blood-boasting Roundabout!

Ah me! the days when we were young,
And youth and maiden loved so well,
That silence held the fluttering tongue
That found it hard heart's thoughts to tell;
That spoke of all below, above,
Save that which put the lips to route,
As though the natural way to Love
Was that bewitching Roundabout!

Ah! when years grew up a joint,
How many things there were to lure
From waking to the wretched point
That held that which we would procure,
How many transient joys to climb,
How many banners gay did float,
To keep us out of breath and time
Upon the wearying Roundabout!

Ostrions, ratty Roundabout!
How many hopes are lost on thee,
How many hearts that once seemed stout
Lie fainting through thy fallacy.
How many joys are in dismay,
That would endure long seasons out,
Did we but keep the onward way,
And leave delusive Roundabout.
SWEETSHURTON, Q.

FEUDAL TIMES;

OR,

TWO SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE.

A Romance of Daring and Adventure.

(Translated especially for the FAÇONITE from
the French of Paul Duplessis.)

CHAPTER I.

TWO CAVALIERS.

On the Whit-Sunday of the year 1581, the little market town of Saint Pardoux, situate about five leagues N. E. of Riom, on the border of Upper Auvergne, presented a noisy and animated spectacle. The religious duties of the day had been conscientiously performed, and the entire population of the place had given itself up with hearty zeal to the pleasures of holiday-making.

Close by, a party playing at bowls for a few measures of white wine might be seen, a number of dancers, exhibiting more of indefatigable energy than grace in their movements; further on a group of old men sat watching with jealous glances the reckless vivacity of the more youthful merry-makers; and lastly, seated at tables about the door of a roadside inn, were a score of drinkers—(the notabilities of the town—chatting, each with his hand carelessly placed upon a capacious stone jug filled with the thin wine of the district.

The conversation of this party, after having ranged over the ordinary topics more or less personal to the speakers, had strayed upon the ground of politics; and, judging by the spontaneous movement with which the little circle had closed about one particular speaker, the theme was one in which all felt a stirring interest.

"By St. Blaise, my patron!" cried this person, who appeared to be one of the most well-to-do of the party. "I heard strange stories last week at Clermont. Oh, you needn't look over your shoulders in such alarm! I'm not afraid of any one overhearing what I say. We're Christians, and not dogs; and what I say to you I'd say to Mousigneur de Canillac himself if he were here. What I say I stand by; and I say that whoever oppresses the poor will have to answer for it to heaven."
"Don't talk in that way, Blaise," cried one of



"APOLOGISE, AND I WILL SPARE YOUR LIFE!" CRIED RAOUL.

his companions, looking anxiously over the heads and beyond the circle of those seated next to him. "If any of this were repeated, you'd be set for two hours in the pillory on market-day, and get a hundred lashes with a whip."

"Whip me!" cried the first speaker. "I'd claim protection of our good seigneurs de Guise, and there'd be no more talk of whipping. Listen to what I now tell you. A League is at this moment being formed in all the provinces—following the example set by Burgundy. Our good seigneurs of Guise, whom heaven prosper, will no longer allow the minions of the king to fatten on the fruits of our toil. By Saint Blaise! have a little more patience, comrades, and—"

The speaker suddenly stopped, and violently pushed to the right and left with his two vigorous arms the party by whom he was surrounded. His attention had been arrested by the appearance, at a turn of the road, of a stranger entering the town.

This stranger was a cavalier, mounted on a splendid black horse, and making his way towards the cabaret. On the arrival of the unknown, the games and dances instantly ceased, and the inhabitants of Saint Pardoux, hat in hand, and with outstretched necks and gaping mouths, silently watched the movements of the stranger, whom chance had brought to their little town, which, lying far out of the way of any royal road, was rarely visited by travellers.

Apparently from three to five and twenty years of age, the stranger had features of an extremely and delicately marked, over which was thrown a shade of melancholy, almost of sadness. His eyes were large, of sombre blue, and overshadowed by eyebrows nearly meeting in the centre, the expression of his face indicating a nature serious and reflective. His hair was black, and escaped from beneath his velvet cap, in crisply curling masses. His somewhat square upper lip was covered with a moustache gallantly trained at the extremities. His face was deeply sunburnt. In height, he was about five feet nine, and the proportions of his frame were irreproachable, announcing, if not heroic strength, at least more than ordinary suppleness and agility.

Of defensive arms he carried two long holsters, a sword and a dagger. Behind him, strapped to the saddle of his horse, was a scabbard. From his appearance altogether, it would have been difficult to have formed any very precise opinion as to his social position.

Riding straight up to the door of the cabaret before drawing rein, he dismounted, saying as he did so:

"If the holly-branch nailed against this wall is not a deceptive sign, I ought to be able to get a bed and a supper here. Where's the landlord?"

"Here, monseigneur," replied the master of the little house, evidently flattered by the pompous appellation applied to him, and bowing to the ground.

The traveller drew his pistols from the holsters, unhooked them, and then threw his horse's bridle to the waiting host.

"Walk him up and down a little, before taking him to the drinking trough," he said; "the poor beast has had a heavy day's work, and needs care."

This direction given, the stranger entered the house, the group of gaping politicians humbly saluting him as he passed.

The interior of the cabaret of Saint Pardoux consisted of one large room, the floor of which was formed by the solid earth, and served for the drinking-room of the customers, the sleeping place and kitchen of the landlord. A door on the further side opened into a garden, decorated with three or four little arbors, for the use of guests, and it was in one of these that our traveller seated himself.

Taking off his waist-belt, he hung up his sword and dagger in the jutting branch of a tree; and then, resting his elbow on the worm-eaten table before him, and his forehead upon the palm of his hand, he sank into a reverie so profound that the host, who approached him five minutes later, had to speak twice to him before being able to attract his attention.

"Ah, it's you, my friend, is it?" he said at length, like one waked out of a dream; "what do you want with me?"

"I have come to take your orders, monseigneur."

"To be sure. Let me have dinner at once." Before answering, the host cast a rapid and anxious look about him. Then approaching his guest with the utmost precaution, and dropping his voice almost to a whisper, he said:

"I guessed, by your costume and your accent, that you were a stranger, and that might be enough to make me suspicious of you, monseigneur; but if you order it, though it were a dinner to excite the envy of a king, I shall have no fear of obeying you, only I must not hide from you that the price will be dear—one livre four-teen sous, wine included."

"And in the name of wonder, is all this mys-

tory necessary before you can set a meal's victuals before a hungry guest?"

"Ah, I see, monseigneur, you do not know the country you are in!" cried the host. "Our seigneurs exact a tax of ten deniers for every fowl we raise. If the marquis, my master, were to learn that I possess a fat pullet, I should be sent for a month to prison, and have to pay a fine of ten livres."

"Oppression everywhere!" murmured the young man, knitting his brow. "Why don't you carry your complaints to the lot of the throne?"

"Petition the Valois?" cried the cabaretier. "By Saint Blaise, it's plain, by your talking in that way, that you are not only a stranger to this part of the country, but also to the kingdom. The Valois! we'd as soon think of."

"Silence, fellow!" said the traveller severely. "He is the king—your lord and master—the elect of heaven! As such you owe him obedience and respect."

Suddenly the speaker stopped, and then, as if ashamed of the heat he had displayed, continued, in a tone of mildness and benevolence: "My friend, I thank you for your offer, which I accept. You shall be paid all you ask."

The cabaretier bowed profoundly, and then retired without saying a word, astonished to have heard, for the first time in his life, any one undertake the defence of King Henry III.

While the young traveller thus left alone gave himself up to thought, the inhabitants of Saint Pardoux, collected in groups, made him the wondering subject of their discourse. They had not, however, been long occupied in this manner, when their attention was attracted by the arrival of another horseman, whom they saw approaching the town from the side opposite to that by which the first traveller had arrived.

The effect of two such events in one day was to excite in the highest degree the public mind of Saint Pardoux, utterly unused to such incursions from the outer world. Between the two cavaliers, indeed, there was a striking difference sufficient to have warranted free comment under any circumstances.

The new-comer was a man of five-and-forty years of age, of gigantic stature, bestriding an iron-grey steed of great strength, and both fully armed.

"By the mass!" cried this personage, heavily descending from the back of his horse, and reaching the door of the cabaret, "from the innermost recesses of this house there comes an exhalation of roast meat that fills me at once with astonishment and satisfaction—having resigned myself, as I had already done, to the idea of dining off a man of boiled chestnuts, Hallo, cabaretier Mousigneur le Diable! Who are you?"

Seeing nobody approach in answer to his summons, the Goliath crossed the threshold of the house and made his way into the garden.

"So, so!" he said, "a good meal and a good companion! Decidedly I'm in luck to-day!"

The two travellers bowed to each other. "May I be permitted to ask, monsieur," demanded the giant, "whether the delicious odor which at this moment caresses my nostrils betokens the preparation of a dinner for you?"

"I certainly have ordered a pullet to be roasted."

"Pullets are to be had, are they?" cried the giant, joyfully. "Hallo!—Cabaretier—two pullets!"

"I don't whether our host will be able to obey you," said the younger man, "he has devoted to my service all the resources of his kitchen and larder. However, the dinner may surely be got over, if you will do me the honor to partake of my dinner?"

"Share a pullet!" cried the giant. "You might sooner ask me to commit one or all of the ten deadly sins! I prefer to eat the wine of it. There's no use beating about the bush. I'm a jolly companion, and it's my way to go straight to the end I want to reach. It will take but a few words to make us understand each other. Will you, or will you not, give up your dinner to me? If you say yes, I'll kiss your hand, and bid you for the gallantest man on the face of the earth, but if you say no, you will have to put up with my sword through your body, while I sit down to table and finish the entire pullet. I wait your response."

At this somewhat strange proposition the young man remained unmoved. For a moment, however, his eyes flashed, and showed that under this constrained calmness, a boiling anger was hidden. It was, nevertheless, with a calm voice that, after thoroughly collecting himself, he replied to his adversary.

"I'll not conceal from you, monsieur, that

• About five francs ten centimes of present money.

your manner of questioning me at first considerably surprised me; now I understand you better. You told me you were a jolly companion, and I now see how agreeably you can handle a joke. I assure you, you completely succeeded in taking me in."

"A joke! A thousand legions of devils!" cried the giant. "It seems to me, my friend, that you are laughing at me! Take care what you are about. My patience soon comes to an end, and once Captain Roland de Maurevert loses his temper, there's no knowing to what lengths his anger may go. I pardon your blunder this time, but don't repeat it. Now, yes or no!—do you consent to give up the pullet?"

"You are really in earnest, then?" demanded the young man, still calmly.

"As earnest as if the cause were a thousand times more important. Let me advise you to entertain no particle of doubt on the point."

"Allow me, in turn, to address a word of advice to you, Captain de Maurevert. Do not too readily assume to yourself the right of directing me in the present circumstances; I am used to regulate my own conduct." After a short silence, he continued: "You must allow me to tell you that, in my estimation, the duel, so much honored in France, constitutes the most guilty act, the most odious crime, that a Christian can engage himself to commit. The duellist, properly so-called, has not the excuse of passion; he kills simply for the sake of killing. That is cruelty pushed to its last expression—something at once vile, sanguinary and shameful."

"A homily worthy of the monk Poncet!" cried De Maurevert. "If such are your enlightened sentiments, why don't you give up the pullet?"

"I've not quite said all I have to say," continued the younger man. "I have made it a rule of conduct to avoid as much as possible affairs of honor. I must be pushed to extremities before drawing the sword from the scabbard. Are there no means of arranging our difference. Is it not truly deplorable to see two men, strangers to each other, rip one another to pieces with their daggers, like two hungry dogs over a bone? I assure you, captain, if it were not that I have been fasting for nearly twenty-four hours, I would not hesitate to resign my dinner to you."

At these words the captain rose and shrugged his shoulders with an air of pity.

"Monseigneur," he said in a disdainful tone, "all that you have said may be summed up in three words—you are afraid."

"Captain!" cried the young man, biting his lips till the blood came from them.

"Well—what? You are not going to lose your temper? That would be too good a joke."

The young man paused for a few seconds, during which time his lips quivered and his brows contracted nervously.

"Captain," he said, in a voice which he tried to render calm, but the tones of which trembled with anger, "if I hesitate and hold back from entering upon a duel so singular as the one in which you are now seeking to engage me, it is because nature has unhappily inflicted me with instincts of which I dread the explosion. At the flash of steel my heart beats with joy, my blood becomes fired, my brain transported, and the idea of carnage seizes me like a delirium. It is not ferocity, captain; it is a malady. Perhaps this terrible fury may have been transmitted to me from my father. Sometimes I am tempted to believe that I come from an accursed race. Captain, have pity on me! Do not add a new remembrance of blood to those which already weigh upon my past!"

During the time the young man was speaking De Maurevert observed him with the closest attention.

"Monsieur," he cried, "accept my sincere apologies. I see that I am mistaken in my opinion of you."

"So, then—our duel?"

"Is now inevitable. A sort of bravery is what I ought from the first to have expected to find in you. Allow me, on my side, to display to you a sort of honesty which is my peculiar quality; frankness for frankness, monsieur. I also have on my conscience a considerable number of peccadilloes. I have done, in fact, all that a man of war can do. This is equivalent to a terrible confession. In religion I respect but one thing—my word. In this is comprised my entire honesty, and I push it to the farthest; for when one boasts but one good quality, one is clearly bound to make the most of it. Now, I have pledged my word to kill you if you do not give up your dinner to me. It was wrong of me to pledge my word, perhaps, but it's now too late to withdraw it. One word more, by the way—what is your name?"

"My name has nothing to do with our difference."

"Excuse me, I always made a point of knowing the names of those whom I send to another world. It is a sort of library of remembrance I am forming for the entertainment of my old age."

"I am called Raoul Sforzi, and I belong to his Highness, Monseigneur the Duke of Savoy."

"Raoul Sforzi," repeated the captain, tranquilly. "That's a coupling of French and Italian that seems suggestive of a certain irregularity in your birth."

At this response of Roland de Maurevert, his adversary uttered a cry of rage that sounded not unlike the roar of a lion, and instantly stripped off his coat, or *soubreveste*.

"Take off your cuirass, captain," he cried; "you are a wretch unworthy of pity!"

A few moments later they both stood ready to begin the fight.

"Don't you think we should find better ground for our purpose outside the house than here in

this pent-up garden?" asked De Maurevert. "Here we can only massacre each other like two peasants; out there we may cut each other's throats like gentlemen."

"Just as you please, captain," replied Raoul.

"Pass out first, then, I beg."

"After you, captain."

"You'll oblige me infinitely by not insisting."

Raoul bowed to his adversary, and crossed the threshold of the outer door.

"Pardieu," cried De Maurevert, following him; "you are a brave companion, and I hold you in great esteem. To expose your back so to me, when I have a sword and dagger in my hand, proves on your part a loyalty that does you honour. Hallo! you fellows," he cried to the wonder-struck group who stood about the door of the cabaret, "brush me this ground here clear of stones with your caps, and then take yourselves to a convenient distance out of the way; and for your pains you shall see a sight that many a Court lady would pay half her jewels to witness!"

The two adversaries crossed their swords in a moment, and the fight began. It was of short duration; for, to the amazement of the giant, at the second pass Raoul's sword wounded him in the right shoulder. A moment later, and, like a whirlwind, Raoul closed upon him, his foot gave way under him, and before he was hardly aware of what had happened, he found himself extended on the ground, with Raoul's dagger at his throat.

"Apologise, and I will spare your life!" cried Raoul.

"Apologise—for what?" demanded De Maurevert. "I've not offended you in any way. If you give up the pullet, I'll accept my life; if not, cut my throat, and the devil fly away with me. I've given my word, and that I'll never break to save my life."

"Take the pullet, then, captain," said Raoul sadly, releasing his antagonist, and moving slowly back towards the cabaret.

No sooner was De Maurevert upon his feet than he rushed after his magnanimous opponent, and threw his arms about him, crying:

"Chevalier, let me embrace you! The devil confound me if I in the least understand what is the matter with me. I feel a strong inclination to cry: I fancy I must be ill. Don't expect any better explanation; but, since I have not been able to kill you, suffer me to become your friend. I pledge you my word to be faithful and devoted to you."

Raoul's answer to this remarkable and altogether unexpected proposition was a hearty grip of the giant's outstretched hand. The engagement was accepted.

CHAPTER II.

THE MARQUIS DE LA TREMBLAIS' TWELVE APOSTLES.

Hardly had the late adversaries re-entered the cabaret, when a new personage appeared upon the scene.

He was a man about five-and-forty years of age, with low brows, deep-set eyes, angular features, thin lips, and sidelong restless looks; his ensemble conveying at a glance anything but a favorable impression. His costume of sombre-colored serge clearly indicated his station as that of a domestic; he was, in fact, one of the gamekeepers of the Marquis de la Tremblais.

The arrival of this person produced an extraordinary effect—something not far removed from consternation, indeed—on the minds of the holiday-makers of Saint Pardoux. As soon as his presence was observed, the groups separated, and though everybody affected to greet him with a friendly smile and bow, it was easy to be seen, by the embarrassed and even terrified expression of their faces, that their smiling and friendly salutations were drawn from them rather by the sentiment of fear than of friendliness.

Whether the valet Benoist was used to receptions of this kind, or that he set no store by them, he appeared on the present occasion unconscious of the effect produced by his presence. He passed proudly and disdainfully through the throng, which made way for his passage, and entered the cabaret. A malicious smile played about the corners of his evil-looking mouth as he called in a loud and imperious tone:

"Master Nicolas!"

The cabaretier, pale, and uneasily fumbling at the broad brim of his cap, quickly made his bow before his redoubtable guest, who looked at him for a moment or two in silence, and with some such expression as we may fancy a viper contemplates a wren he is about to dart upon.

"You've got a wedding dinner in course of preparation, Master Nicolas, eh?" asked Benoist, after enjoying, as long as was agreeable to himself, the poor cabaretier's agony of mind. "Who are the happy young people, Master Nicolas? I did not know any wedding was in contemplation at Saint Pardoux?"

"Wedding, Monsieur Benoist!" cried the cabaretier, affecting the profoundest astonishment, and holding himself carefully on the defensive. "I've heard of no wedding, Monsieur Benoist."

"I must have been mistaken, then; so we'll say no more about the matter. It was the agreeable smell of roasting meat that fills your house misled me. I made sure I scented a wedding-feast."

Master Nicolas tried hard to protest his innocence, but his presence of mind entirely deserting him at this critical moment, he could do no more than blush guiltily to the roots of his hair. From being simply malleous, the smile of the gamekeeper became hideous.

"Exercise has given me an appetite, Master

Nicolas," he said, after a slight pause. "Cannot you find for me in a corner of your larder—say a crust of bread and cheese? Certainly I should prefer a slice of venison; but then, I know—you are so poor!—such luxuries as fresh meat or game of any kind never find their way into your humble house."

The unfortunate Master Nicolas felt very much as if he had been stretched upon a red-hot plate. He saw that there was no escape from the terrible clutches of Monsieur Benoist.

"If you will promise me your protection, Monsieur Benoist," he cried, with trembling humbleness, "and also to keep the secret—I think I shall be so happy as to be able to treat, as he deserves, the head gamekeeper of Monseigneur the Marquis."

"Aha! A confidence! Pray let me hear what it is."

This command was given without any accompanying guarantee, and the unfortunate cabaretier bitterly repented his unguarded proposition. But as it was impossible to retreat from the position he had taken, he resigned himself to the consequences with an inward groan.

"Yes, Monsieur Benoist," he replied, affecting an air of careless gaiety, which had the effect of making his embarrassment more conspicuously noticeable, "I have something better to offer you than a mere crust of bread and cheese—a roasted pullet!"

"Oh, you're joking, Master Nicolas," cried the gamekeeper, with a well-acted look of incredulity.

Master Nicolas, however, felt but too poignantly how little of jocularly there was in the affair. His only chance of escaping punishment lay in inventing a plausible lie, and he had not hesitated to attempt to save himself by that means.

"The fact is, Monsieur Benoist," he said, lowering his voice, "about an hour ago two cavaliers dismounted at my door, and gave me a pullet, with orders to roast it for their dinner. It's no uncommon thing for travellers to carry their own provisions, is it, Monsieur Benoist? Now, what prevents me from telling my guests that the fire was too strong, and that it has burnt up their pullet?"

"Nothing whatever, good and faithful Master Nicolas."

"Of course, between you and these strangers I would not hesitate for a moment."

"I am happy, Master Nicolas—for your sake that I was mistaken. For a moment I suspected you of a design to defraud monseigneur of his rights."

"Ah, Monsieur Benoist," cried the cabaretier, putting on the best look of injured innocence he was able to assume; "how could such a thought have come into your mind?"

While poor Master Nicolas was thus doing his best to lie himself into security, Captain Roland and Raoul were amicably talking away the time, and waiting as patiently as they could the advent of their dinner.

"I consider that to-day has been a lucky one for me, chevalier," cried the giant; "for not only have I had the honor of gaining your friendship, but the sword-thrust which you gave me, and which might have laid me up in bed for a fortnight, is nothing but a skin-deep prick, of which there will be no sign by this time to-morrow. I assure you, chevalier, it is impossible for me to tell you how much your character attracts and pleases me. Let us remain in company. I've a presentiment that we shall do something remarkable together. We each complete the other. You will bring into the partnership youth, mettle, beauty; I, what is worth all the rest—experience. For, to speak frankly, my dear Chevalier Sforzi, I don't think much of your intelligence as a negotiator; you've superabundantly proved to me that you don't in the least know how to make the most of an advantage."

"How so, captain?"

"For example: When you held me down just now, and had your dagger at my throat, why didn't you impose a ransom? In your place, I should have done so. Why, I've fought duels that have brought me five hundred crowns. In fact, a sword in the hands of a brave and ingenious man represents a certain source of income!"

"Fight for money, captain?"

"You wouldn't fight for love, would you? My young friend, I don't for a moment dispute that you fence admirably; but I sustain that, beyond that you have everything to learn. In the course of the next few days, when I know you better, I'll carry this conversation further. Meantime, my stomach cries *famine!* Let's dine, and I offer you a share of my pullet. What ho!"

At the captain's summons, Master Nicolas appeared with a contrite air and a piteous countenance.

"Forgive me, monseigneur," he said, "I have had the misfortune to be called away from the cooking of your pullet for a few minutes, and the fire—has burnt it up entirely!"

On hearing this disastrous news, Captain Roland dashed his clenched fist down upon the table before him with such tremendous force as to shiver the worm-eaten wood into splinters.

"Wretch!" he cried; but then suddenly checked himself, and after a moment's reflection, continued in an unexcited tone: "My friend, it isn't to an old fox like me that it's any use talking such nonsense as that. You'll never make me believe that you have allowed a dinner worth two *livres tournois* to melt into smoke. You must have found some magnificent customer for it?"

"I swear to you, gentlemen"—

"Silence! If you dare to interrupt me again,

I'll wring your neck without pity. Confess your crime—it's the only way of saving yourself from my indignation. Now, tell the truth, or dread my terrible wrath!"

So many examples of cruelty were daily given at this period by the feudal nobility of the provinces, the life of a peasant was held of so little account, that Master Nicolas began to tremble in every limb.

"Promise to forgive me, monseigneur," he stammered almost unintelligibly, "and I will confess to you the entire truth."

"I consent," replied the captain, after a moment's reflection; "but at the same time, that your fault may not go unpunished, you will lodge and feed my friend the chevalier and myself gratis."

"You do me too great an honor, monseigneur. I thank you for your goodness."

"Never mind thanking me, but go on with your confession," cried the giant.

Nicolas was perfectly sincere. He related the fact of Benoist's arrival, the critical position in which the presence of the Marquis de la Tremblais' head gamekeeper had placed him, and, in fine, the sacrifice he had been obliged to make of the roast pullet intended for the travellers, to save himself from fine and imprisonment.

"By all the furies," cried Captain Roland, when the cabaretier had finished his lamentable narrative, "conduct me to this knave. The gormandiser has the audacity to attack gentlemen, has he? Backs and gibbets!—we'll get some fun out of this!"

The giant, now moved to real anger, had risen from his seat, and was already some way towards the door of the cabaret, when Master Nicolas threw himself on his knees before him, and clung to one of his legs.

"In the name of all the saints, monseigneur," he cried, "do not think of anything of the sort. You do not know Benoist! Woe to whoever offends him! Benoist never forgives."

"Fear has robbed you of your wits, fellow, and made you forget in whose presence you are and to whom you are speaking," cried the giant, roughly throwing off the terrified cabaretier. "Dare to threaten me—Roland de Maurevert—with the anger of a hind?"

"Monseigneur, I conjure you take care," cried Nicolas, beseechingly. But seeing that the captain paid no heed to his words, he sprang to his feet and placed himself in the doorway. "Monseigneur," he cried, as pale as a corpse, and in a hoarse whisper, "what I am about to tell you may cost me my life; but I cannot bear to see you heedlessly rushing upon your fate. Monseigneur, the gamekeeper, Benoist, is chief of the twelve apostles of the Marquis de la Tremblais."

On hearing these enigmatical words, the captain stopped.

"What do you mean by the twelve apostles of the Marquis de la Tremblais?" he asked.

"Did you not know of their existence, monseigneur?"

"Not the least."

Leading his guest well out of earshot of whoever was in the house, Nicolas, after a moment of painful hesitation, explained.

"What are called the twelve apostles of Monseigneur the Marquis de la Tremblais are murderers charged with the execution of his vengeance. Monseigneur never leaves his castle without having them for an escort—for monseigneur never lives on good terms with the neighboring nobility. The twelve apostles are a band of pitiless and lawless wretches, who, feeling themselves supported by the power of their master, shrink from no deed to which they are incited either by greed or wickedness. If I were to attempt to tell you all the dreadful things they have done, the day would not be long enough for the story. Let me beseech you, monseigneur—do not draw upon yourself, much less rouse the anger of the chief of the apostles."

"What do you think of all this, my dear chevalier?" demanded the giant of Raoul, whose flashing eyes and knit brows spoke clearly enough the indignation with which the cabaretier's recital had filled him. "Does it not strike you that luxury is being carried to an unheard-of pitch in the provinces? This Marquis de la Tremblais appears to deny himself nothing. Twelve assassins in his pay!—it's truly royal. One might really believe oneself in Paris."

Having delivered himself of this judicious reflection, Captain Roland passed straight through the cabaret, followed by Raoul.

The first object their eyes rested on, upon reaching the road in front of Master Nicolas' house, was the chief of the apostles, seated at table and in the act of beginning to carve the pullet. Uttering an involuntary cry of distress at the sight, the captain sprang fiercely towards Benoist.

"Gallow's bird!" he exclaimed, "this fowl belongs to me! Up with you, and off with your cap when I speak to you!"

The chief of the apostles made no movement towards rising from his seat; but his viperous eyes turned with an indescribable expression of malice upon his interlocutor, and his hand sought the hilt of a heavy cutlass which he carried by his side.

The captain observed both the gesture and the look that accompanied it.

"Home of Beelzebub!" he cried, "this fellow is mad!"

Without troubling himself to utter another word, and with the most perfect coolness, he raised his right arm, and brought down his closed fist upon the head of the gamekeeper, who fell to the ground as if struck by a thunderbolt.

Upon the assembled townspeople, the effect produced by the sight of this transaction was indescribable. As for the captain, he contented himself with directing Master Nicolas to bring after him the fowl, happily still intact; and then, taking Raoul's arm, returned to the garden at the rear of the cabaret.

"Decidedly, my dear chevalier," he said, "the luxury of these country gentlemen is of poor quality. A mere box on the ear is more than their chief bullics can stand."

An hour after the accomplishment of this exploit, and when he had eaten two-thirds of the famous pullet, which had been the cause of so many events, Captain Roland, his back resting against the wall, his legs crossed before him, and his manner somewhat anxious and reflective, addressed his new friend:

"Chevalier," he said, "there's nothing like a good dinner to make a man take a reasonable view of things. Now, I won't attempt to conceal from you that I see clearly our present position has a vulnerable and dangerous side. I think it's very likely that I did wrong to chastise the insolence of the chief of the apostles, and I shall not be the least surprised if it brings us into trouble. The Marquis de la Tremblais counts among the highest and most powerful of the nobility of Auvergne. He has at his command sixty cuirassiers, forty light horsemen, and a hundred pikemen. With such an adversary therefore, you see, dear friend, precaution cannot be counted as cowardice. Moreover, the reputation enjoyed by this powerful gentleman is as little amiable as it can be—he is said to be traitorous, vindictive and sanguinary to excess. If it should come into his head, therefore—and it's not at all unlikely to do so—to consider himself insulted by the cuff on the head given to the chief of his apostles, he is quite capable of treating us as if we were serfs—that is to say, hanging us out of hand on the nearest tree. My advice is, that we lose no time in getting away from this place."

"I am ready to do whatever you think best, captain," said Raoul.

"If we could only reach either the outskirts of Mont d'Or or Clermont we should be out of danger. My presence in Auvergne once known, the office I hold renders my person sacred and inviolable. The only thing I dread is to be carried off before I have time to make my name heard by the echoes of the mountains."

Captain Roland paused for a moment, and it was with visible embarrassment that he continued:

"Chevalier, I am afraid that you judge unfavorably of my prudence. Answer me, I beg of you, with perfect frankness: Do you think me a man who would shrink from, for example being cut in bits, or torn to pieces on a rack, if by making my own escape I left you in peril?"

"No, captain; I do not believe you to be such a man."

"On the faith of a gentleman?"

"On the faith of a gentleman."

"In that case, let us set off without delay. The opinion you have formed of me, dear chevalier, fills me with delight."

The two companions of fortune called the cabaretier; then, after Sforzi had paid their reckoning, in spite of the captain's strong opposition, they mounted their horses.

"What is the nearest inhabited place to Pardoux, Master Nicolas?" demanded Captain Roland.

"The domain of Tauve, monseigneur," answered the cabaretier.

"Is it a town or a village?"

"A fortified house, monseigneur, belonging to the Dame Loise d'Erlanges."

"One last question, Master Nicolas. What is the distance from Pardoux to Tauve?"

"About a league. But, pardon me, monseigneur, can it be your intention to go to Tauve?"

"What is that to you?" replied the captain, to whom the question conveyed a suspicion of possible treason.

"Nothing to me, monseigneur," replied Nicolas; "but if I were in your place, I should not go to Tauve, that's all."

The cabaretier spoke with such a tone of frankness that the captain, after a moment's reflection, replied in a softened tone:

"Explain what you mean, without fear. On my honor as a soldier and a gentleman, I will preserve in inviolable secrecy all you now tell me."

"In good faith, captain," cried Master Nicolas, after a moment's hesitation; "I am so grateful to you for the way you knocked over the chief of the apostles, that I cannot let you walk blindly into difficulties. With regard to the Dame d'Erlanges's house at Tauve, this is how the matter stands. Our master, the Marquis de la Tremblais, villainously in love with the daughter of the Dame d'Erlanges, and finding that the young lady regards him only with horror, has resolved to succeed by force and cunning. With this view he has isolated her in her mother's house, and deprives her of all aid and assistance. Our master, who shrinks at nothing, has published by sound of trumpet throughout his domain, that all persons approaching within a league of the fortified house of Tauve shall be accounted by him as enemies, and treated as such. At first there was a great commotion in the surrounding country, and several gentlemen, indignant at the proceeding, came forward and offered their support to the Demoiselle d'Erlanges. But these brave gentlemen had not taken the twelve apostles into account. Master Benoist set to work, and, in less than a fortnight, five gentlemen fell by the pistols or daggers of that dreadful band. Everywhere there was great indignation and regret;

but what could be done? After Monsieur de Canilhac, the governor for the king, our master is the most powerful person in the province."

"In saying 'after' Monsieur de Canilhac, I am wrong," continued Nicolas; "for if these two seigneurs were to meet in battle, the one who would be beaten is certainly the lieutenant of the Valois. Now, while I speak, the sentence pronounced against the Demoiselle d'Erlanges is in such force that the most daring gentleman in Auvergne would not venture to approach her house within the limits proclaimed by the Marquis de la Tremblais."

"Captain Roland," cried Raoul, "I will not do you the wrong of asking you what you think we ought to do. Our conduct is so plainly indicated by honor that doubt or question is impossible."

"We don't look at this matter with the same eyes, dear chevalier," replied the giant, calmly. "To me it appears to require extreme caution in the handling. You fancy, without doubt, that we are in the age of Charlemagne, but I know that the days are passed for cutting through a mountain with the stroke of a sword, or of making one's way into a strong castle with a single blow of a battle-axe. What have we to do with the love misfortunes of the Demoiselle d'Erlanges? What prospect does our interference offer but the chance of getting ourselves pistolled or stabbed, like the five gentlemen of whose fate Master Nicolas has just told us? If there were any chance of realizing a handsome reward for the danger of our skins—that, I grant you, might leave the subject open to discussion."

"Every one is free to indulge his own opinion, captain," replied Sforzi, with cold hauteur. "Don't let my example influence you. I go to Tauve."

"You have a bad memory, chevalier," replied Captain Roland. "I have promised you a friendship faithful and devoted equal to all proofs to which you can put it. Why, then, should you try to stimulate my self-love by useless rallery. It would have been a hundred times more simple to have said to me, 'Captain Roland, I am going upon a ridiculous and pitiable enterprise. Come with me, I shall want you.' This way of stating the question that now divides us would have put us at once in accord. I should have instantly answered you, as I do now: 'Chevalier, you are acting with utter thoughtlessness. Good—! I'm with you!'"

Without leaving Raoul time to express either regret or gratitude, Captain Roland spurred his powerful iron-grey horse, and rode off in the direction of Tauve.

(To be continued.)

MEN WHO FACE DEATH.

THE POLICEMAN.

Don't you go and make any mistake! The pictures in the comic papers, and all the rest of the jokes about the policemen, may be all very well in their way, and I can laugh myself at a good joke at the expense of the Force, but for all that there is not as much in them as some of the would-be sharp ones make out. Most of 'em are as stale as they well can be, and though for anything I know they may have been to the point some time, they ain't now-a-days, not by a long way. There's a saying about life not being all beer and skittles, and you may take my word for it that life ain't all cupboard courtship for a policeman. Even if he had the inclination for it, his superiors would take precious good care that he didn't spend his time on duty making love to cooks and feeding in gentlemen's kitchens. That may be very well in a pantomime, but it's about as much the real thing as pantomime fish and carrots are; whatever people may think, policemen don't always come up just when a fight is over, and it isn't only women and little boys that they collar—I should like to see some of them that talk that way have to tackle some of the customers that we have to do; they'd mighty soon alter their tone, I expect. Why, taking it all through, there's few businesses as are more risky than a policeman's. In plenty of neighborhoods he goes on duty with his life in his hand. People read and talk about the dangerous classes, but it is the policeman that has to deal with 'em, and it's him as knows how dangerous they are. They know whether it's only women and boys that we collar; they know who lays them by the heels, and they remember it, with a vengeance. "Revenge is sweet" is a motto with a good many of them, and when they are loose they will often go a long way to have it on the man that has been the means of caging them—that was how I came by the gash you see on the side of my face here.

I had got a customer two years for stealing lead, and I was one of those that escorted him to the van after he was sentenced, and as we passed along he growls out to me under his breath, "You've scored this chalk, but you may lay any odds that I'll score the next, if I have to die for it."

I could tell that he meant what he said, and I bore it in mind. When he was out again, I kept well on my guard whenever I saw him lurking about; but at length he was too sharp for me.

One rather foggy night I was passing the top

of a dark-side street, when hearing a rush, I wheeled round as quickly as I could—but too late. I just caught sight of the scoundrel making a swinging hit at me with a bottle tied in a handkerchief, and the next instant I was stretched senseless. I shall carry the mark of the blow to the grave with me, as you may see, and it was pretty nigh carrying me to the grave; I was within half an inch of death, as you may say, for if it had been half an inch more on the temple it would have been an end of me. As it was, it laid me up for about three months, but beyond marking me, it did me no permanent harm.

When I got on duty again I said nothing, but made up my mind that there should be a third chalk to the game between me and the fellow that struck the blow. He had bolted as soon as he had done it, and hadn't been heard of since; but for all that I felt quite sure he would turn up in his old lurk again, sooner or later, for his wife and all his companions were there. So I watched and watched, and sure enough at the end of a couple of years I spotted him again. I found out that he had only been back a week when I caught sight of him, and so I didn't try to flutter the nest too soon. I let three months go by, so that he was all right, and then I went in to score my next chalk.

I reported him, and half a dozen of us were told off to take him. Three went into the house after him, two kept watch in the front, and I took my stand at the back, the way he was likeliest to come if he managed to make a run of it. As it turned out, he did make a run, or at any rate he got a start.

It was a low-built house, and before those who went in could get up-stairs he dropped out of the bed-room window, coming down safely on his feet; but before he could take to his heels I was facing him, my right hand holding my staff ready-drawn behind my back, my left hand ready to collar him.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" he grinds out between his teeth, and before I could say a word or move an inch, he had whipped out a large clasp-knife. I could see murder in his eye, and so I dashed in at once to seize him; but before I could lay hold of him he had gashed my hand to the bone—and then it was my turn. He was drawing back to make a running stab at me, when, quick as lightning, and with all the strength I could put into it, I swung round my right arm and caught him with the staff full in the face, felling him like a bullock. He was quite senseless, and by the time the others got round I had him quietly handcuffed. When we got him to the station we sent for a doctor to dress his wound, but he wouldn't have it touched, and insisted upon being taken into court next morning with his face all marked; but though he certainly looked horrible enough, he didn't take anything by his move. He was well known, and besides, though I struck with a will, I struck in self-defence, and for life. He had penal servitude, and he didn't live to do his time out.

This is the sort of customer a policeman has sometimes to tackle, and he never knows the day or hour he may have to tackle. Men as are wanted will generally come quiet enough, when they find they are fairly dropped upon; but still you can never be quite certain of them; if the drink or the devil is in them at the time, they may take it into their heads to show fight, and when they do they're not particular to trifles—the first thing that comes handy they'll use. But, as I said before, it's when they go in for being revenged on you that they are the most dangerous. It isn't a case of fighting then; they don't give you the chance to fight; they creep upon you—in the dark for choice—and are up to all sorts of cruel, cowardly ways of laming a man. Many a fine man has been made a cripple for life, in doing or for having done his duty as a policeman, and some have been killed outright.

Then see how a policeman has to go into a row, and take his chance of what may happen from interfering with wild or drunken men with their blood up; again, see how he has to go into a house where "Murder" is being shouted, and where perhaps the first thing that meets his sight is a man more than half-mad, and slashing right and left with a poker. Then there is being at fires, and being out in all sorts of weather, so that what with one thing and what with another, a policeman's is both a hard job and a risky one. If there's any one as thinks as it ain't risky, just let 'em ask any policeman's wife as cares for her husband how often she has lain awake, fearing something might happen to him, when he's been on night duty in a bad quarter!

What class of criminals are the most dangerous for a policeman to have to deal with? Well, I hardly know; the regulars, the "habitual criminals," as they are called, are much of a muchness. A sneaking thief may turn Turk upon you, while a burglar or garotter, as you might think likely to show fight, will often let himself be took as quietly as a lamb. The chance cases are often rough ones. A mad-drunk sailor ain't a nice customer to handle, and a mad-drunk soldier—especially when he takes to the belt—is a decidedly nasty one; and sometimes your swindling clerk, or absconding bankrupt, will show his teeth—pull out a pistol, or pick up a deceiver or chair, and talk of knocking your brains out if you lay a hand on him; though of course we do lay hands on 'em for all that. If you dash in boldly at them they generally knock under.

Coiners used to be the worst, but there's not many about now. There is one customer, however, as is more likely than not to make a fight of it before he'll be taken, and as is generally a

tough un to fight, and that is the escaped convict. It's generally a desperate hand that does manage to escape, and one that's dreadfully fond of his liberty, and that knows that if he is took again he may bid a long good-bye to it. A gentleman of that stamp gave me the stiffest tussle I ever had, and the one I'm proudest of, for I fought him fair, and took him single-handed. When he made his escape he got clean away, and he had sense enough not to hark back to his old London haunts while the search was hot; but about a year afterwards he did venture back, and I accidentally got wind of it.

I knew that there was five pounds for any one who took him, and I had a pretty good idea that the governor of the prison he had broke out of would stand something more; but more than all that, I—Well, I may well say it: I had not been long in the force at the time, and I wanted to show that I had something in me; and so, though I could have asked for help, I made up my mind to try to take him by myself. I was twenty-seven at the time, stood five foot eleven, weighed twelve stone—good fighting weight—and, though I say it that shouldn't, the convict, escaped or unescaped, didn't breathe that I feared to tackle single-handed.

It was not of the man himself that I was afraid, though I knew he was a Tartar; what made the job so risky was the danger of being set upon by the whole of the gang to which he belonged, and who always went about together, and would, I knew, think nothing of murdering a policeman. I waited a few weeks to see what chance might turn up, and at length one afternoon I heard that the gang had picked up some sailors, and were spreeing with them in a public-house some little distance from their regular lurk; and thinking to myself that I might wait long enough without finding any much better opportunity, I determined to try my luck there and then, and down to this public-house I went.

There was no one then particular at the bar, and so I passed through to the back, and there in a shut-in skittle alley I caught sight of the gang, eight in number, and with three sailors in tow. I felt quailish, but I knew that it wouldn't do to give way to that feeling, and so seeing my gentleman there in the midst as large as life, I put on my boldest face, bounced into the alley, and shutting the door, placed my back against it. Though the gang were taken by surprise, they acted cleverly enough; they didn't know which of them might be wanted, and not one of them said a word or moved an inch, but I noticed my man pick up a pot and make a pretence of sipping at it, though I could see easy enough that his real move was to be ready to fling it at my head if it should turn out that he was the man wanted.

I caught his eye, and in an off-handed tone said, "Oh, you know it's you I've come for, then; but take my advice, don't do anything in the pot-throwing line. It will only make things worse for you, for the house is surrounded, and there are men enough in reserve to take a houseful of you."

"I shall make it death or glory this time," he answered, "and so here goes;" and as he spoke the words he threw the pot as hard as he could, and then made a dash for a window at the end of the alley. The pot just skimmed my ear, and then I was on him like a panther, and dragged him back just as he had got about half out of the window. I downed him, and had all but mastered him, when one of the gang, that had popped out as soon as my back was from the door, came running back to tell the others that it was all gammon about there being a reserve. This was enough for them. Without another word said, they made a rush towards me; and, though I still held my man, my heart grew cold, and a prayer flashed through my mind, for I felt I was face to face with death. I knew that they'd stick at nothing, and that the very same gang had kicked a man to death only a few months before. But I was in luck.

I would have called to the sailors for help, but they looked helplessly drunk, and two of 'em was, but the third, as it happened, was only half-seas over. He was a big lump of a fellow, a Yankee mate, as I knew afterwards and about as cool and bold a card as there could be. As they sprang forward, so did he, and whipping out a revolver, says he, in an aggravating sort of way, "Gentlemen, fair play is a jewel, and I like to see it respected—and so I will. They are men to man, and pretty fairly matched, and if the officer can take him, he shall." Whether or not he really would have fired at them, they must have believed so, for they slunk back. All the same they had done a good thing for their mate.

While this had been going on I had, without knowing it, slackened my hold, and my man, putting out all his strength in a sudden move, threw me off, and got on to his feet, and before I could close with him again, had drawn a life-preserver. He made a dash at me with it, and aimed a crushing blow at my head.

Fortunately it only reached my left shoulder, but even there it was a crippler for the time being, for I felt my arm drop useless to my side. He staggered a bit from partly missing his blow, and before he could recover himself I was alongside of him, and he went over like a ninepin, and held up his hands to have the bracelets put on.

It was only about two minutes' job altogether, but it was a mighty tough one, I can tell you, and a dangerous one too; and what I say is, that when people talk about policemen, they should remember that they never know the day or hour when, in the way of duty, they may have to tackle a job in which their life is at stake.

"A STRAW TELLS HOW THE RIVER FLOWS."

BY L. W. THIRLWALL.

Some read the stars that gild the sky,
Foretell the coming storms and wind,
Their charms are broken when they try
To read angelic woman's mind.

A straw tells how the river flows,
A feather how the light wind blows,
But none so subtle as to find
A test so sure for woman's mind.

And now the enchanting prize seems won,
She charms and chains one with a smile,
Its light divine outshines the sun,
What craven heart could dream of gulle?

A straw tells how the river flows,
A feather how the light wind blows,
But none so subtle as to find,
A test so sure for woman's mind.

The sunset streaming o'er the sea
Doth turn each wave to living gold,
So radiant is her smile to me,
Her heart like the deep waters, cold.
A straw tells how the river flows,
A feather how the light wind blows,
But none so subtle as to find,
A test so sure for woman's mind.

For the Favorite.

A GREAT MISTAKE.

BY MRS. C. CHANDLER.
OF MONTREAL.

"I must take charge of the baby for you, Matilda," I said to my wife; not that I had ever any experience in the way of nursing, or that I particularly appreciated infants, albeit they might be my own; but the reasons for my making such an offer as I have mentioned, were these: My wife had just received a note saying that her mother was seriously ill; and begged her to come to her, without delay. Here was a dilemma. Master Tommy, our baby, had a severe cold, and could not be taken out; and we had no girl at present.

We had always kept one since this said baby's advent, which was some eight months before; but my wife had been rather unfortunate in her selections; for, after innumerable changes, the last girl thought proper to help herself to a few teaspoons and some other little valuables, (by way of keepsakes, perhaps,) and left one night without bidding us adieu, and has never been heard of since.

My wife then determined to nurse baby herself; but that arrangement was not the most comfortable one, as it proved (at least to me) this day.

Unfortunately, I was at home. I did not feel well, so had not gone to business as usual. My wife's perplexity was very great when she got the note.

"What shall I do, what shall I do?" she cried, wringing her hands. "I must go to mamma, yet I cannot take baby;" she did not like to ask me to take care of him, knowing that from his birth I had scarcely ever taken him in my arms, and then tears came stealing down her cheeks.

At the sight of her distress, I began to think how I could help her; there seemed but one course, and in a moment of sympathetic excitement I said,

"I must take charge of the baby for you, Matilda."

The little woman jumped up, in an ecstasy of relief, and throwing her arms around me, actually kissed me in the exuberance of her gratitude.

"He will not give you much trouble, Harry; he is such a good baby, and seldom cries."

I thought my wife made a little mistake in the last assertion, but I did not like to contradict her.

"You will find the milk in the cupboard," she continued. "When he awakens pour some into a sauceman, and warm it; his feeding-bottle you will find in the cupboard also."

These directions were given hurriedly, while my wife was arranging her bonnet and cloak; then bidding me good-bye, and smothering baby with kisses, which it was wonderful did not disturb him, she tripped away to catch the cars which were then passing.

As soon as I was alone, I sat down in my easy-chair near the fire, for it was a chilly day, hoping to enjoy a good spell of quiet reading, forgetting the great responsibility I had undertaken. Vain were my hopes: in about half an hour I heard a wail proceed from the cradle in the adjoining room. I took no heed of it at first, when a shrill cry made me leap from my chair as if I had been shot.

I rushed to the cradle. I found all right, so I supposed the scream only meant a call for his nurse. Obeying directions I poured out the milk and put it to warm, then returned to the cradle, whose occupant was now roaring lustily. I dragged up the cushion, by an arm and a leg, for I could not contrive to get him out otherwise; I arranged the little scamp flat on his back in my arms and tucked a towel around his throat, as I had seen his mother do. As it would not stay, I pinned it behind his

neck, for I was wishful of carrying out my nurseship correctly; as I poured the milk which I had put into the boat, into its mouth, it gave a terrific cry, and nearly plunged itself head foremost on the floor.

"What is the matter with the little creature," I thought. I tasted the milk; Heaven! it was almost at boiling heat; I had scalded the poor baby. I snatched it up, and ran to the water-pug, poured out some water, and forced it into its mouth to cool it; but it spluttered and roared, and finally nearly strangled. I blew in its face frantically and it soon recovered. After a few moments I tried to persuade it to take some milk which was now cool, but that was out of the question; it closed its tiny lips most determinedly, and threw itself back in my arms—the old proverb, of a burnt child, &c., was now verified.

As I saw that I could not have any effect in quieting it, I carried it back and tossed it in the cradle.

"Not a bit of it," said my youngster, for he commenced to yell and kick as before.

"I'll leave you to yourself my young scamp," I murmured; so, gathering up my books I went to a room a little further removed from the noise, as my head ached sadly. But it was useless, for the cries of my tormentor became louder and louder, until at last they became like Indian war whoops, for to nothing else could I liken them.

I again rushed to the cradle, the beads of cold perspiration gathering on my forehead from excessive terror. I feared it would go into convulsions, and I pictured to myself the grief of his mother when she returned and found her darling stiff and cold. I took it up again and tried further persuasions about its drinking some milk, for I knew it must be hungry. Nothing I could do would induce the little monster to taste a drop. I tried force, but it only aggravated the little demon to shriek a little louder. I felt almost losing my senses. I was sure that instead of being better, and going to business next day, I should have a brain fever. I now tried to amuse it, and I ran about singing, capering and performing other antics; for a few seconds, it hushed, then came again the ear-torturing peals. Oh, the horror of those hours! In sheer despair I threw the wretch, as I termed it in my heart, into its cot again. I then took a seat near it and looked at it.

Realities seemed to fade away and I felt in a light-mare, and thought I was in one of those enchanted castles that I used to read of when a boy, mocked by a demon as a punishment. On—on, went the unearthly shrieks. I feared every moment to see it expire. If I had known my neighbors I should have asked their assistance; but I did not like to expose my troubles to be laughed at by strangers; so, I tried to be resigned, hoping that an end would soon come in some way.

I rocked the cradle; more terrific the cries. I tore my hair with vexation. "Henry Tharnton," I said to myself, "what evil genius ever induced you to say those words to your wife, 'I take charge of a baby!'"

Yes! one might do that, but my baby had taken and a demon possessed its place. Once more was the milk tried and failed. I made up my mind to interfere no more with the little imp, until his mother came back.

I took up a book and tried to read, but found it an impossibility. I have gone through many scenes since then, but never have my nerves been so tried as on that unlucky day. I would sooner have been left in charge of a tiger for I could have defended myself; but what could I do with a baby. I could not possibly say how long my sufferings lasted, for the screams at last became quite narcotic in their effects, and I went off into a kind of stupor.

I was aroused by the voice of my wife. She called, for she had taken a latch-key and did not knock.

"I have come back sooner than I expected, Harry, for mamma was not as ill as she thought. My baby has behaved well, my little angel, darling."

"Angel indeed," I thought, "rather demon." "Why, what is the matter, Harry, he is sobbing in his sleep, and his face is red and swollen?"

"Oh, he missed you, my love, and would not take his milk, and cried a little." I was sorry at the white lie, but I did not wish to grieve my wife by telling her the truth.

The baby soon awoke, the demon was exorcised at its mother's presence, and it was a pretty, smiling baby again. My wife took it up. "Why, Harry, what did you leave this great owl around it for, with such a big pin sticking in it; it is a wonder it did not prick it. I hope it was not crutched much?"

My wife did not look at me when she asked me a question, or she would surely have seen guilt in my countenance; it now gleamed on my mind for the first time that, perhaps, the poor little mortal had been indeed pricked by that pin; but still I could not entirely pardon it; for babies are considered to be angelic, and his baby might have been less violent under any circumstances. I never gathered courage sufficient to tell my wife what occurred that day; but I resolved never again to take charge of a baby.

DEAR GIRL.—We met Miss Kitty—at a ball recently. After talking about the balloon ascension, the weather and other things, we asked rather abruptly: "Where is your mother?" "Oh," said the sweet damsel, "I have left her at home. I generally do when I come to a ball. What is home without a mother?"

THE CAPTAIN OF THE "NORTHFLEET."

BY GERALD MASSEY.

So often is the proud deed done
By men like this at Duty's call;
So many are the honors won
By them, we cannot wear them all!

They make the heroic commonplace,
And dying thus the natural way;
It is our world-wide English race
Ennobled by that death, To-day!

It brings the thoughts that fathom things
To anchor fast where billows roll;
It stirs us with a sense of wings
That strive to lift the earthiest soul.

Love was so new, and life so sweet,
But at the call he left the wine
And sprang full-statured to his feet.
Responsive to the touch divine.

Nay, dear, I cannot see you die.
For me, I have my work to do
(Up here. Down to the boat. Good-bye,
God bless you. I shall see it through.)

Ye read, until the vision dims
And drowns; but, ere the pang he past,
A tide of triumph overbrims
And breaks with light from heaven at last.

Thro' all the blackness of that night
A glory streams from out the gloom;
His steadfast spirit holds the light
That shines till Night is overcome.

The sea will do its worst, and life
Be sobbed out in a bubbling breath;
But firmly in the coward strife
There stands a man who hath vanquish'd
Death!

A soul that conquers wind and wave,
And towers above a sinking deck;
A bridge across the gaping grave;
A rainbow rising o'er the wreck.

He saved others; saved the name
Unscull'd that he gave his life;
And dying with so pure an aim,
He had no need to save his life.

Lord! how they smote the life we live,
These sailors of our sea-girt isle,
Who cheerily take what Thou mayst give,
And go down with a heavenward smile!

The men who sow their lives to yield
A glorious crop in lives to be;
Who turn to England's harvest-field
The unfruitful furrows of the sea.

With such a breed of men so brave,
The Old Land has not had her day;
But long, her strength, with crested waves,
Shall ride the seas, the proud old way.

COLORADO BILL.

BY HARRY WARING.

"HURRAH! Come here, Bill, if you want to to your eyes good!"

The speaker, handsome and manly-looking, in spite of the yellow clay-streaks adhering to his bronzed face and long flaxen beard, clambered up from the trench in which he had been digging, and leaning on his pick, awaited an answer to his call.

It seemed as if his words were uttered to the winds, and that no one but himself was the tenant of that lonely valley, which stretched from a northern fork of the Sacramento far into the fastnesses of the giant Sierra Nevadas.

On repeating his call, a swarthy but cheerful countenance, surmounted by a rusty felt hat, emerged from the edge of another trench some little distance off, and a pair of light brown eyes peered cautiously over the mound of dirt.

"Haug it, George, what on earth do you mean bringing a fellow up to the top of his hole in this style? When I heard you call, I thought it was nothing less than Injuns or claim-jumpers. It's not so easy shinning up wet clay with nothing to hold on by except your nails; so say what's troubling you, old fellow, and I'll save ix feet of climbing by staying where I am."

He glanced at George, who still rested on his sick, and saw that his comrade's usually calm countenance was working with a strong nervous excitement he vainly endeavored to control. Struck by the change, the tall miner fairly leaped over the dirt-hill surrounding his trench, and in another moment was by his friend's side. The latter silently pointed to his own excavation, down which Bill eagerly gazed, and there saw a hollow recently filled by an up-turned boulder, but now disclosing numerous nuggets of a dull yellow metal.

"A gold pocket, by Jove!" he shouted, frantically embracing his partner. "There's the end of our toil at last. Why, George, that's fortune, fame, everything!"

"It may be to you, Bill; to me it has but one meaning, and that's—Nellie."

George Hanson, the last speaker, had left New York nearly a year before with his young wife, hoping to find in San Francisco the employment that dull times and filled positions denied him in the former city. Some time previous to his departure he had secretly married Nellie White, the beautiful and spoiled daughter of a wealthy merchant, when the young couple

presented themselves before him announcing their union coldly shut the door in their faces, with the declaration, "That as it had seemed proper for them to take such a step without any consultation with him, he would leave them to act with similar independence for the rest of their lives." All their entreaties could not shake the old man's stern resolution. George was at once dismissed from his situation; and after vainly endeavoring to obtain another, he sold a small farm he had lately fallen heir to, and with the proceeds started with his wife for California.

On his arrival he found to his dismay that all the avenues to remunerative employment were more completely filled than in New York; and after recognizing a preacher who once enjoyed some celebrity in that city in the act of wheeling a barrow full of bricks along the walls of a new building, followed by a well-known Philadelphia lawyer staggering under a hod of mortar, he concluded that his own capital, a somewhat superficial knowledge of book-keeping, was decidedly at a discount, and that he would have no harder work, with a prospect of more success, in the rôle of an honest miner.

Nellie, too, seemed so discontented of a selfish and luxurious nature, accustomed to every enjoyment in her father's house, where her lightest whim had been a law, she was tired of this hand-to-mouth mode of living, and despised the rigid economy which George was fully forced to exercise. She longed again for the gay dresses, the round of pleasure and excitement, that she now began to think she had foolishly given up. George's sad countenance and despondent forebodings were wearisome to her; and when at last he rented two small but cosy rooms in a pretty little house overlooking the bay, and giving her nearly all the remainder of his small means, told her to be a good girl for the next six months, the selfish woman, though secretly delighted, was for a brief space moved to tenderness, and actually shed a few tears, which he devoutly kissed away, and departed with the resolve that he would win fortune for the dear girl who thus mourned his absence.

To him she was the same loving woman who had given up all to share his lot. Trusting her thoroughly, he had seen no change, nor did he know how day by day she grew disgusted with the plain matter-of-fact poverty she had wedded, forgetting the strong affection that would dare danger and death for her sake.

Not many of the few females then in San Francisco were suitable intimates for a young and friendly woman, and even the two or three which George countenanced as friends were frivolous, unprincipled women, concealing their real character under a lady-like appearance and some little refinement of manner—dangerous companions for a young girl, and more dangerous for a wife who had begun to weary of her husband.

Yet George Hanson recked little of this on that bright morning when he left his house for the Sacramento steamboat wharf. Although he had bidden her good-bye, he could not resist turning for a last look at the beautiful picture she was leaving. Nellie sat at the window, her abundant flaxen hair waving in natural ringlets over her shapely shoulders. Her lovely eyes, blue as the ethereal expanse above, glanced lovingly and lovingly toward her husband, who left a momentary pang in leaving so much beauty alone and unprotected in a city which even then was a by-word among men for lawlessness and vice.

"Still, she loves me," he thought, "and that will keep her from every temptation."

He looked again before turning the corner. Again the same picture of girlish innocence and beauty. She kissed her finger-tips. He waved an answering signal. How often afterward, when nearly exhausted with travel or worn out under a hot sun while toiling in the reeking pit, did he remember that last look and gain renewed strength for his labor!

For George fondly loved his wife, imagining that her foibles were the mere whimsicalities of a child deprived for the time of its accustomed plaything, and he hoped that the acquisition of wealth would cure her fretfulness, and make her once more the affectionate girl he had wooed and won. He forgot that the love which requires to be thus bought is never worth the price.

He pushed up the river, with no definite purpose as to the manner in which his dreams of riches were to be realized. When he reached Sacramento City, he did what he saw the other miners around him doing. Having purchased his mule and equipments—a small canvas tent and mining utensils—he followed the daily procession trailing across the plains in search of the El Dorado which was to renew his youthful dreams.

From the far-off hills of the Nevada every wind that blew toward the Pacific was laden with rumors of new gold discoveries, until men began to believe that the upper canyons of the Sacramento and American Rivers were the source of the golden fountains whose sands had been so thoroughly sifted on the alluvial plains below. It was whispered around that men whom none would hitherto trust for the bare necessities of life were scattering gold with a lavish hand. As it to confirm all these reports, from time to time some stalwart borderer would lead his horse, jaded with long journeying and staggering under a heavy pack-saddle, through the embryo city's streets, revolver in hand, and two or three of the same guardian weapons protruding from his rude belt. It mattered little if the swarthy stranger's gold disappeared like dew before the sun beneath the melting

business of the fascinating monte or keno; for when the potent drugs of the gambling-hall had deadened his senses to all besides, he still retained a knowledge of the locality where he had obtained his scattered hoard, and informing the listening crowd with drunken stammer that there was "plenny mor' wher' 'at came from," again sought the new diggings, there to remain until a too plethora purse suggested that its unusual weight could be as easily lightened as the last.

With scenes like these daily enacted, it is no wonder that the tide swelled strongly toward the Sierra. Under their influence, thither George Hanson wended his way, only to find that the crowd before him had prospected the desirable places. After trying some unprofitable diggings with indifferent success, he re-packed his mule and journeyed still farther up the river, until one evening, nearly six months after his departure from San Francisco, tired and fevered, he pitched his tent in sight of the snowy summit of Mount Shasta, that towered in the far distance above all its lesser rivals of the Sierras.

The next morning when he opened his eyes he was too delirious to recognize the form which bent over him as that of Colorado Bill, the miner whose graphic delineations of gold-hunting and heavy betting in the Sacramento hotel had insensibly given the direction to his own wanderings. George was down with the terrible miners' fever; and had not some kind providence led the footsteps of Colorado Bill to his bedside, his search for treasure might have had then and there summary ending.

Colorado Bill—thus called from a brief residence on the great river of that name in Lower California—despite his rough exterior, shaggy beard and somewhat dissipated habits, possessed a warm heart. He at once took up his abode in George's tent, nursing the patient in the intervals of work with the patience and tenderness of a sister of charity.

Hanson came to his senses after a fortnight's fight with the fever demon, and no words could express his gratitude when he discovered the extent of his obligation to the tall miner who had stood like a guardian angel between himself and death.

Colorado Bill, on his part, was pleased to think that what he considered nothing but mere duty was so well appreciated. His wandering habits had not utterly destroyed a certain refinement of feeling consequent upon a fair early education, and he therefore longed for a companion other than one whose friendship invariably manifested itself by the mysterious production of four aces in a game of draw poker, and thus showed designs on his dust incompatible with the professions of a Pythias.

The two friends were so well pleased with each other that they made common property with everything, and struck a compact that each would share with the other any good fortune which might befall him.

Up to the morning on which our story opens, the litigation selected had not proved equal to its promise. For many days they had toiled with pick and spade, but beyond a small quantity of scale-gold worth but a few dollars, their exertions had availed them nothing. When they had turned in on the preceding evening, Colorado Bill had given vent to his feelings.

"It's too bad, George," he had said. "We'll try the hole one more day; and if we don't come to the dust, let's git."

And now their highest hopes were realized; yet to the two men the dull metal on which they gazed bore different meanings. To Bill it was simply the agency through which his rolicking animal life found its natural expression. To George, with his strong love and undying faith, it meant hope for himself and happiness for Nellie.

The shades of evening found them five hundred ounces richer than when they had commenced work in the morning. At this rate—though, of course, the first day's find was generally the heaviest—they knew that a handsome competence was only a question of a few weeks' labor. So they worked steadily a fortnight longer. Then their provisions ran low, and Colorado Bill suggested to George that it might be better for him to run down to Sacramento, or perhaps farther, and lay in a fresh supply of grub.

"Tell you what it is, George," he continued, as they sat on the hillside in the warm autumn evening, "you're set me thinking with what you told me about Nellie. More than three months since, when I was down in 'Frisco, I got acquainted with a pretty little girl under somewhat singular circumstances. One afternoon, when I had been thinking of the idle, shiftless life I led, a melancholy stole over me. I couldn't get rid of it. To shake it off, I started out for a walk, and after strolling about some time, thought I would like to take a look at old ocean, and so wandered down the Cliffroad. All at once there was a tremendous commotion ahead—carriages whirling right and left, while between them all rose a cloud of dust coming nearer and nearer. A puff of wind from the sea cleared things up, and then I saw two horses streaking it like lightning toward me. A lady held the lines, and a white-livered cur, without giving her a thought, tried to save himself by jumping from the carriage. I never saw such a scornful look as a woman's face as was on hers when she saw that. The man scarcely touched the ground before I sprang to the horses' heads, and succeeded in checking them after they had dragged me a short distance. The lady never seemed a bit afraid, only after I had assisted her to alight she handed me her riding-whip.

"If you will give that away, what he de-

serve," said she, pointing to the man who was now coming up, "I will be obliged to you."

"Of course I didn't like to insult a man with whom I saw no quarrel; but when he was close to me, I had it was Jim Lascolles, the biggest gambler in California, and the worst, who cleaned me out of six months' dust one night on Goose Flat with loaded dice. The rascal knew me at once, and commenced to feel in his breast-pocket, but I had him covered before he could draw. I knocked his revolver out of his hand into the sea, and then gave him a horse-whipping that I guess will refresh his memory before he does another green miner. He slunk away toward the cliffs. At the lady's invitation, I took a seat by her side. She didn't say anything until we got clear of the crowd which now began to surround us, when she commenced:

"How can I sufficiently thank you for what you have done for me?"

"Oh," I answered, "I'd stop a horse for any lady."

"It was not that—I meant the other thing," she exclaimed, with a scornful gesture in the direction Lascolles had taken.

"If you mean Lascolles' thrashing," I replied, "I owed him that on my own account;" and then I went over my little story about Goose Flat.

"I never saw such a change as passed over her face when I told her that.

"A gambler!" she almost screamed. "Mr Norton always said he was one of the most prominent dealers in San Francisco."

"So he is—at the cards," I answered; "but his name's Lascolles, not Norton, and I'm sorry he's a friend of yours."

"She laughed gayly.

"I don't generally ask gentlemen to horse-whip my friends, so make yourself easy on that score. In San Francisco one cannot make social distinctions among acquaintances—in the States. But as for that man—Norton or Lascolles—I hate him!"

"By Jove, George," she spit out these words like a wildcat, but in a minute afterward she was herself again—all smiles; and she so saucily tossed her little head, all covered with beautiful curly hair, and her blue eyes looked so bewitchingly into mine, that I found myself fairly in love with her."

"You have good taste, Bill," interrupted George; "Nellie has blue eyes and curly hair. But was that all you saw of your beauty?" he continued.

"No. She asked me to come and see her. I went two or three times, and tried to find out more about her, but did not learn much. Whenever I began to question her, she would pat my bearded mouth with her little hand.

"Sh—sh!" she said; "we might make each other very unhappy were we to tell everything we had ever done."

"The long and short of it, George, was that I acted as I suppose many another fool has done before me. I asked her to wait until full, and told her when I had made another pile I would come down and marry her, if she would have me.

"You marry me!" she cried, with an unnatural shriek of laughter that made me almost repent my proposal.

"Yes, if you don't think you're too good for me."

"Her eyes flashed for an instant, and she looked at me very hard. Seeing I meant what I said, she suddenly softened.

"Bill," she replied, "I never could be good enough for you. I hardly know what may happen before fall. At any rate, if you are of the same mind, come back to me then."

"I was so angry at this short dismissal that I did not even bid her good-by, but tore off my buckskin belt, full of double eagles, and dashed it on the table.

"There's something for you to remember me by till fall," I said, and rushed into the street before she could say anything further or prevent my going."

"Just like you, Bill," exclaimed George, when his companion ended—"the best friend and the truest to man or woman; but I hardly like the looks of things. What business had any woman to be driving with a man like Lascolles?"

"Stop, George!" interrupted his friend, in a husky voice; "not a word against Mary! Remember she said that Lascolles was only known to her as the merchant Norton. I'll marry her if she'll have me; for, George," said he, gently, "I feel toward her as you do to Nellie—I love her."

"Then God give you all the happiness you wish for," earnestly answered his mate.

"Amen," replied Bill, reverently.

"So you see, George," he continued, "that it's about time for me to go down to 'Frisco. I must see Mary, and it will only take me a few days longer."

So it was resolved that Colorado Bill should go down to the metropolis.

George had not heard from Nellie for a long time, but this circumstance gave him no uneasiness. He thought that in his wanderings his letters had miscarried, and in their present isolation there had been no chance of communication with the outer world until now. He therefore sent a long letter to her by his comrade, containing an account of their unexpected good luck, with a promise of soon coming in person to San Francisco.

In the meantime he worked long and steadily in the treasure gulch, and day by day added to the pile of yellow dust safely cooped in a corner of the log cabin which they had built for their greater protection.

One evening, nearly a month after the departure of his comrade, and when his return was daily expected, George, having finished his frugal supper, ascended a small knoll behind the cabin that overlooked the beautiful valley beyond. The setting sun gashed a thousand gold and crimson tints on the snowy summits of the Sierras, that rose in the north and east cold and inaccessible as the icebergs of the frozen zone. In the vale below, the temperature was warm and pleasant, and for several evenings past George had gone up the hill, and from thence looked down the valley, hoping to see some sign of his returning partner. Hitherto he had been unsuccessful, but now, as he gazed far down the winding course of the brook, he thought he saw Bill's mule on a rise of ground in the dim distance, slowly plodding its way through a space of five blasted tree trunks that gave an open view of the track. It was so far away, and the twilight was coming on so fast, that he was not altogether certain it was his partner; but he knew that, thus remote from all civilization, the owner of the beast could be none other than Bill. His heart swelled with the thought that he would soon hear from his darling wife. He pictured her delight on receiving the news of his great success, and thought, too, now that Bill had returned, there would soon be an end of toil, and that with the fruits of his labor Nellie should once more have all the luxuries to which she had been accustomed. "How well," he thought, "she had deserved it, for her trust and her patient waiting!" and he resolved that hereafter he would gratify her every wish.

By this time the twilight was rapidly coming on, but before leaving his post, George looked again in the direction of the trail. Did his eye deceive him, or had a deceitful mirage evolved from the haze another mule, the reflection of the first? There, indeed, was another mule and trailing over its side were the long folds of a woman's riding-habit. His heart gave a great bound. There was something in the manner and gesture of the fair equestrienne which over at that distance seemed familiar to him. Could it be Nellie, so tired of waiting that she could not resist the opportunity of thus surprising him? There was no mistaking the other ride now. That was Colorado Bill. George could see him, as they rode up from the vale below laughing and chatting with his companion, and carefully turning aside the long branches which interposed themselves in the pathway.

George, though half ashamed of the emotion felt angry with Bill. Somehow he could not bear to think that any other than himself should be so attentive to Nellie.

They were now directly below him, though the trail circled the hill for more than a mile before it paused at the door of the cabin. Could that indeed be Nellie? There was a certain something—a strange feeling of coming evil—that repelled him the more he gazed.

A harsh, weird laugh, shrill as the night hawk's cry, floated up from the valley below. He breathed a sigh of relief. No; that woman with her bold strident mirth, could not be Nellie, his timid, gentle Nellie, who always seemed to shrink from any action that belied the modesty and attractiveness of her sex.

"It must be Bill's wife," he thought; and he determined that the pair should have a heart-to-heart talk.

He entered the cabin, spread the table, and made the best display of provender that his exhausted store would allow. The coffee-pot hissed merrily on the embers in the fireplace when he heard the clatter of hoofs on the gravel without. The door opened, and his partner entered with a lady, whose face was partly concealed by her veil.

"Hallo, George!" he cried; "I have brought my wife. Look at my pretty little bird Mary," he continued, removing the veil from her face, "this is partner George—George Hanson."

With a cry that echoed far and near through the canon, starting the wild eagle from his eyrie and the huge grizzly from his lair, the lady sank senseless on the floor. Bill rushed to her aid; but glancing at his comrade's face, he was struck by its deathlike pallor.

"George, my boy," he exclaimed, "in Heaven's name what ails you? What's the meaning of all this?"

"Bill, it's Nellie!"

He rushed to the open door; the ring of hoofs sounded sharp and clear through the still night and Colorado Bill was left alone in his misery. Yet only for a brief space. No sooner had the bewildered miner comprehended the terrible truth than, utterly disregarding the covering hoar on the floor, he started in pursuit. For hours he wandered through the forest, but his flinty rocks and hills only echoed back in mockery his call to his fugitive friend.

In the gray light of dawn Colorado Bill re-entered his cabin. It was tenantless. The snow was torn up from the couch that hid their gold dust, and most of it was gone. To Mary alone had he spoken of this secret hiding-place. It store of wealth had furnished many a theme of converse during their long ride to the Sierras. He did not wonder at its disappearance nor mourn over his lost treasure. He knew that to such a woman any crime was light in comparison with the treachery that must have been thoroughly engrained in her nature ere she could so coolly and deliberately trample on the trust of a man like George. For his own disappointment he did not care. Since last night all affection for her seemed dead. He only blamed himself for not tracing out her antecedents before he had given her his faith, and, above all, he cursed his credulity in not following up a clue to Nellie's

disappearance, when he found she had vanished from the place where George left her in San Francisco.

He went sadly back to his old labor. Day by day he washed out the gold-dust, and many a time watched long and wistfully down the valley, hoping for the return of his lost partner.

They met at last.

One noon, when Bill was eating his scanty dinner, he saw numerous dark forms sitting about from tree to tree, and gradually closing in around himself and the cabin. To grasp his gun and flee to its shelter was the work of a few seconds. He knew that successful resistance to the band of savages surrounding him was hopeless. But he had no idea of submitting to the terrible alternative of captivity and death by torture, and resolved to sell his life as dearly as possible.

The unerring aim of his rifle through the loopholes with which the cabin was pierced brought many an Indian to the ground, and evidently so dismayed his foes that their constant hail of bullets against the hut slackened, giving Colorado Bill an opportunity to peer through a loophole and reconnoitre the situation. Just then he fancied that he was called by name. He looked towards the woods, and saw his lost comrade running towards the cabin. The savages desisted George at the same time, and opened fire upon him, while he returned their shots with his revolver.

Bill threw open the door as George stumbled heavily over the threshold, and in another instant secured it with its massive oaken ban. He found to his dismay that George was seriously wounded. A ball had struck him in the back, penetrating his lung, and it was with difficulty that he spoke. Bill carried him to his old bunk, but soon saw he was beyond relief. He lifted a cup of water to the lips of the dying man.

"If it was only the fever again, George!" he said as the tears rolled down his cheek.

"Don't take on so, old fellow," gasped George, feebly clasping his friend's hand. "It's all right. I came back again—to tell you about—Nellie. I didn't want you to think I hated you—for that. I felt that night—I could have killed you—and so I did. I know you couldn't help it. I couldn't be angry with you. She—wasn't—worth it, Bill."

The wronged man had spoken his last. Colorado Bill stood by the dead body of the only true friend he had ever known, and a strong desire of vengeance rose in his breast.

"I only want to live now," he cried, "long enough to circumvent their howling fiends outside who have shot George."

He placed their small keg of powder in one corner, and snatching a lighted brand from the fireplace, threw open the door. The room was almost instantly filled with the clated savages. A dull, smothered report reverberated among the rocks, and once more unbroken quiet reigned throughout the valley.

Colorado Bill had gone to join his friend.

MATERNAL HEROISM.

On the twenty-seventh of January of 1798, a party of Indians killed George Mason, on Flat Creek, about twelve miles from Knoxville, Tennessee. During the night, he heard a noise at his stable, and stopped out to ascertain the cause, and the Indians, coming between him and the door, intercepted his return. He fled, but was fired upon, and wounded. He reached a cave, a quarter of a mile from his house, out of which, already weltering in his blood, he was dragged and murdered. Having done this, they returned to the house, to dispatch his wife and children. Mrs. Mason, unconscious of the fate of her husband heard them talking to each other as they approached the house. At first, she was delighted with the hope that her neighbors, aroused by the firing, had come to her assistance. But, perceiving that the conversation was neither in English nor German, the language of her neighbors, she instantly inferred that they were savages, coming to attack the house.

The heroine had, that very morning, learned how the double trigger of a rifle was set. Fortunately, the children were not awakened by the firing, and she took care not to awaken them. She shut the door, and barred it with benches and tables, and took down the well-charged rifle of her husband. She placed herself directly opposite the opening which would be made by forcing the door. Her husband came not, and she was too well aware that he was slain. She was alone, in the darkness. The yelling savages were without, pressing upon the house. She took counsel from her own magnanimity, heightened by affection for her children that were sleeping unconsciously around her. The Indians, pushing with great violence, gradually opened the door sufficiently wide to attempt an entrance. The body of one was thrust into the opening, and just filled it. He was struggling for admittance. Two or three more, directly behind him, were propelling him forward. She set the trigger of the rifle, put the muzzle near the body of the foremost, and in such a direction that the ball, after passing through his body, would penetrate those behind. She fired. The first Indian fell. The next one uttered the scream of mortal agony. This intrepid woman saw the policy of profound silence. She observed it. The Indians, in consequence, were led to believe that armed men were in the house, took three courses from the stable, and set it on fire. It was afterwards ascertained that this high-minded widow had saved herself and her children from the attack of twenty-five savages.

DESMORO ;

OR, THE RED HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TWENTY STRAWS," "VOICES FROM THE LUMBER-ROOM," "THE HUMMING-BIRD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.

Desmoro's heart began to throb fast and painfully, and his limbs were shaking as if he had been suddenly seized with ague.

Gently and noiselessly he pressed his knee against the woodwork of his window, which opening, swung back on its hinges. Then Desmoro, moving as in a dream, entered the apartment, in the middle of which stood a large canopied bed, and a table, bearing on it a night-lamp.

Shutting the casement behind him, Desmoro paused, and gazed around him. Then he advanced a step, and stopped to listen.

As he could distinctly hear the regular breathing of some person in heavy slumber, he gathered courage and proceeded.

The youth was thinking how much better it would have been for Ralph and himself had Dinah managed to escape through her own casement. But Desmoro had yet to learn wherefore she required assistance in her flight.

On tiptoe he crossed the room, holding his breath all the while, and reaching a door, he noiselessly turned the key of it, and passed at once into another sleeping apartment, where Dinah Tillysdale herself was sitting, pale as a marble statue, with a twinkling rush light on a table by her side, and a number of packages, and baskets, before her.

She started up at the boy's entrance. She was expecting to see Ralph.

Desmoro put his finger on his lip, enjoining silence, and shutting the portal behind him, approached the maiden.

"Mr. Theiford is outside waiting for you," whispered he.

"Oh, I am so frightened!" she cried, tremblingly sinking back into her chair. "I shall never have the courage to pass through my aunt's room! Why didn't Ralph himself come to me?"

"He couldn't climb into the balcony. Miss Dinah, and as I could, he sent me in his stead."

The young girl rose, and looked wistfully at the packages. "Will you help - to carry away these?" said she. "For two whole years I shall be very poor, Desmoro—too poor to buy any such clothes as I possess now; so as I should not like to distress Ralph by ever appearing before him in shabby dresses. I have made up my mind to take with me as much of my wardrobe as I possibly can," she added, by way of explanation.

Desmoro nodded his head, and at once began to load himself with baskets and bundles, until his arms were completely filled.

Dinah having put on her cloak, and drawn its hood over her pretty head now took up a couple of heavy packages. "What about the remainder?" she inquired, anxiously glancing at a small trunk, and a large parcel. You cannot manage any more, neither can I."

"I will return for these when you are asleep, that is, if they are of very great consequence to you," Desmoro answered.

"Thank you very much, Desmoro. Oh, I am trembling in every limb!"

"Shall we need the light?"

"No; I will go first, and lead the way down the stairs, which are not at all awkward."

Saying which she softly opened the door, and quakingly entered her aunt's chamber, Desmoro close behind her.

Then both stood still for a few moments. Miss Tillysdale was sleeping soundly behind the drawn curtains of her bed; and no sounds reached their ears but her hard and regular breathings, and the tic-tic of the lady's large gold watch.

Dinah crouched on, so also did her companion, until they gained the door communicating with the staircase. Here Dinah, putting down her luggage essayed the latch of the portal.

"Heavens! it is locked, Desmoro—it is locked, and the key's removed!" she exclaimed, in a terrified whisper. "Whatever is to be done?" she continued, wringing her hands in helpless bewilderment and alarm.

"Where do you think the key is?" inquired her companion, in almost as much terror as herself.

"My aunt must have it in her own possession," she returned, despairingly. "This is as I feared."

"What are we to do now?" quavered Desmoro, still speaking under his breath.

"What can we do?" she rejoined.

"The window! I will help you through it into the tree, which is at no great distance from the ground," said the youth.

Dinah reflected for a few seconds. The room was very spacious, and her aunt was still profoundly sleeping.

"Stay!" she said. "I will place yonder screen between ourselves and her." And at once Dinah did as she said, and afterwards returned to Desmoro's side again.

The lamp's quivering, feeble rays, filled the vast apartment with a mystic light. The heart of the runaway maiden was throbbing fast and painfully, as she stood gazing around her, uncertain how to act; whether to escape by the window, or to return to her chamber, and so abandon all thoughts of flight.

But to-morrow, she reflected Ralph would

have to quit Blackbrook, and he might be lost to her for ever! Oh! she could not bear that thought—she could not endure the idea of being separated from him, who had become dearer to her than all the world besides.

Desmoro was watching the various changes passing over his companion's features, wondering what she could make up her mind to do. In his own secret heart, he was thinking how badly the whole business had been arranged, condemning it accordingly.

"I will attempt to descend by the casement," Dinah at length said. "I must not remain here, I cannot do so."

"Mr. Theiford will be growing impatient," Desmoro remarked.

"To be sure he will," she answered, quickly regarding her packages of personal property, and crossing the space between hers and the window, the sash of which she unclosed carefully.

Desmoro was by her side, ready to assist her descent.

At this moment the sleeper was heard to turn round in her bed, and utter low, murmuring sounds at which Dinah started, and clung tremblingly to her companion.

"She is awaking, Desmoro!" quaked she, in sudden affright.

"Hush!" responded he, warningly, at the same time dropping the bundles he was carrying, and pushing her through the open window into the balcony, where he followed her. "Halt!" he continued, bending over the stone railings in front of him, and endeavoring to penetrate the darkness. "Are you there, Mr. Theiford?"

"What is the matter?" was the quivering response.

"Miss Dinah cannot leave the house by any other means than this window. Be prepared for her, below there!"

"Ay, ay, all right! My strong arms shall catch my love, should her feet chance to slip!" answered the enamoured stroller.

Dinah now stepped over the balustrade into the tree beneath, clinging first to one branch of it, then to another; as she did so, tearing her garments to shreds, and scratching and bruising herself terribly. But her grip was a tenacious one, her feet did not slip once, and she soon felt a pair of loving arms around her, and was safely lifted to the ground.

"Thank heaven, you are here!" at length exclaimed Ralph, folding the maiden to his heart.

"Now let us hence—Desmoro will quickly follow us!"

"No, no, not yet!" she returned. "He has all my clothing in his charge."

"Your clothing, Dinah!" her lover repeated, in surprise.

"Yes, Ralph," she answered; "you know I could not come to you without either money or garments. Two years hence we may laugh at my present thoughtfulness, but we cannot afford to do so now."

"Catch!" said a voice from above; and following the voice, one of Dinah's large packages dropped at the feet of the lovers, and then another. Then Desmoro disappeared from the balcony into the room beyond it.

But scarcely had he done so, when a bony hand clutched at his shoulder, a shrill shriek rent the air, and Desmoro, turning, confronted the grim face of Miss Tillysdale.

"Red Hand!" she exclaimed, recognising the lad, and tightening her hold on him. "Thieves!—thieves! Help!—help!" she continued, screaming with all her might. "Oh, you infamous young villain! Is this a return for my charity towards you? Thieves!—thieves! Help!"

"My aunt's voice!" cried Dinah. "She has awoke and seen Desmoro. What are we to do?" she added, clinging to her lover.

"Let us fly at once!—if we stay here we are lost!" returned Ralph, hurrying her away from the spot.

"But the poor lad, Ralph?" said she regretfully.

"Let me first bestow you in some place of safety, then I will return here, and look after him. Be at rest about Desmoro, he shall not be placed in any difficulty on our account; of that, be fully assured."

"My aunt will arouse the whole house, and send for the constables. I tremble for poor Desmoro. Then she will discover my flight, and the share that he has had in effecting it, and he will be threatened and terrified by her until he confesses to her all he knows about us; whereabouts we may be found, and everything else she will be wishing to learn from him."

As Ralph's terrors on this subject were just as great as hers, and as he was most unwilling to lose the prize now that he was holding it in his absolute possession, he drew her onwards and onwards through the darkness, entirely forgetful of Dinah's property, which had been left behind.

Still firmly clenching the youth's collar, Miss Tillysdale seized a hand-bell, and vigorously rang it, all the time accompanying its sound with her own thin, shrill screams, and ho cries of "Thieves—thieves!"

Utterly forgetful of her disordered appearance, Miss Tillysdale thus endeavored to call the household to her assistance, but, as the lady's apartment was far removed from all the other sleeping rooms of the hotel, she could not, all at once, succeed in making herself heard by any one save the terrified lad who was shivering in her grasp.

"Don't stir, you young rascal!" she said, panting for breath, and shaking him. "You midnight robber—you wicked ingrate! But you shall be sent to prison, that you shall; and I'll have you transported across the seas, to

work in chains for all the rest of your unworthy days."

"No, no!" cried Desmoro, dropping on his knees at her feet. "Spare me, spare me; I came not here to injure you in any way—I came not here to rob or harm any one!"

"You false-tongued knave!" returned the lady, again agitating the bell. "I am not to be imposed upon by you—not I, indeed! Did I not read your depraved character the very first moment I set my eyes on your ill-favored visage? And that red hand of yours, too! Ugh! Can't any one see how Satan-branded you are?—Isn't the fact published to the whole world?"

"Oh, Miss Tillysdale!" shuddered Desmoro, all his blood seeming to congeal in his veins, "don't, don't think so badly of me, I entreat! And in pity don't say I am Satan-branded! I am fatherless, motherless, and almost friendless! then pray, pray, have mercy on me!"

"Have mercy on you, indeed!" repeated she. "What have you just thrown through the casement, and who are your associates in this nefarious affair?" she added, shaking the hand-bell in his face.

"It is no nefarious affair, ma'am, and I have no associates at all!"

"What!" shrieked she. "Didn't I detect you in the very act of flinging some of my property over the balcony, beneath which one of your own vile class was waiting to receive it?"

"Miss Dinah was beneath it, ma'am," returned Desmoro, quite distinctly.

"Miss Dinah!" exclaimed she, perfectly aghast. "Mr. nice!" she added, dragging Desmoro across the room, and throwing wide the door communicating with the adjoining chamber, into which she dashed at once. "Eh, eh!" she cried, in blank dismay. "Dinah gone! fled! Whittier, you limb of the Evil One? You know, you know, for you have assisted in her escape hence!"

Desmoro did not reply; she had so galled his feelings that he was almost hoodless of her words.

"Answer!" continued she. "Answer truly, or it shall be worse for you. Where is Miss Dinah Tillysdale at this moment?"

Still Desmoro was obstinately mute.

"With whom has she eloped? Tell me that!"

Not a word of response came.

"She must have had a companion," the lady went on. "The ungrateful busy could not go off alone. Is it with Mr. Theiford that she has run away? Tell me, boy, tell me all, else you shall dearly rue this hour!"

He was still resolutely silent. Desmoro knew that his strength was greater than that of Miss Tillysdale, but he disdained to put that strength to the test—disdained to attempt to escape from her. He remembered his promise of secrecy to Ralph Theiford, and he was determined to keep that promise, however much he might chance to suffer by so doing.

"Listen!" resumed the lady, in angry excitement. "Listen, and pay attention to my words. Are you hearkening to me?" she continued.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Reveal to me all that you know of this disgraceful transaction, and I will at once give you your liberty. To commence—who is the companion of my niece's flight?"

"Excuse me, ma'am," responded he, very calmly, "but I would rather not answer any of your questions."

"You would rather not!" echoed she, greatly exasperated. "Oh, indeed! but we'll see about that, thou red-handed rebel! Mind: if you refuse to satisfy my inquiries, you will be made to answer those of others—of others, who will force you to confess the truth!"

"No one can compel my tongue to speak against my will!" returned the youth proudly. "I do not care for your threats now, ma'am!" he proceeded, growing almost reckless, "so do your worst at once upon me!"

"Can I tempt you with money?" asked she, softening her tones a little. "I'll buy from you the knowledge I am seeking."

Desmoro shook his head.

"Then live, and repent of your obstinacy!" said Miss Tillysdale, throwing him from her.

And with those words she darted out of the room, fastened the door behind her, and made Desmoro a prisoner.

Then she once more sought to arouse the slumbering house.

This time Miss Tillysdale's cries were heard and attended to, and her chamber was soon crowded by the inmates of the hotel—by persons who had rushed forth habited in all sorts of strange costumes, their alarm at the lady's screams having prevented them from paying any heed to their respective toilettes.

The landlord of the hotel, bearing a light, and armed with a poker, stood foremost.

Her figure shrouded in a large cloak, which she had snatched up and hastily flung around her, Miss Tillysdale stood in the middle of the apartment, looking full of wrath and vindictiveness.

The landlord glanced around his eyes in search of the thief he was expecting to see; but he beheld only the grim figure of the ancient spinster.

"Well, Mr. Landlord," began she, "this is a fine establishment of yours—bravely conducted, too, in which a lady may scream herself hoarse before she is paid attention to!"

"What is the matter, madam?" he asked, in much bewilderment.

"A thrill of silent horror pervaded the little crowd of listeners.

"Yes, I repeat it—I have just escaped becoming the victim of an assassin!" pursued Miss Tillysdale, in tragic accents. "Look at that open window," continued she, pointing to its unclosed sash; "through that the midnight ruffian entered the chamber where I was lying fast asleep. But just, just as he was about to strike the blow—the blow which was meant to deprive me of my precious life, I awoke, seized his hand, and struggling with him at length forced him into the next room, where I safely secured him."

Everybody was struck with admiration at the lady's brave conduct, as described by herself; but their astonishment was greater still when they saw her unlock the door, and drag Desmoro forth.

The youth's face was covered with beads of moisture, and his white lips quivered convulsively.

"Behold the miscreant!" said Miss Tillysdale, introducing the shrinking youth to the assemblage. "Some one take charge of him, and let a couple of constables be sent for forthwith! Do you hear, landlord?"

"Yes, ma'am—directly, ma'am!" replied he much perplexed at the sight of an offender so youthful.

"Who, dang my buttons, if it beant one of those player chaps!" softly exclaimed another belonging to the hotel, in the ear of some one near him. "I'll swear to him, cos I've sin him on t' stage, as they caws it, dressed in all manners o' colors!" the man added in louder tones.

"Yes, you are right," returned Miss Tillysdale, catching the ostler's words. "He is one of those rogues, whom I, in the charity of my simple heart, once sheltered and fostered, to be rewarded thus! Take him away!"

The landlord and others now laid their hands upon poor Desmoro, who was immediately dragged out of the room, down stairs, into the kitchen, in which he was detained until the arrival of the constables, for whom one of the men servants had just been despatched.

Desmoro had dropped on a seat, and buried his face in his palms. He felt that he was involved in a serious difficulty, out of which he saw no way of escape, save by betraying his friend, which he was resolved not to do.

The youth's heart was full of trouble—full of such trouble as it had never known till now, and he was reflecting bitterly, and asking himself what he was to do.

He could not surely permit himself to be wrongfully accused, and make no defence against such an accusation?

What could they do to him in the way of punishment? They could not prove that he had stolen anything! Then with what crime would Miss Tillysdale's venomous tongue charge him? Surely not with any attempt to do her any serious bodily harm?

What would Mr. Jellico say when they missed him? Would Mr. Theiford explain to him the adventures and misadventures of that night, and so clear his name—the name of Desmoro—from all blame?

The company would leave Blackbrook at daylight. Would not Comfort miss him from her side, by which he had promised her he would travel all the way?

Poor Desmoro was most unhappy while all these questions were presenting themselves to him, that he would have done such to have regained his lost liberty.

While the youth was thus bitterly musing, almost distracted by his own thoughts, two constables arrived, and prepared to place his wrists in a pair of handcuffs.

"No, no!" cried the lad, in accents of terror and anguish, shuddering at the sight of the fetters. "Don't put those on—don't, don't, don't! I'll go with you quietly enough without those—I will, indeed! Believe me!"

"No, no, my lad; safe bind, safe bind, is my motto!" returned one of the men, with a harsh laugh; "so give here your fists, and let us have no more ado about the matter!"

"I—I am not a coward!" faltered Desmoro, his accents suffocating, his eyes full of scalding drops; "but I am frightened of those, and beg you not to put them on me!"

And as he spoke, he retreated, and held up his two hands as if to ward off the man's nearer approach to him.

"Nonsense! nonsense!" flustered the constable who had spoken before, advancing towards our hero. "Halloo!" he added, suddenly pausing; "why, one of your hands is covered with blood; what has brought it there, I should like to know?"

Desmoro's fingers closed instantly upon his crimson palm.

"Come, come; none of that youngster! I'm not going to stand any of your tricks!" continued the man coaxingly. "Let me see your hand?"

"There!" said the youth, at once displaying it.

The kitchen was full of light, and likewise full of people: All crowded round to watch the examination of Desmoro's palm.

"It's only a mother's mark, sir," quivered he.

"It's the queerest thing I ever knew," responded the limb of the law. "This is a bad trade for you to have taken to with such a mark as this on you, my lad! It would be bad enough for an honest man to carry about with him such a print as yours; but, for one of your sort—"

"My sort!" echoed the youth, indignantly; "you mistake me quite! I never did a thor-

oughly wicked act in my whole life, and I trust I never shall!"

At this all the men laughed; while Desmore, finding that it was entirely useless for him to longer resist, permitted himself to be searched, and yielded his wrists to the iron bonds.

As he did so, a sudden chill seemed to fall upon his heart.

It was infamous and terrible to be thus manacled, all innocent as he was of any crime! Desmore's pride was now fairly crushed within him. He would have swept the streets, and felt no degradation in so doing; but to be thus fettered, and thus accused, was more than he could bear.

Through the dark streets the constables dragged the poor, parentless one, until they arrived at the Blackbrook gaol, which was an old, dilapidated building in an obscure part of the town.

Desmore was then hurried up a flight of stairs, and thrust into a desolate, fireless room, where he sank upon a wooden bench, overcome quite by his many contending feelings.

"You'll be taken before the magistrate at ten o'clock, youngster," said the man, as he quitted the apartment, and locked the door of it.

With a sob of wild anguish, the youthful prisoner heard the grating of the lock, and then the constable's receding steps along the passage outside the door.

"Oh, Mr. Theftord, won't you—won't you come and tell them the whole truth, and so save me from further degradation at those people's cruel hands?" Desmore cried aloud, big tears coursing one another down his cheeks.

He was in utter darkness; but, although he could not see the terrible fetters on his wrists, he could feel them; and there was horror inexpressible to him in their touch.

Now Desmore's hands, notwithstanding their strength, were as small as those of a woman. The men had not remarked that fact, and Desmore, after much pressing and squeezing, succeeded in releasing himself from the soul-galling manacles, which he dashed to the ground with terror and loathing.

Desmore now groped round the apartment, which was spacious, and lofty as well, trying to find some outlet. There was a window, a narrow-paned window, but it was so high, he feared, for him to reach.

The youth searched his pockets, hoping that the men had overlooked his knife, which they stripped him of his few belongings, but nothing therein could he find.

Presently Desmore thought of the bench on which he had been sitting. Could he rest the bench on its end, and so clamber up to that casement? He thought he could, and after much difficulty, he did so; and there was he unconcealed in the deep recess of the window, peering out into grey light of breaking morn, meditating an escape from the prison, and praying that he might accomplish such.

He did not like to run away, because such an act on his part would betoken guilt; but he could not remain, and suffer added stings, and added degradation, while liberty was here before him.

Desmore opened the casement, and gazed out of it. Immediately beneath him was the roof of a house, with a tolerably high coping around it. After measuring with his eye the distance he would have to descend, he got out and dropped himself upon the friendly slates, which received him perfectly unhurt.

Our hero breathed freely, now; and his heart—which was beating fast—was filled with hopeful anticipations.

Trembling with grateful emotions, and with fear lest he should be intercepted in his flight, Desmore now approached the coping, and examined his position.

He was not at any considerable height from the ground. He would risk the descent; for, nothing venture, nothing gain, he thought.

Yet he was not rash, and his agitation was taking away a great deal of his strength; so he paused awhile, and strove to collect his energies, and all his courage as well.

He saw he had no time to lose. The gray light of opening day was growing brighter and brighter, and the people around would soon be awake and astir.

Desmore flung his body over the coping, then dropped from his hands to the ground, upon which he lay for some time, stunned, and almost senseless.

But he had broken his bonds; and he was free again, with the broad sky above him, and the firm earth under his feet.

As soon as he was able, he arose, and quickly moved away from the spot, anxious to put distance between himself and his late gaolers. He was thinking of the clown and his pretty laughter, and wondering whether he could reach their lodgings before they set forth on their proposed journey, which had, perforce, to be performed by them on foot.

Desmore was shaken, weary, and heart-sick. Want of natural rest, together with the late scenes of excitement he had gone through, had nearly worn him out. Nevertheless, he bravely struggled onwards, doing his best to forget his sufferings. He did not look either this way or that; but sped along as fast as he could, with his hands thrust deep into his trousers-pockets, his bare head (he had lost his cap somewhere) exposed to the wintry blast, and the now sharply-descending rain.

All at once catching the sounds of footsteps behind him, Desmore quickened his pace. He was dreading pursuit, and dared not cast a single glance across his shoulder.

On and on he flew, his feet seeming scarcely to touch the earth; yet still he could hear the

rapid footfall of one who was apparently in as great haste as himself.

Desmore's face was bathed in a profuse perspiration, and every pulse within him was throbbing violently. He thought that he was about to fall again into the hands of the law, and his terror knew no bounds.

Clatter, clatter, clatter over the rough stone pavement, the narrow, old-fashioned street echoing every sound; and, presently, a hand was laid on the lad's shoulder, and his onward progress at once delayed.

"Let me go—let me go!" shrieked he, struggling to free himself.

"Desmore!" spoke a voice.

And turning round, the youth recognised his friend, Ralph Theftord.

"Oh, Mr. Theftord—Mr. Theftord! I thought you wouldn't desert me quite!" broke forth Desmore, in panting syllables. "I have been placed in handcuffs—think of that, Mr. Theftord!—carried off to prison, accused of heaven alone knows what, by Miss Tillydale, and—"

"My poor boy! And how have you escaped? I was at your heels. I have been to the hotel to inquire after you, and learning there your fate, I was on my way to the prison, in order to see what I could do for you, when I caught sight of your flying figure."

"Oh I am so thankful to see you again!" half-sobbed Desmore.

"Dinah would not permit me to know a moment's rest until I started off in search of you," replied Ralph. "I ran a great risk in presenting myself at the abiding-place of Miss Tillydale; but I could not leave you to suffer for no fault of your own; so here I am, to render you all the assistance I can, under the trying difficulties of your new position, which is one quite dramatic, to say the least of it, eh, Desmore?" added the stroller, with one of his old gay airs.

"Were they to overtake me, could they put me back into the gaol?" asked the lad, his mind still in terror of the law and its agents. "I have more to dread at the hands of Miss Tillydale than you think for," proceeded he. "She accused me of attempting her life, or something like it; and her evidence against such a poor fellow as I would be condemnation to him, no matter what defense he might have the wit and power to make."

"Tush, my dear lad!" laughed Ralph. "You seem to forget that Dinah's evidence would entirely prove your innocence! The old lady might make whatever charges she chose against you, we could quash them all!"

Desmore was reassured; and he now walked on by Ralph's side, feeling as if his breast had been suddenly relieved of a weighty load. But he was far too delicate to harp upon the subject of his late troubles; he merely described the manner in which he had effected his escape from the gaol, and then dismissed the affair.

"What a brave lad he is!" praised Ralph. "I shall like you better than ever after this, Desmore," he added, his voice slightly husky as he spoke.

"When shall you be married, sir?" inquired the youth, purposely changing the subject of conversation.

"To-morrow, after we have arrived at Freshfield. Dinah is traveling in company with Mrs. Polderbrant."

"I am already so tired, that I fear I shall not be able to get to Freshfield to-day," observed Desmore, very faintly.

"Nonsense, nonsense! I'll have you there sooner far than you expect. I've ordered a horse and covered cart for our use, and Shavings and Comfort have arranged to be of our party. What say you to all that, my lad?"

"That you have been very thoughtful and kind, as you ever are," returned Desmore, his veins quivering at the mere mention of Comfort Chavring's name.

CHAPTER VI.

The little party in the covered cart, now jolting over the rough, muddy roads, seemed a very happy party indeed, to judge from the laughter under the tarpaulin. Ralph was the gayest of the gay. Shavings was simple and quaint, as usual; and Desmore and Comfort were amused listeners.

Ralph knew that Dinah was safe under the care of Mrs. Polderbrant, and that the morrow would see the damsel his own for life; and his felicity was brimming over; and he sung merry songs, related droll tales, and made the roads re-echo with his joyous and melodious voice.

"This is to be an expectant bridegroom," remarked Shavings, winking at Desmore. "Do you observe, my lad?"

"Ay," smiled he, as he quietly glanced at Comfort's sweet face, hid under a gipsy hat of black beaver. Then he began wondering whether, when he came to man's estate, Comfort would care for him as wealthy Dinah Tillydale had proved she cared for Ralph Theftord, the poor stroller.

And thus reflecting, Desmore's head drooped forward upon his breast, and the wearied boy slept profoundly.

Comfort, who had been made acquainted with all her young friend's late mishaps, here touched the sleeve of Ralph, who was warbling forth one of his most hilarious ditties.

In a moment Ralph was silent.

"Ah, poor lad!" he said, as he spoke arranging the straw at the end of the cart, so as to form a sort of pillow for Desmore's head. "He has done me some good service, and must not be neglected!"

And then Ralph himself leaned back amongst the straw, and soon dropped into slumber.

Shavings now drew closer to Comfort, and gathered her to his breast. It was intensely cold, and the father and daughter were but thinly clad, and, therefore, the closer they could get to each other the warmer they would be.

On the following day, Ralph Theftord, with a wedding-license in his pocket, and accompanied by Jellico and Desmore, repaired to a certain church at Freshfield, at the door of which he met the trembling Dinah and Mrs. Polderbrant—the "heavy lady" of the strolling company—who had mistaken the time, and arrived at the church a whole half-hour too soon, an event which Mrs. Polderbrant declared she wouldn't have had occur on any account, if she could possibly have helped it.

Mrs. Polderbrant, who had her own peculiar notions on points of etiquette, was a tall, bony, hard-fleshed woman, stiff in manner, and as haughty as the proudest lady in the land. "Nature had intended her for a duchess," she used to say, "but cruel fate, like a spiteful jade as she was, had failed the great mistress's intentions."

Mrs. Polderbrant was, moreover, a strong-minded female, who never allowed herself to be imposed upon, never, never!

Mrs. Polderbrant kept the whole company in awe of her superior birth, superior learning, superior mental qualifications, superior talents, and superior strength of mind.

She was a widow. Her late husband had been a weak-brained fellow, whom people had kindly said she had tormented into a galloping consumption. But such was not the case, for Patience Polderbrant, peculiar as she certainly was in many things, owned a heart as soft as that of any other woman. Nevertheless she had much strangeness about her, and few persons liked her, or sought her acquaintance.

She was odd in her attire too, and disregarded fashion entirely, often wearing her stage dresses in the streets, appearing in the costume of foreign climes, of ages long gone by; now as a Russian peasant, then as a Spanish lady; at another time as a Scotch lassie, afterwards in some other strange garb equally out of place and absurd.

On this occasion, although there was snow on the ground, she wore a dress of thin, white muslin, made exceedingly scanty and short in the skirt, a fur-tippet, black velvet hat, and a long veil of snowy lace. By the side of Dinah Tillydale, who was dressed neatly and seasonably, she looked one of the oddest creatures in the world. But few persons paused to remark the singularity of her appearance, as every eye of interest was directed towards the bride, who was looking as prettily as any bride had need to look, even were such bride about to wed a king.

"I ought to be ashamed of myself, Mr. Theftord," she commenced, gushingly greeting the bridegroom with a pair of outstretched hands, which he received and heartily shook, "I really ought; but it wasn't my fault for all that! I should not have trusted to my watch, which having been my late grandmother's property, often takes wild frocks into its head, stopping or going just as suits its changeful fancy. Behold your bride, bustling as a bride should, eh?" she continued, moving aside and showing Dinah's timid shrinking form. "Ah, happy pair! ecstasies!" she added, with an extravagant air, and at once taking possession of the maiden, she led up the aisle of the church to the altar, Ralph, Jellico and Desmore following close behind, without observing any order.

Jellico had given away the bride, and the priest's benediction had just been pronounced upon the newly-wedded pair, when a voice, shrill as the squeak of a penny trumpet, sounded through the sacred building, and sent terror to the hearts of all those who recognised it.

Every one paused in blank consternation, as, rushing up the centre aisle, was seen the quaint figure of Miss Tillydale.

"Stop the ceremony—stop the ceremony! I forbid the marriage taking place!" she half-screamed, nerving the altar, around which the wedding-party was still standing. "Where is she—my niece—Dinah Sophia Markland Tillydale—and that rogue who stole her away? Where is she?—where are they both?"

Dinah clung unto her husband; Desmore kept in the background; while Mrs. Polderbrant, who was acquainted with Dinah's story, swelling with importance, boldly confronted the enraged Miss Tillydale.

"Stay, madam!" she said speaking in a solemn tone, and holding out her arms, in order to arrest the further progress of the lady. "Remember where you are, and do not disturb the sanctity of this place!"

Miss Tillydale gaped in astonishment.

"Do you know who I am, and wherefore I am here?" she demanded, at the same time endeavoring to rush her way onward.

"Perfectly madam!" was the stiff rejoinder. "You are Mrs. Theftord's aunt, whom I would take the liberty of advising to behave as becomes a prudent old lady."

"What?" screamed the spinster, recoiling in horror. "Old lady!" she repeated, in a perfect fume of angry agitation. "And who are you, insolent creature?"

"Creature!" bridled Mrs. Polderbrant. "Oh, shade of the departed Frederick William Polderbrant, look down and hear your widowed wife abused!"

"Gracious!" exclaimed Miss Tillydale. "Is it possible that I have stepped into a lunatic asylum by mistake? Where's the clergyman? Is it thus that our English churches are conducted?"

And, with these words she dashed past the "heavy lady," and stood before the minister and the wedding-party, darting venomous looks on all around.

"Am I too late?" she gasped, addressing herself to the parson.

"If you will please to accompany me to the vestry, madam, I will there answer all your questions," was his reply.

"Are they married?" she repeated. "Are they married—tell me that?"

The minister was on his way to the vestry, and did not heed the lady's impatient queries.

Turning to Dinah, who was still clinging to her husband, Miss Tillydale, flinging high her arms, once more reiterated her inquiry.

"Are you really married, Dinah, and to that pauper at your side?"

The bride winced, and Ralph reddened.

"This lady is my wife, madam," he rejoined, pointing to Dinah as he spoke. "But the son of one of his Majesty's servants, wild though he has been, can hardly be termed a pauper."

"Eh?" exclaimed Miss Tillydale, at a loss to comprehend his speech.

"Excuse me, madam, at some more suitable opportunity than the present I will reveal to you who and what I am."

And with those words, Ralph drew Dinah's arm within his own, and led her way towards the vestry, where the minister was awaiting them.

Mrs. Polderbrant, who had been standing by during the above, now advanced towards Miss Tillydale, and gravely curtailed to her.

"I will show you the way to the vestry, madam," she said, in mysterious accents.

"You?" exclaimed the ancient spinster, indignantly. "You? Go away, you fright—go away!" she added, waving the "heavy lady" off. "I never before was brought in contact with such a person as yourself, and I'm perfectly disgusted with you!"

"Disgusted, madam, and with me!" repeated Mrs. Polderbrant, frowning up. "Oh, that I should live to hear a conceited old maid breathe such syllables against me! But I can read you through and through, madam, although you think I can't! You are jealous of your pretty niece—ah, I can see, and you only object to her marriage with Mr. Theftord, because you want to marry him yourself! There! that's the truth, and you can't deny it—you know you can't deny it—you know you can't!"

Miss Tillydale's countenance was of a bright purple hue, and her whole body was in a quiver. She was conscience-stricken, and did not make any reply.

Mrs. Polderbrant rubbed her hands together, and laughed triumphantly, but quietly; never forgetting her accustomed dignity of demeanour. Then she swept past the antique maid, and disappeared through a narrow doorway at the extremity of the aisle.

Miss Tillydale's whole frame shook with excitement and choler. She was frustrated, and exposed, and she knew not how to be revenged on those who had defected her. She now hated Ralph Theftord as much as she had before admired him; hated her niece, and likewise Desmore. Indeed, she seemed to have bitterness in her heart against all around her.

She stalked towards the vestry, and, entering it once more presented herself before the clergyman and the wedding-party. She was looking deathly white, and grimmer than ever.

She stretched out her arms, as if about to anathematize some one, and raised her sharp voice, which had now a strange, hollow sound in it.

"Dinah Tillydale," she said, addressing the quaking bride,—"child of my dead brother, servant whom I have nurtured in my breast only to disgrace and stunge me in return,—from this moment I disown you, and cast you off for ever! I cannot deprive you of your inheritance, but I can strike your name out of my own will, and forget you. And I will do so, depend on't. Ha, ha! I will be revenged upon you and that beggar by your side. So I leave you, leave you with my everlasting curse!"

At this moment, Miss Tillydale's voice was suddenly arrested; and her extended arm fell powerless by her side, her eyes started almost from their sockets, her mouth was dragged all awry, and her limbs refusing to bear her, she tumbled all in a heap upon the vestry floor.

"My aunt, my poor aunt, she is dead!" cried Dinah, rushing to the prostrate figure, which Mrs. Polderbrant was already attempting to raise into a sitting posture.

"A doctor, a doctor! Fly for a doctor at once!" said that lady.

Jellico was gone on the instant.

All was now consternation in the vestry, and everybody was endeavoring to assist Miss Tillydale, who made neither moan nor movement of any kind; but lay with her eyes and mouth wide open.

Presently, Jellico returned, accompanied by a doctor, who after a slight examination, pronounced Miss Tillydale to be dead.

This awful event, so sudden and unexpected, was a shock to all present. Dinah swooned away; Mrs. Polderbrant burst into tears, and the utmost confusion and terror reigned amongst the wedding-party.

"It was the judgment of heaven on her, because she was about to curse one of His creatures," whispered Mrs. Polderbrant into Jellico's ear. "I am sorry now for what I said to her," she added, in a regretful tone, as she wiped her wet eyes. "But I did not contemplate with a tragical event as this!"

THE FAVORITE

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1878.

"THE FAVORITE"

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Publisher,
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ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

In our next number we will introduce a new feature in the way of a column of answers to correspondents. We shall be pleased to hear from our readers on any subject, but trust they will not annoy us with useless, frivolous questions. All letters intended for this department should be addressed to J. A. Phillips, Editor "Favorite"

"UTTER EXTERMINATION."

The tremendous war which the United States have for months been prosecuting against Captain Jack and a few hundred half-starved, half-naked Indians of the Modoc tribe, had almost become a farce when it was turned into a tragedy by the murder of General Canby and Rev. Mr. Thomas by the Indians while attending a conference to which they had been invited by Captain Jack. But, barbarous as the act of the Indians was it is fully equalled, if not excelled by the following order from General Sherman, the italics are ours.

Headquarters of the United States Army Washington, April 12.

Gen. Gillem, Modoc Camp, via Yreka, Cal.:—Your despatch announcing the terrible loss to the country of Gen. Canby by the perfidy of the Modoc band of Indians has been shown to the President, who authorizes me to instruct you to make the attack so strong and persistent that their fate may be commensurate with their crime. You will be fully justified in their utter extermination.

(Signed),

W. T. SHERMAN.

No one would for one moment attempt to defend or justify the treacherous and brutal conduct of the Indians, but the order of General Sherman's to exterminate a whole tribe of people consisting of men, women and children, seems too brutal for us to believe that it can ever be seriously intended to carry it out; should it be fulfilled General Sherman will deserve to be handed down to posterity side by side with Captain Jack. There are two sides to the Indian question, and two sides to the Modoc war. The Indians are, no doubt, treacherous, cruel, and hard to bring within the bounds of civilization, but they have been robbed, deceived and swindled by the Indian agents and commissioners beyond measure; their reservations have been encroached on, the supplies promised them by Government stolen, or greatly reduced by the agents, and if the Indians have been cunning the white men have proved more than a match for them in treachery. If the United States Government expect the Indians to respect treaties with them, the best way would be to begin by respecting their treaties with the Indians. As to the Modoc war it looked very much like a "job" from the commencement, and would, probably, have continued some time longer as one, but for the terrible tragedy which has occurred, and which has raised a feeling of great indignation throughout the United States; now it will doubtless be speedily finished by the "Utter Extermination" of the race, in compliance with General Sherman's order.

THE "ATLANTIC" DISASTER.

The official investigation in the causes of the wreck of the *Atlantic* has been in progress at Halifax during the past week. So far the evidence has not thrown very much credit on the officers of the ill-fated vessel, nor has it attached any particular blame to them; but one very important point has been adduced with regard to the management of the White Star Line which reflects very little credit on that Company. When the accident occurred the agent at Liverpool telegraphed the agent at New York, that he could not understand why Captain Williams wanted to put into Halifax, as he had ample coal for the voyage. Now it appears that the investigation that the ample supply consisted of enough to last thirteen days, at the rate of a moderate consumption, say fifty-five to sixty tons a day; but the vessel had experienced heavy weather, and had used a little more than her usual quantity, and so, after being eleven days out Captain Williams found he had only two days supply of coal left, and determined to put into Halifax. That he was right in doing so no one can doubt; how well, or ill he did his duty during the time he was trying to get there is another question, but, there can be no question that great blame must be attached to the Company for allowing a vessel, containing 976 souls, to attempt a voyage across the Atlantic with only thirteen days supply of coal, when it is well known that fourteen days is about an average passage, at this time of the year, and that passages of seventeen, or eighteen days are not uncommon. Certainly the Company might profit a few pounds by their parsimony, but we think the 546 lives which were lost more than balance the Company's gains. In view of the fact of the short supply of coal on this vessel, carrying so many lives, would it not be well for Government to order an inquiry into the practice of all ocean going passenger steamers, and see whether it is the custom of all steamship companies to be soiggardly as the White Star Line, or whether the ships, as a rule, carry sufficient coal to last several days beyond the time it is expected the voyage can be made in?

A GOOD SIGN.

American politics appear to be undergoing a slight revolution if we can take a recent election in Sandusky, Ohio, on the principle that straws show which way the wind blows. A candidate was elected there on the grounds that he had subscribed \$5,000 to establish steel works, aided the railroad and coal interests of the place, and insured the building of a blast furnace in the city. This is a far better "platform" than the old cry of what each candidate had done for his "party," and leads to the hope—illusive perhaps—that party politics may be wiped out of municipal elections in American cities, where the young aspirants of each party have long been struggling for civic honors, as the commencement of a political career in higher spheres, and have usually managed to make something handsome out of the spoils.

For the Favorite.

BRIEFLESS LAWYERS.

BY W. O. FARNER.

These nondescript bipeds are not indigenous to any particular soil or climate. Like certain weeds, they are found to vegetate beneath all suns, but nowhere more plentifully than in our Canadian homes. Without stopping to analyze the reason, the fact is incontrovertible, that the rising generation, particularly that portion of it inhabiting the rural districts, seem smitten of late years with a prevailing mania—an inordinate ambition to add the prefix "advocate" to their cognomen. Unlike the great Cincinnatians, they despise the harrow and the plough and the quiet enjoyments of rustic seclusion for the gilded but hollow pleasures of city life. In fact, their dreams of a forensic career—its imaginary

glories and greatness—so turn their weak-minded heads, that they are perfectly blinded to their natural unfitness for the position coveted.

In many instances, these aspirants to legal fame are the victims of a small mattering of knowledge—a positive evil to most possessors—having, like Sambo in the minstrel troupe, been through college, that is, passed in by the front door and out by the rear. But what they lack in intellectual merit, they amply make up in what is vulgarly termed "cheek," or, in politer parlance, "effrontery." Freightened with this ballast, now so universal, their bark of life is seen, not untruly, to weather every storm, and to eventually cast safe anchor in the rich, broad haven of political patronage, while the more deserving often meet with only shipwreck and disaster.

Once admitted to the Bar—the *ultima thule* of their desires—they are immediately noticed to change in language and bearing—prominently, the better to identify themselves with their beau idéal of professional dignity. But as their natural insignificance is not lost upon the more discerning, their efforts to "put on airs" only excite risibility by reminding one of the story of the Ox and the Frog, which we beg to reproduce for our readers in the form of verse:

Once near a pond a fat bull grazed;
Presently a frog his head upraised,
And spitefully his bullockish eyes:
"Now is it just," quoth he, "or wise
To keep us frogs as mean and small
And let bulls grow so much more tall?
What right have they to lord it thus,
Or folks to prize them more than us?"
And straightway, as the Fable shows,
To stretch his skin, he puffs and blows.
But—poor, dast frog! he swelled his hide
So much, he burst his pelt and died!

But let us not be unjust. Briefless lawyers are not destitute of all merit. They may be experienced in the Law, but they can certainly lay claim to proficiency in the science of dodging—be it a editor in petticoats with an unpaid washerwoman's bill, or a hero of the goose, seeking a settlement for habiliments long since, probably, worn and threadbare.

Those of the "briefless" legion blest by wealthy parents, who love their offspring "not wisely, but too well," are exempt, of course, from the trials besetting their less fortunate confrères, who are obliged, by way of providing against possible contingencies in the future, to frequently practise the simulacrum of war, or that special branch of it which gives ease and rapidly in executing difficult marches, counter-marches and movements by the flank—a knowledge which they can fall back upon with advantage whenever pressed by a too troublesome enemy in the shape of importunate donors. Drawing "berally on their 'government'" to the country for supplies, these bear apparent nonchalance, nicknamed "lawyers," may hourly be encountered on the fashionable promenades, being easily recognizable from an air of mock gravity in some, while others of the species betray an evident desire to play the "lady-killer." These get up their "enter man" according to the latest fashion plates, affect a weakness in a vocal organ, a defect which they aristocratically remedy by the ostentatious use of a *lorgnette*. This artificial aid to sight is brought into superfluous requisition whenever Eve's fair daughters approach, the beau advocates ogling them as they pass with simpering looks as vacant as their thoughts.

Sometimes we meet with members of this interesting family in another guise. Undeterred by their mischance at playing the lawyer, they aim at achieving notoriety in another rôle,—that of the orator, no less in pursuit of this chimerical idea, their wisdom and perseverance deserve to gain for them honorable mention in some obscure corner of the Dandel. Failure, however frequent and inglorious, never seems to dishearten them. Imagining with Sheridan that oratory "is in them and must come out," they still cling to verbiage and declamation, their logic and diction being a decided improvement on Huxley for whitticality and spread-eaglesism. Certainly, the memory of the "mountain in labor" must keep green, so long as such rangers surround us. Obstreperous in speech and violent in gesticulation, the result of their forced travail is the result of a mere "ridiculous mouse"—scarcely a grain in all the chaff. With them, "gift of the gab" and oratory are convertible terms, and sound a substitute for matter:—*Ver, et proferam nihil*; or, liberally translated: "The emptiest casks give out the loudest sound."

These observations find, of course most honorable exceptions at the Bar, which must, I suppose, have its black spots, like the sun. The exceptions are men of long tried worth, possessed of rare legal acumen and of unblemished character and repute; men who, polished as Chesterfield in the private relations of life, and able as Erskine in the discharge of their public duties, alternately gladden our hearts by an overflow of convivial spirits at the fireside or electrify them by sudden bursts of Demosthenic eloquence in the Senate chamber.

ANOTHER WAY.—Somebody is advertising a preparation which, among other merits, is warranted to keep a lady's hand free from chaps. Punch knows another way to effect this. Let her dress in the present fashion, and have it known that she has no money. Chaps, if they are sensible chaps, will let her hand alone very soverely.—*Punch*.

PASSING EVENTS.

The yellow fever was abating on the Brazilian coast.

The health of Sir George Cartier is represented as greatly improved.

EMILE GIRARDIN, the celebrated writer, died suddenly at Paris on 11th inst. of apoplexy.

THE Sultan has sent twenty cases of articles selected from his treasures to the Vienna exposition.

Two men about to explode an Orsini bomb were arrested at the door of a Gavazzi meeting in Rome.

ITALY has concluded a treaty with Japan by which the right of residence in any part of the islands is conceded.

Two cotton mills at Springfield, Mass., were destroyed by fire, and 600 operatives were thrown out of employment.

The principal lines of railway running from New York to the West have lowered their freight rates by 16 per cent.

THE grave-yard on the banks of the Arkansas river, near Little Rock, caved in on 16th inst.; 700 bodies were washed away.

A HONOLULU letter says annexation with the United States is now openly advocated, and annexation meetings are being held.

A FIGHT between the Royal Engineers and the Marines at the Arsenal has occurred at Chatham, but order was speedily restored.

It is said the Imperial Government will spend half a million sterling on the fortifications of Halifax during the coming year.

THERE was a rumor that Sir Samuel Baker had been murdered. Lord Granville has telegraphed to Egypt to enquire into the origin of the report.

It was reported that the troops in Porto Rico had declared in favor of the Republic; that a revolt had followed, and that assistance had been asked for from Havana.

THE Whites and Blacks in Louisiana have had a desperate fight, in which 100 of the latter, who had taken refuge in the Colfax Court House, are said to have been killed.

THE President's message to the Mexican Congress refers to the Mixed Commission with the United States, the Spanish Republic, education, and a commercial treaty with Italy.

THE Khan of Khiva, to conciliate Russia, has imprisoned his uncle, executed his Prime Minister, and liberated the Muscovite prisoners, whom he has sent to meet the expedition advancing from Orenburg.

ADVOCES from Mexico say the Jurist and Porfiristas parties have formed a powerful opposition to the Government, and have adroitly seized upon the general dissatisfaction with the administration of its financial policy.

It was reported in Paris that the Carlists, after a short conflict, had gained possession of Onate, a small town in the Province of Guipuzcoa, 30 miles from Bilbao. The population of Onate is between 4,000 and 5,000 souls.

It is reported that a son of Prince Henry of Bourbon was killed in the late C. rial attack upon Puyoerd, a, as it is also called, Pulgerda. Puyoerd is a fortified frontier town, 53 miles north-west of Gerona, at the foot of the Pyrenees.

THE Pope is reported as still suffering, but the reports as to his real condition are contradictory. A courier has been despatched from the Vatican to Germany with instructions as to how the German Bishops are to act in case of his death.

THE reports from Rome as to the health of the Pope are very contradictory; one despatch represents him as dying, another as improving, and still another states that he is neither better nor worse; the latest account from New York, dated 16th inst., says: "A Rome special says the condition of the Pope is critical, and all the Cardinals have been summoned to attend."

A DINNER EXCUSE.—Apologies for poor dinners are generally out of place. But when a lady has a forgetful husband, who, without warning, brings home a dozen guests to sit down to a plain family dinner for three or four, it is not in human nature to keep absolute silence. What to say, and how to say it, form the problem. Mrs. Tucker, the wife of Judge Tucker, of Williamsburg, solved this problem many years ago. She was the daughter or niece (I am uncertain which) of Sir Peyton Skipwith, and celebrated for her beauty, wit, ease and grace of manner. Her temper and tact were put to the proof one court-day, when the Judge brought with him the accustomed half-score or more of lawyers, for whom not the slightest preparation had been made, the Judge having quite forgotten to remind his wife that it was court-day, and she herself, strange to tell, having overlooked the fact.

The dinner was served with elegance, and Mrs. T. made herself very charming. Upon being asked to leave the guests to their work she said: "Gentlemen, you have dined to-day with Judge Tucker; promise me now that you will all dine to-morrow with me."

This was all her apology, whereupon the gentlemen swore that such a wife was beyond price. The Judge then explained the situation, and the next day there was a jolly banquet.

Moral. Never worry a guest with apologies.—*Lippincott's Magazine*.

FLORENCE CARR.

A STORY OF FACTORY LIFE.

CHAPTER XIX.—(continued.)

The widow, Mrs. Bolton, took the corner of her denuded-looking apron, which was hardly suitable in its size, shape, pockets, or fill, to either her age or position, and began to wipe her eyes with it. A natural actress was Mrs. Bolton, an actress in private life, one whose stage was the home circle. After a time her thoughts came back to her son, and a troubled expression settled upon her withered features.

"I wonder what maggot the lad's got in his head," she muttered, with a dash of bitterness in her heart at the tone. "Ho have gone runnin' arter this new lass, as though our mill hand wasn't enough."

"It was a rare tak' down to my pride when he thort he studeed a mill lass. But it be no use fretting mysef; he be a lad out o' a thousand. Now, if he war like Jone, my sister Sally's son, I might ha' cause to fret mysef; but he beent. He's worth twenty on 'em."

This thought seemed to inspire her with fresh energy, and the little woman began to pace backwards and forwards at a considerably quickened pace.

"Aye, there's a lad," she went on, in a half defiant, half-plaintive tone; "a ne'er-do-weel, one as will drink fr Monday morning to Saturday night, and go on ag'in all day Sunday, niver out o' the public hut when he's in the pawn shop, stripping his pore mother of all she's got. Aye, that lad'll bome to bad yet, tak' my word on't."

Her charitable soliloquy came to an untimely end at this point, for a knock sounded at the door.

The latch was lifted, and John Barker—Jone, as his aunt called him—the very subject of her meditations, entered the room.

"Good night, aunt. What's will?" asked the intruder, in a somewhat thick voice, as he walked with scarcely a firm or steady step into the room.

Now Mrs. Bolton, like many another woman, was exceedingly brave and outspoken in a person's absence, even to talking of what she would do and what she would say if she had the opportunity, though directly that chance came, all her fictitious courage and positive opinions vanished, and she was, if anything, extra-civil and polite, especially if the mesling took place in her own house.

The consequence was that, instead of ordering her nephew to leave the house the moment he entered it, as one would almost have expected from the opinion she entertained of him, she welcomed him with a cordiality that in its un-naturally spasmodic efforts, implied, or was apt to suggest, the presence of fear.

And if the truth be told, she was afraid of him, a circumstance of which the young man was perfectly aware, otherwise we should not have found him here this evening, when he knew she was alone, having watched his cousin leave the house, as though for an hour or two.

Indeed, John Barker had a purpose and reason for being here this night.

"Willie's gone out," she said, in reply to his question. "But how art thee, lad, and how's Sally?" she asked, with more than her usual politeness, for the fact is, Jone seemed more than usually drunk.

"Aye, she's reel enough," he replied, staggering towards the fireplace. "B'ant' thee gunt' to g'e a man a bite an' a sup?"

This was rather more than Mrs. Bolton had bargained for, not from any feeling of regardlessness, or want of hospitality, for, to do both Lancashire men and women justice, with all their rough, sometimes unorthodox manners and speech, they are kind-hearted and hospitable to a fault.

There was no one in the house, not even a dog to protect her; so, mentally vowing how she would talk to her son and insist upon his warning his cousin from the house, she brought out a large piece of cheese, a loaf of bread, drew a jug of ale, and having set this, with a knife and plate, before the half-stoopy intruder, said she wanted to run in to the little shop half way up the street for a minuter or two, and would do so while he was there to take care of the house.

Barker nodded a half-stupid assent, and the next moment his face was lost to view by being hid in the jug to which he was giving all his attention, and poor Mrs. Bolton, anxious to get

away, threw a thick shawl over her head and shoulders, and left the house.

Reverently could she have taken a dozen steps beyond her own door, when the man's face and manner underwent an entire change.

A change so startling that you saw he had, from the moment of his entrance, been playing a part to deceive the old woman.

Neither were his actions heavy or lumpy, for in a moment after his aunt had gone, he cleared the room of a bound, shot the bolt into its fastening, so that no one from the outside could enter, and then, with a strangely wicked expression on his young, handsome, and dissipated face he turned and left the room, though not the house.

He did not take the candle with him.

There it remained upon the table.

Perhaps he needed no light for the work he had in hand, or it might be that he feared anyone outside the house would notice the light moving an ill-fitting about; he did as it may, he went out of the kitchen, and a few seconds after, his footsteps might have been heard ascending the dark staircase.

His nervousness and desire for secrecy reassured the old woman; if he had so much himself to hide, he would scarcely have come to expose her, and she replied in a milder tone—

"Aye, we're alone enough. Now what dost a want?"

"A cup of tea and my fortune told. See your own tea is getting cold. Give me one with you. There are three pounds for it; you can throw the fortune in out of kindness."

"Aye, there's a cute lad," she said, her small, bead-like eyes absolutely glittering, as they caught sight of the gold, and she rose with an alacrity one would scarcely have expected at her age, to reach out a cup and saucer for her self-invited guest.

The two drank their tea almost in silence, eyeing each other with seeming friendliness, yet with a lurking, watchful suspicion on both sides, as though the intention of each was to take advantage of the other.

"Will 'ee have it told by the cards or the crystal?" asked the crane, as soon as the tea was drunk.

"Oh, the cards, by all means."

"All rest," and the old creature produced a

"I don't want any of the girls' secrets that come here. What I want to know is if you can tell me anything of a William Bolton, a fitter, or anything about his home or family. I don't suppose he comes here, or that there's much of a secret about the matter, but I want to know all that's to be learnt about him."

"Then he's the dark mon?"

"Yes."

"And thee wants to be rid on 'im?"

A nod of the head was the significant reply. "Thee only wants be out of the way, I reckon?"

"That is all. Get him away a year or two, so that he can't come back for a time, and I don't care what becomes of him then."

"Transport 'im," suggested the woman.

"Aye, a good idea. But how? I've thought of a plan, but I can't work it out alone. He mustn't suspect me."

"What is't? But first, what art thee going to stand? Such jobs want brass."

"Of course 'ee do. If you manage it for me without suspicion falling upon me, I'll give you a hundred pounds."

"Make it two, and I'll say done."

"Two let it be, then."

But mind, it must be done carefully and thoroughly, and the consequence of failure will fall upon yourself."

"Reel, mon. But thee'll pay the expenses."

"What will the expenses be?"

"Maybe twenty, maybe fifty pound. I mon get some lad to do the deed for me, and lay it at his door."

"Very well, then we will say fifty more. Two hundred and fifty, but not another sixpence, mind, and remember, coming to me for husband-money after will be useless, for I won't pay it."

"Reel yo' are, mon. Two hundred and fifty pound; fifty to-night or to-morrow, a hundred when the lad's in the hands of the p'lice, and 'other hundred when he's sentenced. Is that the bargain?"

"Aye."

"Now, then, yo' said yo'd a plan."

"Yes. I thought if my counting house were robbed, and some intruding bank notes and papers found in his house, hid in his bedroom, for instance, the job might be managed. He's been working at the machinery in my mill this week."

"That be the thing. Leave the rest to me. The lass yo' knows about it the better 'fore the trial. Yo' ain't got the fifty pound about you, I s'pose?"

"No, but here are five, the rest you shall have to-morrow. I'll bring it to-morrow night, about this time. You'd like it in gold, I suppose?"

"Aye, all in gold. Don't fail, and leave the counting house door unlocked to-morrow night, with what yo' want taken ready. Yo' knows what aw mean?"

"Yes. I understand. You know someone that will do it?"

"Aye, that aw do, and so like to the lad as will suffer for't, that in the dark thee might take 'em for one and 'other, and they're more like brothers nor cousins in the daylight."

"But is his cousin to be trusted? May he not turn round upon us?"

"Noa, mon. Jone Barker don't love Willie Bolton weel enough to hurt hisel to save him. He'd be na out too glad to do his cousin an ill turn. He hates un worse nor pisen, and if he didn't, he'd sell his soul for a cask o' drink."

"Well, I must trust it all to you; but remember, if you fail and are discovered, it will be ruin to me and transportation for you."

"Aye, aw knows all about it. Bring the brass to-morrow night, and the plan o' the counting house and what thee wants taken fra it; that's yo'r part; work it out clear. Aw'll get the lad as'll do it."

"But you won't mention me in the matter; you must not even let your tool suspect who employ's you in this business."

"Hoat, mon, dost a think aw's a fute?—dost a think aw'd trust moy cat in Jone Barker's hands? Not I. Don't fret thysef. Aw'll use un, and then sling un away like that."

And she threw an emptied reel, which had once held cotton, and now stood useless on the table, into the fire, as though the more forcibly to express her meaning.

"All right. I see you understand me. I can trust you. And now good-night. I shall bring the money to-morrow, and have my plan clear without fail."

"Good-night," said the old woman, clutching the few shillings which lay upon the table, and adding them to the three she had previously



"FOR A FEW MOMENTS, GRANNY BLACK GLOATED OVER HER TREASURE"

CHAPTER XX. A VILE BARGAIN.

Granny Black, the "White Witch" some people termed her, was sitting over the fire, having just brewed her second edition of tea, for strong tea and plenty of it was her principal luxury and extravagance, when the door of her room opened, and her grand daughter Jem entered, followed by a tall, broad-shouldered man, whose face was so muffled and hid in shadow that for the moment she failed to recognize him.

"Aw've brought yo' a customer," said the deformed girl, perceiving her grandmother's start of surprise, even of fear. "He wants his fortin told."

Still the old woman was doubtful.

He illegal trade rendered her suspicious of ever, and and everybody that was in the least degree out of her usual course of business, and even when Frank Graham assumed his face, and she recognized it, she still hesitated, doubting whether it was not some carefully-laid snare to entrap her.

"What dost a mean?" she asked in a shrill, indignant tone. "It'll mak' his fortin, and lose un, too, w'out help o' mine."

"You distrust me," said the young man, in a conciliating tone, "but yo' needn't. I wouldn't have anybody know I've been here for twice the money you have over received for fortune-telling."

"See, my lass," he added, turning to Jem, "there's what will buy you a new gown to help you to keep yo'r tongue still; and how you can go back to yo'r work. My fortune's a queer one, and I'd like best to hear it alone."

Jem took the sovereign with bright, greedy-looking eyes, muttered something which might be intended to express her thanks, and then went out, closing the door behind her.

And a soon after they heard the house-door close also, for the cottage in which the white witch lived boasted of a passage, and the front room consequently did not open directly into the street.

"Are we alone?" asked the young man, glancing suspiciously around the poorly-furnished apartment.

greasy pack of cards, and began to cut, shuffle, and lay them muttering inanely.

Suddenly she lifted her bead-like eyes from the book of fate, the leaves of which she professed to have been reading, and said, in a quick, sharp tone, that made her auditor involuntarily start—

"That's a dark mon in thee path."

"Aye, I know there is," was the startled reply.

The fact is, he had been watching the old woman's face rather than paying heed to her occupation, wondering how far he might trust her, and also to what extent, if willing, she could help him, and her abrupt exclamations had for the moment taken him off his guard.

"And thee wants to trample on him?"

"I will trample on him?" was the fierce reply.

"Eigh! And what dost come here for?" was the old woman's next question.

"To see if I might trust you and if you can help me."

"Who is it?" she questioned.

"I'll tell yo' later, perhaps. I suppose you know the business of a good many of the folks about here?"

"Aye; that beent many things goes on at Owdham that I don't know come at un. The stant gals come to me and the mill lasses come. Who is't thee wants to know on?"

The young man hesitated.

The villainous work he had in hand required accomplices—could not be executed without them, and the idea had occurred to him that this woman, on whom the hand of the law at any moment, instigated by himself, might pounce, and whose testimony, if given against him, would never be considered as worth much, might be useful in the dark plot he had woven, and not as a blind or screen between himself and his intended victim—might indeed do the vile work for him without he himself being implicated or suspected in the matter.

Still, much as the chances were in his favor, he hesitated.

"Come, mon, if thee wants anybody's secrets fra me, thee won't get 'em. Moy trade wouldn't be worth a shilling if 'twas knowed I sold 'em."

This protest or defiance decided the cotton-spinner, and he said—

you, I s'pose?"

"No, but here are five, the rest you shall have to-morrow. I'll bring it to-morrow night, about this time. You'd like it in gold, I suppose?"

"Aye, all in gold. Don't fail, and leave the counting house door unlocked to-morrow night, with what yo' want taken ready. Yo' knows what aw mean?"

"Yes. I understand. You know someone that will do it?"

"Aye, that aw do, and so like to the lad as will suffer for't, that in the dark thee might take 'em for one and 'other, and they're more like brothers nor cousins in the daylight."

"But is his cousin to be trusted? May he not turn round upon us?"

"Noa, mon. Jone Barker don't love Willie Bolton weel enough to hurt hisel to save him. He'd be na out too glad to do his cousin an ill turn. He hates un worse nor pisen, and if he didn't, he'd sell his soul for a cask o' drink."

"Well, I must trust it all to you; but remember, if you fail and are discovered, it will be ruin to me and transportation for you."

"Aye, aw knows all about it. Bring the brass to-morrow night, and the plan o' the counting house and what thee wants taken fra it; that's yo'r part; work it out clear. Aw'll get the lad as'll do it."

"But you won't mention me in the matter; you must not even let your tool suspect who employ's you in this business."

"Hoat, mon, dost a think aw's a fute?—dost a think aw'd trust moy cat in Jone Barker's hands? Not I. Don't fret thysef. Aw'll use un, and then sling un away like that."

And she threw an emptied reel, which had once held cotton, and now stood useless on the table, into the fire, as though the more forcibly to express her meaning.

"All right. I see you understand me. I can trust you. And now good-night. I shall bring the money to-morrow, and have my plan clear without fail."

"Good-night," said the old woman, clutching the few shillings which lay upon the table, and adding them to the three she had previously

received. "There can find the way out, aw reckon."

And the next instant the young man was gone.

Left to herself, the old woman rose to her feet, for she had scarcely moved from her chair while her visitor was there, and then you could see she was lame, had, in fact, a wooden leg, and moved about with the aid of a stick.

Yet, for all that, her actions were quick, sharp, jorky, and gave you the impression that despite the loss of a limb, she was both active and energetic.

Twisted, lopsided, and stamping about with a dot-and-go-one sound, she nevertheless gave you the idea of power and intensity of purpose either for good or evil, and a certain mesmeric influence, almost fascination from her black, bead-like eyes, never failed to leave a scarcely agreeable impression on the mind of the observer.

The light in her eyes this evening when she found herself alone seemed to have acquired a new and more glittering light, as though the sight of gold and the promise of so much more of the shining metal had fired her whole being.

First she thumped on the floor with her wooden leg across the room, turned the key in the door, hung a handkerchief over the keyhole, then made her way to the window, and examined the shutters to see, not only that they were secure, but that no one could peep through them.

Satisfied on these points, she approached the fire-place again, and having removed the fender, lifted up, by the aid of a chisel, a stone which, though apparently firm and well-fitting as the rest on the floor, was in reality, simply dropped into the hole it fitted, without mortar or any cement to fasten it.

Having lifted this from its place, the withered arm of the hag dived down into the hole which the slab had covered, and came up again holding a bag, so heavy, however, that both hands were required to lift it.

This she untied, still on her knees, and the bright fire-light eclipsing the tallow candle, shone upon a mass of golden coins.

A perfect pile.

So many that it would have taken some time to count them; but this was not the intention of the owner—she had other work to do.

For a few seconds she remained gazing over her treasure, and passing her skinny fingers through the yellow heap.

Time was precious, however, and with something like a sigh of regret at having to shorten her pleasure in gazing on her wealth, she took the eight sovereigns given her by the stranger, marked them with a red pencil she had in her pocket with the sign of a cross, then added them to the rest, and tying the bag up quickly, as though fearing to trust herself longer with it, consigned it to its hiding-place, returned the stone to the position in which she found it, put back the fender, then rose from the floor.

There was a wicked look on her face, as well as a leer of malice and spite, as she muttered—

"Now, Lizzie Bolton, aw'll pay yo' and yo' son out, aw reckon, for the scorn yo's heaped upon me. Witch, am aw? Yo'll find out aw'm more nor a witch, afore yo've done wi' me."

And thus muttering, she took a large shawl, planned it over her head, plied fresh coals on the fire, extinguished the candle, and prepared to go out.

Out into the cold, bitter snow.

But what was the weather to her when her cupidity and desire for revenge were both interested in the object of her journey?

CHAPTER XXI.

A TERRIBLE TEMPTATION.

The Reverend Sidney Beltram sat in his study the morning after Frank Gresham's visit in a state of intoxication to his house, looking and feeling, it must be confessed, as though some great grief and agony were upon him.

And so there was.

Sidney Beltram was but a man, a very weak man, with all his vows and high resolves, and he found this out now to his bitter cost.

A face had for more than a month haunted the sleeping and waking moments, and filled the heart and brain of the young clergyman.

It was the face of a woman, too, young, beautiful, and strangely sad, as though some great grief or dread had passed over and left its impress behind it.

He had seen beautiful faces before, many far more lovely than that of the mill girl who had crossed his path, but none that so persistently refused to be forgotten.

A kind of madness was upon him, he knew it, felt it, struggled, fought against it, and yet all the time yielded to it.

Day after day found him, by some strange fatality, in the path of the troop of girls that came out of Gresham's mill, and, though it seemed accidental, perhaps was so, Florence Carr's eyes, by some strange and subtle fascination, met his, to be withdrawn again abruptly and with something like a shudder of fear.

The girl feared him, shrank from him, it seemed, and he, too, tried to shrink away, to forget, nay, even hate her, but in vain.

Vainly he told himself that his vows prohibited such thoughts and feelings as had taken possession of him, they would not be reasoned away or exorcised even by prayer; the spell was upon him, and fight and struggle as he would, it bound him in its overmastering strength.

As he sits there, his elbow resting on his desk, his hands clenched in his nails seemed to penetrate the skin, you can see that the struggle has been a severe one, and that the temptation has conquered.

A knock at the study door arouses him from his reverie, and the next instant his sister, Lady Helen Beltram, with a small packet in her hand, entered the room.

The struggle in her heart was over.

A trifle paler than usual, perhaps she looked, her lips may have slightly trembled, and, had one examined them closely, a trace of tears which could have been detected in the swollen eyelids.

Too trifling, however, to be noticed unless you looked for them, and Sidney Beltram was far too much occupied in the thoughts raging in his own heart to be very critical on his sister's personal appearance.

"Sidney, may I speak with you?" she asked, with a slight amount of nervous timidity, for when in his study, the rector was supposed not to be disturbed even by his aunt or sister.

"Yes, come in. What is it?" he replied, hurriedly, rousing himself by an effort from his dark, painful reverie.

"I—I want you to send those letters and presents back to Mr. Gresham," she said in a calm, but evidently strained tone; "and request all to be over received from me in return."

"Yes; is that all?"

It was only by an effort that he could fix his mind, even upon his sister's disappointment and the insult and indignity offered to her.

Her next words, however, roused him.

"No. I don't know how to say it, but I have heard that there is a girl, a mill hand in his own employ, one who has seen better days, though she is still young and very lovely, and that—how can I tell you—that—"

And she drew a deep struggling sigh, as though the explanation were more than she could endure.

But she nerved herself with an effort and continued—

"That Frank—Mr. Gresham, I mean—admits and is trying to ruin her. Oh, Sidney," she went on, with a burst of feeling; "if it is not too late, save her; pray, save her. She may be good and innocent and pure now, but will she, can she remain so, surrounded with poverty, and that men trying to tempt her? Do try save her, Sidney. I feel as though her salvation lay in your hands."

"In mine! What can I do?" asked her brother, in a kind of dazed helplessness.

"Do!" repeated the girl, with a tinge of impatience, almost of irritation, in her tone and manner; "why, you can go and see her as a clergyman, ascertain if she is good and virtuous and willing to be helped to escape from that man; if so, we might help her to get a situation in some other town out of his reach and where he would not find her."

"Perhaps you are right, but I—I could not go to her on such an errand; it is the work for a woman, not for a man to talk to her of such things."

"But what woman can go to her?" returned Lady Helen, determined to gain her point, and get her brother to do as she wished. "I would do so myself in a moment, but she would think, and she would say, I was afraid and jealous of her, and only wanted to get her out of the way, when the fact is, nothing would induce me to marry that man, now that I know him in his true character."

"But you might send some other woman."

"No, there is no one I dare speak to on the subject, but my aunt, and she is too irritable at the whole affair to take any interest in the girl's fate or care what becomes of her; besides, she would not have the patience or tact to try to save and help without offending her, so if you will not do it, Sidney, no one else that I know of can."

There was a silence for a few seconds, and the clergyman hid his face in his hands as though in deep thought, but there was more than simple meditation written on his countenance which it might be as well to hide.

Little could his sister dream of the temptation she was laying before him.

To her it seemed strange that he should hesitate.

It was not often he was so reluctant to save a brand from the burning fire, a soul from possible destruction, and she had learnt to look upon him as one exempt from the common feelings and passions which are the usual heritage of humanity, and to take him at his own valuation—a being superior or inferior, but utterly distinct from the ordinary run of mankind.

He would not marry.

He had taken a vow to that effect, she knew, and she could not dream of anything less sacred or holy in connection with her brother's life or thoughts.

Presently he raised his head and uncovered his face, when, for the first time, his unnatural pallor struck her.

"Sidney, you are ill," she cried, and she darted to a cupboard, poured out a glass of wine from a decanter in it and brought it to her brother, holding it to his lips.

But he pushed it away coolly, almost mechanically, as he said—

"No, I am not ill; don't alarm yourself. I will think of what you have said. Do you wish me to take or send the letters?"

And he laid his hand on the packet she had placed before him.

"Whichever you like, Sidney, but do drink this wine, you look so pale and ill. It is all over between Mr. Gresham and myself, please remember that. I will accept no excuse, apology, or explanation."

And to Lady Helen's satisfaction, he swallowed the glass of sherry she had poured out for him.

The wine brought a faint tinge, not of color, but of the appearance of life, to the rector's pale, ghastly-looking face, and he was about to make some further remark to his sister, when a tap sounded on the door and a servant opened it, announcing that Mr. John Gresham had called, and was in the hall.

"Show him in," said the master of the house, and the next moment the young ironmaster stood before him.

Of course it is very wrong to rejoice over another person's shortcomings or downfall, especially when the prize we ourselves have coveted is thus left within our possible reach.

No doubt Jacob felt very much ashamed of himself for taking advantage of his brother Beau's hunger and absence, but that feeling, supposing it to exist, did not, as we know, prevent his taking away both his birthright and his father's blessing.

And John Gresham, though he was heartily ashamed of his brother's conduct, and somewhat remorseful also at feeling secretly glad of it, was quite ready to take advantage of all Frank's folly had left him to reap.

It is not the fashion nowadays to carry one's heart upon one's sleeve, or the thought of one's mind and record of one's feelings upon the countenance, and following the way of the world, John Gresham looked far more humble and deferential than enthusiastic and triumphant as he entered the sacred study.

A faint tinge of color so slight and transient that it could not be termed a blush, passed over Lady Helen's cheek as the brother of the man she had loved entered the room.

The first greetings over, the visitor observed—"I could not persuade my brother to return home last night; have you heard from him to-day?"

"No," was the cold reply. "I have given orders that he shall not be admitted. My sister desires to end all the relations between them, and declines to see or hear from him again. She wishes to return and receive back certain letters which have passed. I do not wish to meet him myself; my temper will scarcely stand it; but if you will undertake the commission of exchange, you will confer a favor upon all parties."

For a moment John Gresham hesitated.

His brother knew his secret, would no doubt taunt, perhaps quarrel with him about it; but then the desire to stand well with the inmates of the Rectory, the wish to have a certain hold upon their gratitude and friendship, and also the determination to supplant his brother fully and entirely in Lady Helen's affections, all these considerations urged him, reluctant as he felt, to do what he was asked to undertake.

"Thanks, you have relieved me of a disagreeable duty," said the clergyman, with a sigh, "and I am not very well to-day. Of course we shall be happy to see you as usual. I think my sister and aunt are going into the church to assist in decorating it for Christmas Day. Perhaps you will go and help them. I have some of my parish duties to attend to. Good-bye for the present. You will come in and dine with us to-day or to-morrow?"

"Perhaps I will; but you look ill. You'd better take care of yourself, or we shall have you laid up, perchance. Fastling may be all very well in its way, but it soon knocks a fellow up, and saps the very life out of him."

But the Reverend Sidney Beltram sighed wearily, even sadly, as he shook his head and said—

"Don't be alarmed; I usually look pale. I am past being hurt by many things now. You will join the ladies in the church. Good-bye for the present."

And feeling dismissed, somewhat reluctantly the young ironmaster left the room, and Beltram was once more alone.

Starting to his feet as the door closed, he turned the key in the lock to prevent further interruption, and then the mask seemed suddenly to fall from him.

His face became distorted, he clenched his fist, tore his hair, and seemed as though he would drag his very heart out, muttering, in the deepest agony—

"Fast, penance, prayer! Yes, they take me for a saint, and I am a demon. But do the demons suffer the pains I endure? No, no! It is impossible, and yet I sink deeper and deeper, until 'he power to struggle against and baffle them is gone! Oh, Heaven! to what have I come when I sink so low as this!"

And he threw himself on a chair and sobbed like a child.

After a time he rose, pale, weak and dejected, all the fire and passion of remonstrance gone, the last effort was over; he would beat his breast no more like an imprisoned bird against the bars of its cage, but yield blindly to fate, whatever it held in store for him.

Another element had been added to the torment of his mad infatuation, the impetus of jealousy.

Little did Lady Helen think the mischief she was doing when she urged her brother to try to save Florence Carr from the snare of the cotton-spinner.

He would save her, he vowed, but for what? He dared not answer that question, even to himself.

But when darkness came on, ending the short wintry day, and dinner, which was barely touched, was over, Sidney Beltram went to his study, and a few minutes after, left the house and walked out into the night with the falling snow around, on a mission which we shall learn as we proceed.

(To be continued.)

For the Favorite. DAYS OF YOUTH.

BY HENRY DUNDAR.

The soft regret that o'er the soul,
When happy youthful days before us roll,
When fancy weaves its transient dreams,
And from old age our youth redeems.

When from the busy toils of life,
Wearied and fainting with worldly strife,
We turn and for relief let fancy reign;
And live those happy moments o'er again.

The glorious joyous days of youth,
When warm with love and hope and truth,
Then romance flung o'er every thought,
Its mystic charm will never be forgot.

With noble thoughts and aspirations high,
Our bright ambition bounded to the sky;
What height was there it could not climb,
When drifting lightly with the stream of time.

But soon, how soon, the transient dream,
Fades and is lost like summer's beam;
Old age draws near with winter's icy hand,
And puts to flight the happy joys we planned.

Yet in old age though merging to the tomb,
All is not pain nor yet all gloom,
Some purer joys unknown to earlier days
Then glow forth in their brightest rays.

Our thoughts are turned with hope and prayer,
That we by faith in heaven may share
Those sacred joys which open from the tomb,
And from dread death disperses all the gloom.
MONTREAL.

For the Favorite.

HOW I LOST MY EAR

AND

HOW I WON A WIFE.

BY W. S. HUMPHREYS,

OF MONTREAL.

The events I am about to narrate occurred nearly twenty years ago. I had been outspending the evening with a party of rollicking young fellows like myself, and probably I might have indulged a little too freely in wine, but nothing to speak of. I was vending my way homeward about midnight, when I thought I heard a cry of distress. I stopped to listen, but, hearing nothing more, and thinking I must have been mistaken, I was turning to leave, when again I was startled, and this time I heard distinctly, in a woman's voice:

"Help! help! Will nobody come to save me?"

I turned in the direction from whence the sound proceeded, and saw a dilapidated old mansion,—an old house that was well known to me, it having the reputation of being haunted, and I had no idea that anybody was at present residing in it. The last tenant had left it about six months previous, being frightened away by strange noises, as chains creaking, doors slamming, and all other sounds supposed to appertain to a thoroughly haunted house, since which time the house was supposed to have been uninhabited.

While hesitating whether to advance or retreat, the cry of distress once more fell upon my ears:

"Help, help! murder! police!"

I hesitated no longer, but made a rush for the door, which resisted all my efforts to open—it was locked. I tried the windows—the shutters were all closed and locked. I rushed round to the back of the house—there was a faint gleam of light, which I discovered proceeded from an open door. I hurried in, following the light, which gradually grew brighter and brighter as I proceeded, until I emerged into a large apartment, furnished in a style that must at one time have been beautiful, but which was now so covered with dust as to be scarcely discernible. I looked around, but could see no living thing except a cat, who gave me a welcome in the shape of a "mehow," which sounded, to say the least, ghastly in the extreme.

Again the cry falls upon my ears, much more distinct:

"Help! help!"

What was I to do? I could see no entrance to or exit from the room except the door by which I had entered. I was nonplussed. Was the house really haunted, and was it only supernatural cries that I heard? or was it my imagination which conjured up the signals of distress?

While debating these thoughts in my mind, a feeling of dread crept over me, and a cold perspiration gathered on my forehead. I would have retreated, but something seemed to hold me to the spot. I made a desperate effort to shake off the feeling, and had partially succeeded, when again came the cry:

"Help! help! Will nobody save me?"

Where did the sound proceed from? Not a human being was in the room, and yet the voice seemed to proceed from some one very near.

I turned and searched carefully around the room, and then went back to the passage, and peered into every nook and corner of the way by which I had come, but nothing could I discover, and I was going to give up the search in despair, when suddenly what seemed to me as a part of the solid wall opened, and a figure, clothed in white, emerged therefrom, whether man or woman I could not determine in the dim light. It came direct towards me, as though knowing the exact position in which I stood.

Nearer and nearer it came. The perspiration stood on my forehead in cold drops. I was shaking in every limb, my knees knocking together audibly. I could not move—I seemed frozen to the spot.

Still nearer and nearer, till at last the Thing, whatever it was, was no more than a couple of yards distant, and still coming direct towards me. I was near fainting with fright.

At last it reached me, laid a firm hand on my coat-collar, and drew me forcibly towards the room I had just left. I could not resist, and, even had I the power, I fear my resistance would have been futile, for the Thing seemed to drag me along with superhuman strength, and forced me into the room, flinging me from him with such force that I fell heavily to the floor, completely stunned.

How long it was before I regained consciousness I have no idea; but when I opened my eyes it was with a sickening sensation running through every vein of my body, for, standing over me, with eyes bloodshot and with a maniacal glare in them, was the Thing, which I now recognized as a man, with a knife uplifted as if to strike me dead.

I closed my eyes again, and waited for the stroke, praying Heaven in its mercy to interpose in my behalf; after which I felt stronger, and better able to meet my fate.

But the blow did not come; instead, I heard, in a soft, plaintive, voice:

"Spare him! oh, spare him!"

I opened my eyes, and beheld one of the most beautiful visions of womanhood that I had ever seen in my life.

She had hold of the man's arm, trying to prevent him from aiming the fatal blow, her eyes looking up at him beseechingly, as she said:

"Spare him! oh, spare him! Kill me, but spare him!"

The man's eyes were turned away from me, and were fixed on the lady with a look of such vindictive hate that I shall never forget. She met his gaze unflinchingly, her beautiful eyes so brilliant as to almost seem to emit sparks of fire.

Now was my time for action. I took in the whole situation at a glance, and in less time than it takes to write these lines, I was on my feet, with one hand wrenching the knife from his grasp, and with the other clutching him desperately by the throat.

He struggled long and frantically for the possession of the knife, but I held it in a firm grasp, and did not for a moment loosen my hold on his throat.

At last, with almost superhuman strength, he flung off my grasp, and retreated to the further end of the room, clutching something from a little table as he went, which, to my horror, I soon perceived was a pistol.

He aimed it directly at my head, and then, indeed, I thought that nothing could save me, and I gave up everything for lost, quietly resigning myself to my fate.

But, hark! Surely that noise was the opening of a door? Can it be possible that help is at hand! Who can it be? Ah! perhaps it is a confederate of my adversary! He hears the noise also, and for a moment seems undecided how to act. But only for a moment, for the next instant he fixes his eyes fiercely on me, and says, with maniacal joy:

"Ha, ha! your hour is come! Die, curse you!"

I did not attempt to utter a word, knowing that it would be useless, but stood still, quietly facing him, my eyes looking into his sternly. I think that something in my attitude saved my life, for the next moment—click went the trigger, followed by a sharp report, and the ball lodged—not in my head, as was intended, but in the wall, taking with it a portion of my left ear.

With a mental prayer of thankfulness, I again turn to look at my adversary, when—oh! horror of horrors!—he is going to fire again.

My nerves will stand no more. I feel weak, the blood flowing copiously from my ear I stagger on my feet—I am fainting—I fall, and all is blank.

When I again regained consciousness, I felt confused and bewildered, remembering nothing at the moment.

I was alone—but where? I looked around the room in a mechanical sort of way, trying to think where I was, when I felt a twitching in my left ear, and, putting up my hand to see what was the matter, I encountered—what?—a bandage, and then, all of a sudden, all that I had passed through flashed upon me.

But where was the maniac, and where the lovely lady? I looked anxiously around the room, but could see them nowhere.

Then I remembered that I had not seen the lady since I had first grappled with my antagonist. Where was she? Had she escaped the moment she found escape practicable, or had she gone for help? Or, perhaps, the man, thinking he had killed me, had also made away with her.

But who had bandaged up my ear. Surely no

one but a woman; and who so likely as the woman whose life I had saved?

While I lay pondering on all these things, I was startled by hearing light steps coming along the passage, and the next moment the subject of my thoughts entered the room, and came directly to the lounge whereon I lay. Seeing that I was awake, she exclaimed:

"Oh, sir! how can I ever thank you for the great services you have rendered me. Had you not come the instant you heard my cry, perhaps I should at this moment have been a dead woman."

"But where is he?" I interrupted. "I awoke some moments ago, my brain bewildered, remembering nothing till I chanced to put my hand up to my ear."

"Ah, yes! how selfish of me to forget that you were suffering from your wound. Do you feel much pain?"

"No; thank, I presume, to your skilful doctoring, my ear troubles me very little. But tell me, I pray you, how you got rid of that maniac, if you really have got rid of him."

"Well," answered the lady, "as soon as I saw that you had possessed yourself of his knife, I hastened out of the house to look for help, and, before I had gone more than a dozen yards, I had the satisfaction of falling in with a posse of policemen, who were out on some errand or other, and had no difficulty in persuading them to accompany me. Just as we had reached the door, we heard the report of a pistol, which induced us to rush in with still greater speed, and, as I entered the room, I saw you fall heavily to the ground. The maniac was soon surrounded; seeing which, he attempted again to use his weapon, but it was knocked from his grasp, and the policeman soon had the handcuffs on him, when a couple of them led him away to the station-horse. Our attention was then directed to you. At first we thought you were dead, you looked so white and rigid. I had you lifted on this lounge, and despatched one of the men for a doctor, who arrived in a short time. After a careful examination, he found that the only wound you had received was the loss of a portion of your left ear, and, with his assistance, I soon bandaged it up. He then gave you a sleeping draught, saying that you would wake up refreshed in a few hours."

"A few hours?" I repeated. "And pray how long have I been here?"

"I was about midnight when you arrived. It is now half-past six," she answered, looking at her watch.

"Six hours and a half," I exclaimed, incredulously.

I raised my head from the lounge, but was forced to lay it back again almost immediately, for I felt a considerable amount of blood, and felt very weak.

"Pardon me, lady," I said, "but you have not told me who you are, or what is the name of that man."

The lady sighed, and then replied in a low tone:

"It is a sad story, and was never told outside of the family, but, after the occurrence of last night, I am sure I cannot be blamed for telling it to you. The man you saw here last night was my cousin, Arthur Hope. His father and my father were partners in business as merchants. If you have ever been on Broad Street, you must have seen the name—Hope Brothers."

I nodded assent, and she continued:

"Arthur's father died some years ago, and papa was appointed his guardian. He was, from earliest childhood, a boy of weak intellect, and, as he grew older, this weakness increased till, at the age of twenty, he became a confirmed maniac. When papa found that nothing could be done for the poor fellow, he had him placed in a private insane asylum, where he has lived for three years, seeming to grow worse each year. By some means, he managed to escape yesterday evening, and while I was walking in the garden, just before retiring for the night, he pounced upon me, and, lifting me up in his arms, hurried away with me, stuffing something in my mouth to prevent my cries from being heard. He did not say a word till he had brought me to this place, which originally belonged to his father, when he took the gag out of my mouth and glared at me with maniacal fury; then, telling me to prepare to die, he left me for a few minutes. It was then that I managed to cry for help, which so fortunately brought you to my rescue. And now, Mr.—"

"Samuel Almswell," I put in.

"And now, Mr. Almswell, I must again thank you, but can never repay you for saving my life."

"Miss Hope," I replied, "you have nothing to thank me for, for had you not come into the room at the moment you did, the knife your cousin held in his hand would have pierced my heart."

"Well, well," she interrupted, "I must send papa to thank you. Now you must take this medicine the doctor left you, and try to sleep."

I did as desired, feeling too weak to refuse, and soon dropped into a refreshing slumber.

When I again awoke Miss Hope and her father were by my side. The old gentleman was profuse in his thanks, and insisted on my being removed to his house, and taking up my residence there till my wound was completely healed. Miss Hope (Laura, as her father called her), also urged me to accept the invitation, and the consequence was I was soon domiciled in the palatial mansion of Reginald Hope, Esq., Waverley Avenue.

One year has passed away, and I am still at

Waverley Avenue, but not as a guest—oh, no!—but as the husband of beautiful Laura Hope.

Her father, in giving her to me, joyously said:

"Well, Sam, my boy, if you have lost your ear, you have found something of far more value,—for you have found a beautiful, tender, loving wife."

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL-GIRL.

BY MRS. WOOLSON.

If there be one habit which well-bred relatives delect beyond any other, it is the use of a certain kind of language which they denominate slang, and if there be one in which the school-girl especially delights, it is that. It is not low and vulgar slang that she affects, for the native delicacy of her mind leads her to avoid anything really coarse, but those vigorous, unrecognised expressions which mean so much more than all the set phrases she finds in her grammar, and which are all the dearer to her because they have no flavor of books about them.

After reciting all day in the most correct and classic English at her command, she revels in a disregard of precedents, and dashes off her ideas in few and resounding epithets. Her exuberant feelings demand for their expression only the most intense superlatives. Simple adjectives are discharged from her service as too tame for burning thoughts. Nothing can be to her merely good or bad; it is either perfectly magnificent or as horrid as it can be. One epithet there is which appears to be always appropriate, and preserves its glow and fullness when others become stale, and that is her favorite "splendid." It does duty on all occasions, and never fails to interpret her emotions. Of course, with such constant wear and tear, all extravagances become threadbare in time, and then she resorts to a misapplication of terms for the desired effect. Pretty ribbons are "stunning;" she finds her new studies "jolly;" and has "gorgeous" times at the Fair. When this fails, and speech is beggared once more, she resorts to new creations of her own that never saw a dictionary, nor were uttered by lips profane, but which seem to her none the worse for that. She knows no reason why "the well of English undefiled" should be done bubbling now; and though Worcester and Webster may count up all the words to be discovered in literature, she is sure that somebody had to manufacture them in the beginning, to express his needs, and she claims the same right for herself. So she coins queer, heathenish epithets, which never fail to adorn her bursts of descriptive eloquence when the audience is appreciative. Their spelling is a matter of individual conjecture, and their meaning no words can define. She has one such adjective—"gloptious"—that no one ever found in book or paper; but when she utters it, it is with a dis-away expression of delight and rapture, like that the painters give to St. Cecilia. She stigmatizes long lessons as a "tremender;" and when she appears in her new walking-suit, she informs her class-mates that she is out in her "swelly rig," and they declare it to be "jimmy" and "splufous." Pardon me, dear little word-mongers, if I am irreverent to print them; there are many others, endeared by long use, that I keep treasured in my heart. But our school-girl knows full well that these must all be banished to outer darkness when she crosses the threshold of home. She has come to grief so often by introducing their barbaric splendors, that, like the political orator, she keeps two sets of expressions for use in different situations. Teachers, parents, and older sisters must be addressed in Addisonian phrase; but only to congenial souls, who feel, like her, the force of originality, does she pour out the riches of her untaught speech. By and by, when all the vigor and freedom of her youth are past, and her days are spent on parlor sofas, discharging the trivial duties of a young lady in society, she will confine herself to two unexceptionable epithets—"very nice" and "very unfortunate;" and innocent epithets and violent superlatives will alike give place to well-constructed phrases, as flat, stale, and unprofitable as the life she will lead while using them. Then good, honest Saxon speech will give her a shiver, like a blast of the outer air; and unless the edge of language be taken off, in synonyms made from French or Latin, she will consider it wholly unfit for her delicate mind.

We may forgive the school-girl for all pervasions of her mother-tongue save one, and that is the liberty she takes with her own goodly Christian name. She resents nothing so much as an attempt to give this appellation in full. The queenly Elizabeths and Catherines, the noble Margarets and Helens, with all their historic and family associations, are sunk without a pang into the rapid, characteristic Lizzes and Kattes, the Maggies and Nellies, which appear so absurd on the grave, printed page. Such abbreviations will do for the daily intercourse of friends, but even then we may query whether the expression of endearment implied in their contraction and French ending does not come with better grace from another than the owner, and whether it be not out of taste to sign one's name in such affectionate, caressing fashion, even in a familiar note. But however this may be, no one can read down the register of girls' names in any school-catalogue, with its inevitable call-me-pel-names-dearest air, without wondering that teachers, as well as

school-girls, should be so lost to all sense of the purity of the English tongue, and the honor and dignity of the female sex. If women are ever to go to Congress, or to command respect on starting in the career and professions to which they aspire, they must have something more substantial to append Honorable and Doctor and Reverend to than the Timnies and Mammos and Lulus to which they now so pertinaciously cling. These might form a sufficiently serious nomenclature for butterflies and elves, or the pots of an Eastern harem, who are supposed to have no souls; but they can never be rendered illustrious, nor honorable, nor even impregnated with any flavor of individual life. But all arguments fail to convince the school-girl of this folly. When she has made up her mind on any subject it is made up effectually, and she admits no possibility of change. She forms at once the most pronounced opinions upon every question that presents itself to her mind. That flimsy, nebulous state, through which matter is said to pass before globing itself into the solid planet, finds no correspondence in the shaping of her ideas. No haze nor hesitation retard their complete expression; they leap, like some crystals, into perfect form at a shock. She would be decided as to the origin of evil, the author of the Junius Letters, or the assailant of Billy Patterson, one minute after those questions were given her to consider. She decides upon characters with equal promptness, and fancies that she has read them at a glance. All persons whom she meets are divided into two classes—those she loves and those she hates; and she allows no virtues in the one, nor faults in the other. Saint or Satan, glory or misery, are the opposite poles around which all natures and conditions range themselves. That utter indifference to the majority of people, which older hearts profess and feel, she can never understand.

THE SAILOR AND THE ACTRESS.

"When I was a poor girl," said the late Duchess of St. Albans, "working very hard for my thirty shillings a week, I went down to Liverpool during the holidays, where I was always kindly received. I was to perform in a new piece, something like those pretty little affecting dramas they get up now at our minor theatres; and in my character I represented a poor friendless orphan-girl, reduced to the most wretched poverty. A heartless tradesman prosecutes the sad heroine for a heavy debt, and insists on putting her in prison, unless someone will be bail for her. The girl replies, 'Then I have no hope, I have not a friend in the world.'—What, will no one be bail for you, to save you from prison?' asks the stern creditor.—I have told you I have not a friend on earth," was my reply. But just as I was uttering the words, I saw a sailor in the upper gallery springing over the railing, letting himself down from one tier to another, until he bounded clear over the orchestra and footlights, and plined himself beside me in a moment. 'Yes, you shall have one friend, at least, my poor young woman,' said he, with the greatest expression in his honest, sunburnt countenance. 'I will go bail for you to any amount. And as for you' (turning to the frightened actor), 'if you don't bear a hand, and shift your moorings, you lubber, it will be worse for you when I come athwart your bows! Every creature in the house rose; the uproar was indescribable; peals of laughter, screams of terror, cheers from his tawny mesmates in the gallery, preparatory scraping of the violins in the orchestra; and, amidst the universal din, there stood the unconscious cause of it, sheltering me, 'the poor, distressed young woman,' and breathing defiance and destruction against my inimic persecutor. He was only persuaded to relinquish his care of me by the manager pretending to arrive and rescue me with a profusion of theatrical bank-notes."

THE ART OF MAKING MONEY.

One great cause of the poverty of the present day is the failure of many people to appreciate small things. They say that if they cannot save large sums they will not save anything. They do not realize how a daily addition, be it ever so small, will soon make a large pile. If the young men and women of to-day will only begin, and begin now, to save a little from their earnings, and invest it in some savings' bank, and weekly or monthly add to their mite, they will wear a happy smile of content and independence when they reach middle life. Not only the pile itself will increase, but the desire and ability to increase it will soon grow. Let the clerk and tradesman, laborer and artisan, made now and at once a beginning. Store up some of your youthful force and vigor for future contingency. Let parents teach their children to begin early to save. Begin at the fountain-head to control the stream of extravagance, and then the work will be easy to choose between poverty and riches. Let our youth go on in the habit of extravagance for fifteen years to come, as they have for fifteen years past, and we shall see a nation of beggars with a moneyed aristocracy. Let a generation of such as save in small sums be reared, and we shall be free from want. Do not be ambitious for extravagant fortunes, outseek that which it is the duty of every man to obtain—Independence and a comfortable home. Wealth in sufficient quantities is within the reach of all. It can be had by one process—saving.

TRIED BY FIRE.

BY ELLEN M. MITCHELL.

I was nervous and discontented that night. My husband had scarcely looked up from his writing for the last two hours, and was so absorbed that he had apparently forgotten my very existence. There wasn't any one else to talk to except the pictures on the walls, even the cat had gone into the kitchen, and I found it dull and lonesome enough. I tried tatting, crocheting and reading, but all to no purpose; the demon that possessed me would not be exorcised.

My life at aunt Amy's had been so different. There everything was bright and cheerful, with plenty of talk and laughter and gaiety, and the little house was never so full that it couldn't accommodate one more guest. Aunt Amy, the only mother I had ever known, was a dear, bustling little body, brimful of kindness and hospitality, and it was seldom that she wore a sour look. Toward me, her orphan niece, she was particularly gentle and forbearing, for, with the exception of herself and children, I had no living kindred, at least, so far as I knew. A half brother of mine had left home when I was a child on account of some domestic difficulty, and had never been heard from since, and whether he was among the living or dead we could not tell.

Aunt Amy was the good genius of my life and looking back now I am afraid that she and her big boys spoiled me a little, for I was the only daughter of the house, and there was no one to dispute my way. Never had queen a happier girlhood, or more obedient subjects than mine. I remember how surprised and shocked they all were when aunt Amy disclosed the fact that Robert Allan had asked me to be his wife.

"Why, he wears spectacles, and is as grey as a rat," said Jimmy, indignantly (Jimmy was the youngest, and my favorite cousin). "And to think that he has the impudence to come and court Lucy, when I've been intending all the while to marry her myself. I won't put up with it, that I won't. Let him go and propose to that jolly little widow, Mrs. Ketchum, or anybody else he wants to; but if he is seen around our house again it will be the worse for him, that is all."

"Indeed it will, and no mistake," said Hugh, the oldest (he was twenty, and two years my senior). "Lucy is hardly out of pantalettes yet, and oughtn't to think of marrying these ten years. A pretty wife she'd make that old curmudgeon."

"Too pretty, by far," answered Joe, another cousin, who stood biting his nails, a habit he had when vexed. "If she can't find a husband younger and better looking than he is she might as well stay single. But what do you think, mother?"

"Lucy is old enough to decide for herself," said aunt Amy, smiling, "and has already done so, subject, of course, to my advice and approval. Mr. Allan is a man of worth and integrity, and there is no greater disparity of ages between him and Lucy than there was between your father and myse f. He is only thirty-five, but his gray hairs and near-sightedness make him look much older."

"Has Lucy said yes?" chorused the three together.

Aunt Amy nodded her head in assent. There was a general groan of disapproval, and it was several days before my friendly advances met with any response from either of the boys. Aunt Amy expostulated with me afterward.

"I am afraid, dear, that Mr. Allan is not the kind of man you ought to marry," said she, gently. "There is a greater contrast than you think between his nature and yours; one gloomy and taciturn, the other genial and sunny. Can you bridge over the chasm that divides you and be happy as his wife? That is the question. In the new life you are to enter upon together he will look to you for comfort and sympathy, you to him for amusement and companionship; will these always be found of the kind and degree desired? He is neither impulsive nor demonstrative; you are both, and so sensitive that a word or look will sometimes give you the headache. Oh, Lucy, think of it well before you take this man as your husband. He is older, graver and wiser than yourself, and only 'love that exceedeth all things' can sacrifice the nation."

"But if he was not different from all, I shouldn't like him," returned I. "That is the reason we are so fond of each other. I'm his little sunbeam, at least that is what he says, and I return the compliment by calling him an 'old ogre.' Why, you don't know anything about it, and we are exactly suited to each other, and if we hadn't happened to meet, should have been miserable all our lives."

I remembered all this to-night with a pang. And in spite of my longing to see aunt Amy, I fairly dreaded her promised visit, fearing that she would discover the secret I strove so hard to conceal. For I was not happy as the wife of Robert Allan. Not that I loved him any less than in those halcyon courtship days when I spoke so hopefully of the future; he was even dearer to me now than then, but there was a gravity and reserve in his demeanor that somehow interposed a barrier between us, and seemed to drive us farther apart daily. I fancied that he was tired of his girl-wife, and found her less of a companion than he anticipated, for I was only too conscious of my own ignorance and his superior knowledge. I would have improved myself, and "reached onward to new and wiser" but

he smiled good-naturedly when I told him so, and hinted that his favorite pursuits were not such as women usually find interesting. Mechanics, engineering, and similar studies were those in which he took chief delight, and I have seen him show such excitement and enthusiasm over a little inanimate piece of machinery as fairly made me jealous.

He owned a large iron foundry just within sight of the house where we lived, and it was there that he spent most of his time when away from me. I could see it in the moonlight behind yonder trees, looming up black and solemn, and I don't know why, but a shiver of dread and apprehension for which I could not account, came over me at the sight.

My husband looked up suddenly, and discovered me at the window. "What, Lucy, not gone to bed yet?" and he drew out his watch. "You ought to have been asleep an hour ago."

He treated me like a child. I felt the hot blood leap up into my forehead, but said nothing. Neither did I stir, and after a swift scrutiny of my face he resumed his writing.

Half an hour afterward he laid down his pen, and turned to me again. "Lucy, my dear, pardon me for saying it, but I would like to be alone. I have an intricate task before me, and much depends on its being finished to-night. Your presence disturbs me, how or why I cannot tell, but there is something that comes between me and the paper, and distracts my attention. Please don't be offended, will you?"

But I was, though too proud to own it, and when he came over to where I stood, and put his arm around me caressingly—a rare action on his part—I shook it off in spite of the secret surprise and pleasure I felt, and hurried out of the room without a word or look in reply.

Up to my chamber I fled, and seating myself by the open window—I had no intention of going to bed—wondered why I had been treated so unceremoniously. For it had never happened before; however much absorbed my husband was with his books or studies, he had seemed rather glad of my presence than otherwise, and there was either something peculiar in his work to-night, or he wanted to get rid of me for other reasons.

I doubted his motives. Three days before he had received a letter in a strange, cramped handwriting. I noticed the envelope as it lay on the table, and had trembled and turned pale as he hurriedly scanned its contents. I was watching him closely, and saw him look toward me with sudden fright and apprehension when I inquired with pretended indifference, "who it was from." He did not tell me, nor give any explanation whatever of his singular conduct.

This was not all. Last night just as the clock was striking twelve, I awakened suddenly, and from some impulse hard to define, jumped up and went to the window. Two men were talking together in the shrubbery, and thinking they were burglars, I was about to give the alarm, when I recognized one of them as my husband. The other was a villainous-looking character, wearing a cloak and slouched hat. I couldn't distinguish what either said, but judged that the subject of conversation wasn't a pleasant one from their threatening looks and gestures. It was one o'clock before they parted, and I noticed that my husband's step was slow and heavy when he came toward the house. The strangeness of the occurrence kept me awake a long time, and I wondered and wondered what could have been the business that was transacted between these two at such a mysterious hour, and in such a mysterious way.

And now to-night there was to be another interview, I felt confident. It was for this that my husband hurried me off to bed, and showed such eagerness to be alone; and it was for this that I resolved to watch and wait.

The more I thought of it, the more I was puzzled in trying to solve the question as to who the man could have been, and for what purpose he sought my husband. Robert Allan's integrity had never been questioned; and yet there was something strange and suspicious in the way he was acting now. I knew not what to make of it; and I almost wished that I could blot out from my memory the remembrance, both of the letter and the midnight meeting, for somehow I associated the two together. It isn't pleasant to distrust one's husband, or any one else that we love.

One little ray of hope cheered my perplexity. It might be some one from the foundry who had invented a new piece of machinery, and wanted to introduce it secretly, and in any such enterprise my husband would have been sure to lend a helping hand. But this didn't look so reasonable as I tried to make it. For there were plenty of opportunities in the daytime when a plan like this could have been matured. Nor did it account for the agitation my husband had shown—agitation that was plainly of an unpleasant, instead of a pleasant character. And for more than a week past he had worn a moody, troubled look, and been unusually silent. I was too proud to ask any questions; but oh! how I longed to comfort him, and take the wife's true place at his side. I was hurt that he should hide from me even the most trivial secret, and here was something that perhaps I ought to know, carefully concealed.

I felt justified, therefore, in the course I pursued. Under other circumstances I might have thought it mean and unwomanly to watch my husband, but the mystery that invested this affair drew me forward almost in spite of my will, and at the same time filled me with dread and terror.

So I waited silently behind the curtains, and a little past midnight my vigil was rewarded. Noiselessly my husband stole from the house,

and was joined outside by the same man whom I had seen on the previous night. He looked even more like a ruffian than before. Their talk was carried on in low voices, but every now and then I caught a few words.

My husband seemed to be urging the man to keep some promise he had made, of what nature I could not discover, but I heard him say gruffly—

"I'll do it; but let's see the money first." And then, was it possible? A large roll of notes was slipped into his hand, and he counted them, chuckling.

"It's not enough," said he, angrily. "I'm not to be bought so cheap as that. Come, hand over some more, or I'll call on your lady-wife in the morning, and tell her a certain little secret you wouldn't like her to know."

"Never!" said my husband firmly. "I would shoot you in a minute if you did."

The man swore a fearful oath, and my husband, looking up at the house as if fearful of discovery, dragged him further along out of hearing. But I saw them point to the foundry once or twice, as if that had something to do with the matter they were discussing—and I was nearly paralyzed with horror when, just as they were separating, the man drew a rope out of his pocket and made a faint of hanging himself. My husband turned away with a gesture that seemed like disdain, and left him standing there. He gesticulated wildly a minute or two, and then disappeared.

Cold and trembling, I hurried into bed, ashamed that I had acted the part of a spy, and fearful that my husband would find it out. But when a little later he came into the room, he was apparently so tired and worn out, that, kissing me softly on the forehead, he at once fell asleep. Whatever were the secret relations that existed between him and his midnight visitor, they were not of such a nature as to keep him awake.

I pondered over what I had seen and heard, and puzzled my brain with conjecture after conjecture as to what it might mean, until I, too, overcame by fatigue and weariness, lost consciousness. How long I slept I know not, but a confused cry of "Fire! Fire!" was sounding in my ears when I awoke. Whether it was a dream or reality I could not make out at first—but again and again it came, louder and shriller, "Fire! Fire!" and there was the heavy tramp of feet outside, and a continuous pounding at doors and windows, and, yes, a bolt of lurid light shot into the room.

I jumped out of bed, and rushed to the window—and oh, merciful God! what did I see? The foundry was one mass of glowing, seething, crackling flames.

Faint and dizzy, I turned toward the bed, where, in spite of the noise and confusion, my husband still slept. Oh! the terrible suspicion that was born of that moment. The foundry was insured; could it, could it be the man I had seen was the incendiary? Was it for this my husband had given him money, and he had tried to extort more? I remembered his words, and the terrible pantomime through which he had gone, and my heart sank in my bosom. Had he pictured the risk he ran as a convincing proof that it ought to be better paid? I attempted to strangle these unworthy doubts, but they persisted in rising up before me, one after another, like horrible spectres.

Frenzied with fear I stood in the middle of the room, and brighter shone the flames, and louder rose the voices outside. Waking, my husband saw me thus. He understood it all in a moment.

"Oh, my God, the foundry is on fire!" and a groan of horror burst from his lips, and his face grew pale as ashes. Hurrying on his clothes, I heard him mutter to himself, "The wretch has kept his word."

I could not shed a tear, nor speak a word of comfort.

"Poor little Lucy!" said he tenderly, thinking my silence the result of fright.

"Mr. Allan! Mr. Allan!" shouted voices from below.

"Yes, yes, in a minute," he replied. "Will you go down too, Lucy?"

I shook my head.

"Then I'll send Norah up to stay with you." She came, wringing her hands, and full of voluble Irish sympathy. I sat and listened for over two hours in apathetic indifference. These words aroused me at last:

"And they do say, Miss Lucy, that it was set on fire, for all at once the flames burst out in ever so many places, and there's been a strange man seen prowling around the yard for several days past."

It seemed as if I could hear my heart beat.

"Did they tell you how he looked?" and I strove to speak composedly.

"Oh, yes," and then she gave a description that corresponded exactly with that of the man I suspected.

"But what could have been his object?" queried I, finding a strange fascination in the subject.

"Don't know, suppose he had a grudge against master."

"What are you talking about, Norah?" said my husband sternly. He had entered the room unobserved.

She hesitated, stammered and finally told him the truth. I saw his lips quiver with a spasm of pain, and a dark frown settle on his forehead. But I didn't more than half understand the plying, deprecating look he turned toward me.

"Say nothing more of this," commanded he. "It is all a mistake. The fire wasn't accidental, it was not the work of an incendiary."

"Oh, sir, but you don't know that, and all the men say—"

"Never mind what the men say, but go to bed, Norah."

"Go to bed!" exclaimed she, indignantly, "why, it is nearly morning."

"Well, then, do as you like. Only be careful of one thing. Don't let me hear of your spreading any such absurd report as that the foundry was set on fire."

His eyes flashed ominously. So did hers.

"I'd give you notice, sir, this minute if it wasn't for mistress," and she bounced out of the room with more haste than dignity.

My husband smiled, and then taking my hand, said sadly, "Oh! Lucy, pity me. It is such a blow. The work of years destroyed in a night. Yonder is all that is left of my foundry."

I looked in the direction he pointed. A dense column of smoke rose from the charred ruins. Every now and then a tongue of flame leapt out. But the fire had done its work; its glow and sparkle and splendor had vanished.

"Was nothing saved?" I asked the question without looking in his face.

"Nothing," he repeated bitterly. "I can say to you what I would not admit to Norah. There is reason to think it was set on fire. It caught in several places at the same time apparently."

"But who, who could have done it?" faltered I.

There was a long silence, broken at length by the sound of his voice. It was strange and unnatural. "I have suffered a grievous wrong," said he, "but can do nothing. There are secret reasons why I do not wish this affair investigated by the law. The mischief is wrought; the discovery of the criminal cannot restore my foundry."

"But he ought not to go unpunished," replied I, indignantly.

"Let him settle that with his conscience. Believe me, Lucy, I am the best judge in this matter."

"And have you no fear that your motives will be questioned? Does not your insurance nearly cover your loss?"

He looked at me curiously. "Why, no, not exactly," and he hesitated. "But these are strange questions for you to ask. What put them into your head?"

His voice was so kind and tender, and my heart ached so beneath its burden of doubt and distrust that I should have told him everything I knew and suspected, if it hadn't been for Norah who just then opened the door.

"There was a man here just now who left this for you, sir," said she, smiling, and holding out a letter, her short-lived anger all gone.

My husband took it, tore open the envelope, and having read the slip of paper it contained, rushed out of the room like a madman. The envelope he kept, the enclosure he dropped accidentally and without perceiving the loss. I picked it up after he was gone.

Trembling all over, I took the paper to the light. The following words were scrawled upon it in the same cramped handwriting I had seen before. "I have done as I said I would. It was my hand that set fire to the foundry. Are you satisfied now that I keep my word? Your secret is safe only so long as mine is. Be careful then what measures you take."

Here was a fearful proof that my husband had been implicated in the crime of this man. I examined the writing, word by word, then held it up in the flame of the gas until it shrivelled to ashes. Who could tell what might happen? Better that this evidence of guilt were destroyed.

It was noon before my husband returned. He looked fagged and worn.

"Pardon me, Lucy, for leaving you so abruptly," said he, "but I couldn't help myself. Important business claimed my attention."

He hadn't mislaid the letter, I was sure of that.

"Have you been over to the ruins yet?" continued he. "It is a sad sight. There is nothing left of the foundry but a few charred and blackened timbers. The poor workmen feel the loss almost as much as I do."

"More perhaps." The words leapt out in spite of myself.

"Impossible. Oh, Lucy, if you only knew all."

I fancied that I did; it was a knowledge from which I sought to escape.

"Do you still think it was set on fire?" I tried to ask the question unconcernedly.

"It is hard to tell," was his guarded answer. "That was the general opinion at first; people seem to think differently now. It might have caught accidentally."

"But you know in your heart that it did not," said I, emphatically.

He seemed surprised. "Why, Lucy, one would almost think, to hear you talk, that I had something to do with it."

"You had" was the accusation that sprang to my lips. But I kept it back, and he went on, "That is not what you mean, of course. You referred to what I said this morning. Try to forget it; I shall."

"As you please," returned I. My voice sounded hard and cold, and he looked at me even more attentively than before.

"I have already seen an architect," said he, "and shall commence re-building the foundry at once. That the new one will be superior to the old, I've no doubt, and yet it will never seem the same to me, for my heart was so bound up in that foundry and the machinery it contained, that I feel almost as if I had lost a living friend. It isn't the destruction of the property alone that hurts me so; it is for the

associations connected therewith, and fairly incorporated with its raft and timbers, that I mourn the most."

"Were not those strange words to fall from his lips if all I suspected was true? There was a sorrowful ring in his voice, a look of pain on his face, both too real to be counterfeited. What if he were innocent after all? My very heart leaped with joy at the thought. But I didn't wish to betray the emotion I felt, and so said carelessly. "What will be the extent of your loss after the insurance is paid?"

"I cannot tell as yet, not so great, however, as I feared at first. I am still far from being a poor man. Then I have quite a large sum in bank, my reserve fund that I can make available now. What troubles me most is the condition of the workmen. Most of them have families dependent on their daily labor, and it is a bad time now to get employment. I am determined though, that I'll not let them suffer."

"But your business will only be stopped temporarily?"

"That is all, for otherwise it would ruin me as well as them."

The entrance of a gentleman, whom I recognized at once as the detective, Mr. Markham, (he had been pointed out to me a week or two previously by a friend,) put a stop to any further conversation between us.

I was surprised at the appearance of this visitor. Was it possible that my husband, instead of being accessory to the crime of the wretch I had seen, was his victim? But why had he given him money, there I was completely mystified.

The two had a long and mysterious conference together, and I heard the detective say as he went away, "It will be all right, sir, I promise you that."

The conduct of my husband puzzled me more than I can tell. He admitted privately that the foundry was set on fire, but he refused to do so publicly; he appeared reluctant to have the matter investigated by the law, and at the same time employed a detective to ferret it out. I couldn't understand these apparent contradictions.

My husband said nothing of the interview, and I asked no questions. But my heart beat lighter, for I began to feel certain that, in spite of the mystery surrounding the affair, he was innocent. His words had done much to strengthen this belief. Nor did it seem probable that he would have gone to a detective otherwise. True, there was much that I couldn't comprehend, but I waited and waited as patiently as I could, hoping that time would at length solve every doubt.

A week passed on, and then, like a thunder-clap, came the news that my husband was arrested on the charge of having set fire to his own foundry. I went at once to the prison where he was confined. They refused me admittance.

Then I sought Mr. Markham. He received me in a courteous, but guarded manner.

I told him what had brought me. He listened silently.

"You have no reason to be alarmed," said he, in reply. "Your husband is perfectly safe. The idle tale of your servant, gaining importance as it passed from tongue to tongue is the cause of his arrest."

"Has Norah then told"—I stopped, I remembered the letter, and my tongue seemed paralyzed.

"She has given a history of all that occurred on the morning of the fire," returned he, "and has, doubtless, added a few embellishments of her own."

His eyes were bent upon me with close and eager scrutiny. I felt that I was losing every vestige of self-possession.

"There was a letter," he continued, "was there not, left in a sort of a mysterious way? It was of an exciting character, your husband dropped it accidentally on leaving the room, you picked it up, I hope that if it contained anything that could possibly have been misconstrued so as to criminate him you destroyed it at once?"

"I did! I did!" exclaimed I, forgetful of all such a confession might imply. Then I fished up red with shame and confusion, and only made the matter worse the more I tried to explain it.

"Never mind," said he, kindly. "Keep your secret if you like. I have known Mr. Allan a long time. It would be hard to convince me that he is not an honest man."

I looked up to see if he was in earnest, but his face was one not easily read. "Is there any other evidence against him," faltered I, "except what Norah has said?"

"Yes. He was seen at midnight, just before the fire, talking to a strange man in the neighborhood of your house. The man is supposed to be the same one to whom suspicion was attached from the first. But all this is mere conjecture."

I could not help the exclamation of despair that burst from my lips.

Mr. Markham regarded me gravely. "Let me advise you, my dear madam," said he. "You should have gone to your husband first. Be careful what you say to any one else. Your words and actions may be misconstrued."

"But how am I to see him," inquired I, "when they refuse me admittance? It was for advice and assistance in this very matter that I came to you."

"Ah, well, you had better return home then. He will be released before night, or sooner, if bail is found."

I did as advised. The dread secret that for a time had lifted its leaden weight from my

heart, again seemed pressing out life and hope. All my suspicions were revived, and whichever way I turned, I saw nothing but mystery and wretchedness.

Only one thought I had—to save my husband guilty or innocent. But had I not already injured his cause by the excitement I had shown, the admissions I had made? Was not that what Mr. Markham meant when he warned me to be careful? But how was I to fulfil outward calmness when such a tumult raged within? Could I hide the fearful knowledge I possessed from the sharp eyes of those who were watching me? Unused to concealment I felt that it would be impossible. I trembled for myself and my husband.

There was but one thing I could do—flee; flee from danger, from home, from the man I loved and suspected. My absence could be accounted for plausibly, my presence might ruin us both. No other course seemed left for me to pursue. If I stayed, I knew not how much of the truth might be extorted from me; I might even betray everything in some paroxysm of grief and madness. Better that I hid myself and my secret from the eyes of the world.

But where was I to go? Aunt Amy would receive me kindly and give me love and sympathy, and I needed both in this time of trouble. Nor would she try to discover what I chose to conceal. Her protection, therefore, I resolved to seek.

Norah, alarmed at the mischief she had done, was sobbing vehemently when I reached home.

"You see, Miss Lucy, I just told Bridget Malone, and she promised not to say a word about it, but it is little she can keep to herself with that long tongue of hers, and I was no sooner out of the house than she steps over to Miss Murphy's and repeats it word for word. And of course Miss Murphy told Mike, and so it went from one to another, and I as innocent of meaning any harm as the child unborn."

I tried to comfort her the best I could.

"Will I have to go to court?" inquired she in a frightened voice. "That is what the big policeman on the corner says, and that I'll have to testify against master, too. But I won't and there is no lawyer in the land can make me do it. Miss Lucy, what will they do to him?"

"Nothing," replied I, confidently. I wished to impress her with that fact, however much I doubted it myself. "But, Norah, I am forced to leave home for a few days. Can you manage alone until I return?"

"Why, yes, I guess so," and she hesitated and looked surprised.

"Very well, then. I shall rely on you." And without any further explanations, for Norah was a competent housekeeper, I went up to my chamber and packed the few things necessary for the journey.

Then I wrote a letter to my husband, but without disclosing the real cause of my departure, for I felt that such a revelation would but increase his unhappiness. The excuses I gave were weak and unsatisfactory, however—my desolate condition, my need of aunt Amy, etc. That he would think my conduct strange, and perhaps doubt my affection, I had reason to fear. But even that was better than the risk I should run by remaining under the present circumstances.

I found aunt Amy in a tumult of excitement.

"Why, child, who would have thought of seeing you?" exclaimed she. "And everything all upside down, and your brother just come home to die, and I on the point of sending a telegram to Mr. Allan, and—"

"My brother!" echoed I, in amazement.

"Why, yes, don't you remember? But it isn't any wonder if you don't, such a little bit of a thing as you were when he went away. He has had a hard life, I'm afraid, and wouldn't have been much credit to his friends if they'd known about him—but we oughtn't to think of that now when his hours are numbered. He can't live till morning, the doctor says. And his perfectly frightful the way he raves and carries on, for he is out of his head most of the time."

"But when did he come, and how did you know him?" questioned I.

"Hugh poked him upon the street. He had fallen down insensible just in front of Lucy's drug-store, and they took him in there, and sent for a doctor. I was passing, saw the crowd and went in to find out what was the matter. I didn't recognize him at first, but as soon as he came to and began to look a little more natural, I was struck with his resemblance to your father. Your father was my twin-brother, Lucy, and I can never forget how he looked."

Her voice faltered, and she went on quickly.

"Of course it set me thinking, for the man was about as old as your brother would have been, and looking at him closely, I noticed on his wrist a peculiar scar. It wasn't the strawberry-mark that novel writers always introduce—and she laughed—"but nevertheless, it convinced me of his identity."

"And you took him home at once?"

"Certainly. That was only the day before yesterday; and he has been lying at the point of death ever since."

"Can I see him?"

"Not just yet. He was asleep when I left the room. But pardon me, Lucy, that in talking about him, I haven't said anything as to your own trouble. What a shock it must have given you—the burning of the foundry. Your poor husband! I was afraid that it would nearly drive him crazy. How did it happen that you left him at such a time? I am glad you came, however—I was just about to send for you."

Then I told her as much of the story as I could, without betraying my secret.

"What! your husband arrested, and you here?" exclaimed she, in amazement. "Why, Lucy, I can't understand it."

I was silent. How could I explain? Fortunately, there was a message from the sick-room just then, requiring her presence there immediately. She left me reluctantly, but promised to return soon. Hugh joined me shortly afterward.

"How is the patient?" was my first inquiry, after greeting him affectionately.

"Not much better. The doctor is with him now, and mother too. He is perfectly frantic. You ought to hear him rave. Oh! Lucy, I am afraid that he has not been a good man. You won't mind my saying it, will you, even if he is your brother?"

"Why should I? He is just like a stranger to me."

"The most curious thing of all," said he, lowering his voice, "happened last night. All at once he woke up suddenly, shrieking 'Fire! Fire!' then with a laugh that made my blood run cold cried, 'I have done as I said I would! I have done as I said I would!' (What was there in that sentence to make me start with horror? Was it not the same that had been written on the paper I destroyed?) "Then, sitting up in bed, he seemed to be gloating over what seemed to him a building on fire; he exulted fondly as the flames rose higher and higher in his imagination; and finally, when the timbers fell with a crash, and there was nothing left but ruins, according to his description, he sank back exhausted."

My very heart stopped beating; I staggered and would have fallen if it hadn't been for Hugh.

"Why, Lucy," whispered he, full of concern, "what is it? Are you sick?"

"No, no, but I must see this man who calls himself my brother. There is a terrible secret hidden somewhere. The foundry was set on fire. Who did it? That is the question."

"Good heavens! you don't suspect—and yet it may be—yes, yes, everything corresponds."

I had disclosed more than I meant to in my excitement. But I could not recall it, and together Hugh and I went to the sick-room.

Trembling, I approached the bed. Yes, there he lay, the midnight visitor of my husband, the man who had set the fire to the foundry. True, I had only seen him in the moonlight before, but his face was distinctly visible, and I recognized him at once. My brother! what did it mean? The mystery seemed to deepen.

He lay very still, with closed eyes. Suddenly he opened them, stared at me steadily then said, "Who are you?"

"He is beginning to be conscious," whispered aunt Amy.

I could not speak, I returned his gaze as if fascinated.

"Who are you?" he repeated.

"Lucy Allan," answered I, at last, mechanically.

He sprang up in bed with the exclamation—"My sister!"

Like marble I stood, but he read in my eyes hatred and repulsion.

"You know all!" said he, in a faint voice. "Is it not so? I have wronged you deeply. Your husband would have saved me. I appealed to his generosity, and he gave me money to lead a better life. What did I do? I demanded more, and because he refused it, set fire to his foundry."

"Wretch!" exclaimed I, indignantly.

"Oh, Lucy," whispered aunt Amy, "be pitiful. Don't you see he is dying?"

"Yes, that is the worst," muttered he. "You are right. I am a wretch, a villain, steeped in wickedness. It would make you shudder to hear what I have done. Ah, well, I am punished now."

"It is never too late to repent," said aunt Amy, softly.

He had fallen back on the pillow exhausted. A little while afterward he raised his head, exclaiming, "Mr. Allan! where is he? He is a good man, and I'd like to ask his forgiveness."

The ghastly hue of death was fast creeping over his face.

"He is not here," returned I, softened at the sight. "Be content, however, I forgive you in his name."

That was the last he said. He died without a struggle. Whether or not he repented at the last, who can tell?

Afterward, I told aunt Amy everything.

"Lucy dear, you have done very wrong," said she. "Robert Allan is one of the noblest men God ever created. Witness his treatment of your brother, whom he would have made an honest member of society, if he could. There is nothing that will destroy the happiness of married life sooner than concealment. Never distrust your husband; if you do, tell him frankly, give him a chance to explain. The veriest trifle if brooded over silently, can be transformed from a mole-hill into a mountain. Just think what misery it has cost you, this secret that, if confided to him, would have lost its terror at once."

I was too repentant to suggest that he had shown a lack of candor as well as myself. Aunt Amy, however, was not ignorant of the fact.

"It was from the kindest motives that Robert concealed the existence of your brother," said she. "He feared that it would have an ill effect on your sensitive nature. As a delicate plant is shielded from the wind, he would have guarded you from the knowledge of everything evil and disagreeable. But it is not the right principle. Husband and wife are only linked together by stronger ties, if they share the burdens of life as well as its pleasures, united alike in joy and sorrow."

My brother was buried the next day. We received a telegram from Robert in answer to one we sent, saying that he could not possibly come, that business prevented his leaving home. It not only disappointed, but alarmed me as well, for I knew not what might have happened in my absence. I was full of impatience to return.

Accompanied by aunt Amy, I started immediately after the funeral. My husband was at the depot when we arrived, to my great relief, (I had feared that he might be in the prison yet.)

"Can you ever forgive me?" whispered I, stealing my hand into his under cover of the darkness.

"Forgetting away? I am afraid not." He spoke lightly, but there was something in his voice that startled me, that seemed to imply he had discovered my secret, and knew of what a base crime I had suspected him.

But how could he find it out? I had written of my brother, and described his death-bed, but carefully concealed what I had known before, wishing to reserve my own confession until we met face to face. But there was the letter that Nora had seen me pick up—ah! yes, she had told him of that, and he had guessed the rest. Strange that I had never thought of this clue that, associated with my singular conduct, was enough to explain the whole affair.

We had no sooner reached home than aunt Amy with the tact peculiar to such women, left me alone with my husband.

"You have something to tell me," said he, softly. "What is it, Lucy?"

Brokenly then I related my story, ashamed to look in his face, shrinking from the contempt and indignation I feared to read there.

"Part of this I guessed before," replied he, gravely, "when I came home on the day of my arrest, and found you gone. I was very sorry then that I had not told you the truth in the beginning. But I thought I was acting for the best. Mr. Markham, to whom I confided everything, in order to find your brother, if possible, and place a watch over him, condemned my course severely. 'Better tell your wife all,' was his advice. It was from him I learned of your finding that letter on the morning of the fire. Norah gave in her testimony afterward. When I thought of your reading that, and of what it might lead you to suspect, I fairly trembled."

"And you remember," interrupted I, "how excited you were, and how you rushed out of the room immediately after its perusal?"

"Ah! yes, there is one thing that neither you nor aunt Amy seems to have suspected. Your brother was insane when he set fire to the foundry."

"You only say that out of kindness. It cannot be so."

"But it is. I was sure of it as soon as I read his confession. That wasn't the act of a sane man. And I recalled other things, words and actions that had seemed strange at the time."

"Oh, yes, that panjominio of hanging," and I shuddered.

"And the proofs seemed to multiply. He was subject to fits of hallucination. Frightened at this thought, I went in search of him at once, but was unsuccessful, and it was then that I sought the counsel of Mr. Markham, a friend of mine, and a man that can keep a secret."

"But when was it my brother made himself known to you first?"

"In a letter, shortly before the fire, appointing the meeting you witnessed. You remember that robbery of the Union Bank, in which I was interested, as president of the Company? He wrote me that he was implicated in that, told me of his relationship to you, implored my aid, and declared that if he was arrested he would proclaim himself your brother."

"How did you know he was not an impostor?"

"By his likeness to yourself, slight but perceptible, the way in which he talked, etc., etc. I am a tolerable judge of human nature."

"You gave him money?"

"Yes, on condition that he left the country. He was your brother, and I couldn't refuse him. He was anxious to begin a new life, he said, and I pitied him, and was willing to do for him, what I could. But the amount I gave him wasn't satisfactory; he demanded more, threatened me with exposure if I refused, and left me full of wrath."

"If you had only told me everything then."

"But you seemed to be asleep when I came in, and I was worn out myself. Afterward came the fire, and it looked like cruelty then to disclose your brother's guilt and add to your misery."

"You little thought what I was enduring, and that I was base enough to suspect you."

"Ah, Lucy, it has taken us a long time to understand each other. You fancied that I was tired of my girl-wife, and I that you wearied of your old husband. We have both been mistaken. I blame myself more than you, however. I ought to have remembered your youth, and sunny-heartedness, and love of social intercourse, and not buried myself up so completely in books. Never mind, you shall have no cause to complain hereafter."

My ideal of married life was at length realized. Not that a cloud never rose to dim our happiness, we wouldn't have been mortal otherwise, but the lesson of mutual trust had been impressed upon us in a way never to be forgotten.

Robert was triumphantly acquitted. There was enough evidence brought forward to prove who set the foundry on fire, but it was never suspected outside of our own family circle that the crazy man who committed the deed was my brother.

MANORIAL CUSTOMS.

Nobody knows why the maids of Hildington, Oxfordshire, on the Monday after Whitsuntide, had their thumbs tied behind them, and roared after a lamb; who who succeeded in catching and holding it with her mouth, winning the title of Lady of the Lamb, and being installed mistress of the merry-making. When caught, killed, and dressed with the skin hanging still to it, the lamb was tied to a pole, and carried before the Lady and her followers to the green, where every one footed it merrily until night set in. Next day, the lamb was partly boiled, partly roasted, partly baked, and served up at the Lady's Feast; and when the company had disposed of it, the "solemnity," that had nothing solemn about it, was at an end. If the young fellows of Coleshill, Warwickshire, were nimble or clever enough to catch a hare time enough to present it at the parsonage before ten o'clock on Easter Monday, the parson was obliged to give them a calf's head, a hundred of eggs, and a goat in exchange. Puss and parson were associated too in an Easter observance peculiar to Hailaton, Leicestershire; the rector having to provide two hare pies, two dozen loaves, and a quantity of ale, to be scrambled for, in consideration of the benefit he derived from the Hare-crop Leys. The Leys were inclosed a hundred years ago, and another piece of land apportioned to the same purposes. We believe the custom is still continued under somewhat altered conditions. Easter Monday, the rector provides a basket, a sack, and two handless, stringless wooden bottles, holding about a gallon each. The basket is filled with penny loaves, cut into quarters, the bottles with ale, and the sack with two large veal and beacouples, cut into pieces. Men, women, and children turn out and wend their way to Hare-pie bank, a bank with a small trench round it, and a circular hole in the centre. The loaves are scrambled for on the road, but the pies and the ale are jealously guarded until the bank is reached, when they are thrown into the hole, for all comers to try their fortune at a scrambling about. In 1875 Sir William Bank was allowed to inclose twenty acres of land belonging to St. Paul's, upon condition of presenting the clergy of the church with a fat buck and doe every year, upon the days of the Conversion and Commemoration of St. Paul. The buck and doe were carried in procession to the high altar, where the dean and chapter, arrayed in copes and proper vestments, and wearing garlands of roses upon their heads awaited their coming. The buck's body was sent to be baked; but the head and horns being fixed upon a pole, were carried before the cross, round about the church. On reaching the west door, the keeper "blowed the death of the buck," and was answered by sundry horns about the city. For their pains, the bowers received their dinner and three shillings and fourpence; the keeper, two shillings, and a loaf of bread stamped with St. Paul's image; and the bringers of the buck, twelve pence. Among the bedrooms belonging to Hilton House, Staffordshire, was the hollow brass image of a kneeling man, having a large aperture at the back, and a smaller one at the mouth. This effigy was a foot high, and known as Jack of Hilton. Upon New-year's Day, Jack was filled with water, and set by the hall fire, until getting up his steam, he blew it from his mouth in very audible fashion. Then the lord of the adjacent manor of Essington came into the hall with a live goose, which he drove round the fire three times, before carrying it into the kitchen to be dressed and cooked, when he bore it to the table of the lord of Hilton, and received in return a dish of meat for his own dinner. The lord of the manor of Lodebrook, Warwickshire, was by custom entitled to receive three halfpence a year from every tenant for swarf-money, or, in case of default, thirty shillings and a white bull. In his account of the hundred of Knightlow, in the same county, Dugdale says:—"There is also a certain residue unto the lord of the hundred, called wroth-money, or wrath-money, or swarf-money, probably the same with ward-penny. This rent must be paid every Martinmas-day, in the morning, at Knightlow Cross, before the sun riseth; the party paying it must go thrice about the cross and say, 'The wroth-money,' and then lay it in the hole of the said Cross before good witness; for if it be not duly performed, the forfeiture is thirty shillings and a white bull." This curious custom still exists. At the northern end of the village of Stratton-on-Avon, near Rugby, upon an ancient British tumulus, stands the mortice-stone of the old cross of Knightlow, and here the wroth-silver is yet paid.—Chamber's Journal.

AMATEUR MUSICAL SOCIETIES.

One of the most effectual agencies in the spread of musical knowledge is the amateur musical society. In our time we have been connected with a number, and have a knowledge of many more. It may be that these jottings may prove interesting, or even useful, to others similarly situated. The most pretensions class is the Philharmonic Society, especially in London. Such societies are the chief regular purveyors of good music of all kinds, except cultro opera. The conductor must be a musician of the highest standing. The band and chorus are of the best material, and thoroughly drilled. A good many of the choruses are amateurs; but the band is professional to the backbone, and many of its members are

famous soloists with several instruments. Oratorios, cantatas, symphonies, overtures, and miscellaneous operatic selections, form the staple of the programmes, which are always interpreted by the aid of artists of the first eminence. For a young artist to gain a hearing at such concerts is a first step to fame. The audiences can hardly be described. They will represent, more or less, the three millions or more of London, city and suburbs. Then we have the provincial Philharmonic, or harmonic, or musical society. This is generally something more than a mere concert-giving institution. It is a social feature of the town. To it must subscribe every one with any pretence to taste or culture,—including, of course, many whose only claim is the pretence,—and every one else who aspires to belong to the "upper classes." The dress places are, consequently, largely occupied by people decently dressed, who will yet talk all through a song, treat any more noisy performance as a well-devised cover for conversation, and enter or depart without scruple in the middle of a performance. The cheaper seats are chiefly occupied by people who actually seem to have come for the music alone. It is true you see most copies of the score when a work is performed. The conductor is probably a musician of mark, hailing from London, and running down merely for the concert and one rehearsal before it. The "grinding" is necessarily done by some sub-conductor or chorus-master, before the great man comes. The principal members of the band have similar engagements in London and the provinces, and lead the same nomadic existence as their chief. The band may also include some amateurs; and the chorus is mainly composed of amateurs, with a few semi-professional church singers as leaders. The performances by such societies of oratorio and instrumental works will sometimes reach quite to the metropolitan standard, constituting an admirable local school of music. It is, however, to societies of more modest pretensions and more private character that the term "amateur musical society" more properly belongs; and, verily, their name is legion, and their variety infinite. There is the ordinary private society, whose members subscribe and defray all expenses, providing generally their own music. They employ a professional man or a talented amateur, and give occasional concerts, admission being by invitation, or in aid of a charity. Their work is generally confined to choral music, and they seldom have more than pianoforte accompaniment; yet, with a clever conductor, and members admitted by test, they will sometimes excel the more pretentious public societies. The individual standard of musical attainment being higher, they will get through more music, and perhaps do it better, than in the larger societies, where the sympathy and attention of the conductor is apt to be more devoted to the instruments than to the voices. Then we have the church choir, whose weekly practice has gradually developed into a small choral society, under the presenter or organizer's members will do psalmody, anthems, glees, and even make a frantic attempt—more gallant than wise—at one of the easier masses or oratorios. Lastly, there comes the most rudimentary of all—the "singing class," composed generally of very young folks, who have everything to learn. Hullah's system and the Tonic Sol-fa notation have greatly promoted the success of these, by facilitating the acquirement of right-singing. A combination of the latter with the old notation, called the "union notation," may prove even more useful as a stepping stone to learners. Such classes will learn simple harmonies with astonishing speed.—Once-a-Week.

A HINDOO STORY.

A tiger, prowling in a forest, was attracted by a bleating calf. It proved to be a bait, and the tiger found himself trapped in a spring cage. There he lay for two days, when a Brahmin happened to see that way. "O Brahmin!" piteously cried the beast, "have mercy on me; let me out of this cage." "Alas! but you will eat me." "Eat you? Devor my benefactor? Never could I be guilty of such a deed," responded the tiger. The Brahmin, being benevolently inclined, was moved by these entreaties and opened the door of the cage. The tiger walked up to him, wagged his tail, and said,—"Brahmin, prepare to die; I shall now eat you." "Oh, how ungrateful! how wicked! Am I not your savior?" protested the trembling prey. "True," said the tiger, "very true; but it is the custom of my race to eat a man when we get a chance, and I cannot afford to let you go." "Let us submit the case to an arbitrator," said the Brahmin. "Here comes a fox. The fox is wise; let us abide by his decision." "Very well," replied the tiger. The fox, assuming a judicial aspect, sat on his haunches with all the dignity he could muster, and, looking at the disputants, he said,—"Good friends, I am somewhat confused at the different accounts which you give of this matter; my mind is not clear enough to render equitable judgment, but if you will be kind enough to act the whole transaction before my eyes, I shall attain unto a more definite conception of the case. Do you, Mr. Tiger, show me just how you approached and entered the cage,

and then you, Mr. Brahmin, show me how you liberated him, and I shall be able to render a proper decision." They assented, for the fox was solemn and oracular. The tiger walked into the cage, the spring door fell and shut him in. He was a prisoner. The judicial expression faded from the fox's countenance, and turning to the Brahmin, he said,— "I advise you to go home as fast as you can, and abstain, in future, from doing favors to rascally tigers. Good morning, Brahmin; good morning, tiger."

ANECDOTES OF EARLY TIMES IN CALIFORNIA.

In those days miners would flock in crowds to catch a glimpse of that rare and blessed spectacle, a woman! Old inhabitants tell how, in a certain camp, the now went abroad early in the morning that a woman was come! They had seen a calico dress hanging out of a wagon down at the camping ground—sign of emigrants from over the great plains. Everybody went down there, and a shout went up when an actual bona-fide dress was discovered fluttering in the wind! The male emigrant was 'lelible. The miners said: "Fetch her out!" He said: "It is my wife, gentlemen—she's sick—we have been robbed of money, provisions, everything, by the Indians—we want to rest." "Fetch her out! We've got to see her!" "But, gentlemen, the poor thing, she—" "Fetch her out!" He fetched her out, and they swung their hats and sent up three rousing cheers and a tiger; and they crowded around and gazed at her, and touched her dress, and listened to her voice with the look of men who listened to a memory rather than a present reality—and then they collected \$2,500 in gold and gave it to the man, and swung their hats again and gave three more cheers, and went home satisfied. Once I dined in San Francisco with the family of a pioneer, and talked with his daughter, a young lady whose first experience in San Francisco was an adventure, though she herself did not remember it, as she was only two or three years old at the time. Her father said that, after landing from the ship, they were walking up the street, a servant leading the party with the little girl in her arms. And presently a huge miner, bearded, belted, spurred and bristling with deadly weapons—just down from a long campaign in the mountains, evidently—barrèd the way, stopped the servant and stood gazing, with a face all alive with gratification and astonishment. Then he said, reverently: "Well, if it ain't a child!" And then he snatched a little leather sack out of his pocket and said to the servant: "There's a hundred and fifty dollars in dust, there, and I'll give it to you to let me kiss the child!" That anecdote, is true. But see how things change. Sitting at that dinner table, listening to that anecdote, if I had offered double the money for the privilege of kissing the same child, I should have been refused. Seventeen years have far more than doubled the price.—Mark Twain.

TASTES.

The pure elementary tastes are few in number, and may be comprised under the following heads: Sweet, sour, bitter, and salt. But the compound tastes and flavor are infinite in number, and it is in arranging them according to their affinities that the art of cookery consists. This art is almost entirely empirical. Dishes are dressed to suit the taste, and the cook takes his own taste as the standard of what will be agreeable to those whom he serves. But why certain things are blended together—why certain mixtures form pleasing compounds, these are points upon which we can offer no explanation. It is probable that there may be reasons in the back-ground, but they are of too subtle a kind for our observation. No classification of flavors beyond the very simple and elementary one that we have given above has ever been found possible, because when we get away from the primary sapor we soon arrive at very mixed and complicated flavors, which are difficult to describe in words, and which, for anything we know, may not convey to others the same impression that they do to ourselves. As we have said, those things only which are soluble in the fluids of the mouth can be tasted, because thus only can their sapid particles penetrate the superficial layer covering the tongue, and come in contact with the nerves which lie beneath it. For the same reason fluids are more quickly and easily tasted than solids, because they mix more readily with the secretions of the mouth. In order, therefore, to taste any substance, the best way is to make a solution of it, and then the solution should be moved rapidly over the surface of the tongue and discharged from the mouth. Such is the practice followed by tea and wine tasters, and it is astonishing how many varieties they can distinguish in rapid succession, and with what nicety of discrimination. Indeed, it is marvellous to what a degree of perfection the sense of taste can be educated. Thus Dr. Carpenter tells us that "the taster to one of the extensive cells of sherry at Cadix or Seville has not the least difficulty in distinguishing the butt from which a given sample may have been drawn, although the number of different varieties of the same kind of wine under his keeping may not be less than five hundred."

The same thing, in a less degree, is often seen in those who devote much of their attention to the pleasures of the table. These, then, are the conditions under which the sense of taste is most perfectly exercised:—when the sapid substance is in a fluid form, when it is passed rapidly over the surface of the tongue and then ejected from the mouth; thus the nerves are excited without being exhausted, and one flavor may be tasted in rapid succession after another. But if a contrary method is adopted, and if the sapid substance is allowed to remain long in the mouth, the sensitive filaments of the nerves are exhausted, and become incapable of distinguishing one flavor from another. A familiar example of this is afforded by an experiment which may be tried at the dinner table. After taking a couple of glasses of some strongly flavored wine (such as port or sherry) in rapid succession, it will be found impossible with the eyes closed to distinguish whether the third glass is port or sherry. The nerves of taste are not merely exhausted, but the previous sapor has left an impression behind them which interferes with the discrimination of subsequent flavors. In a similar manner, if we may borrow an illustration from another sense, when colors are presented to the eye in rapid succession, the organ is unable to appreciate them, and the result is an appearance of white light. This is an optical illusion which is exhibited. As the sense of taste, like the other senses, depends upon the integrity of those parts of the body through which it is transmitted to the brain, the reader will be surprised to learn that, in those extremely rare cases which are on record of children born without any tongue, taste has nevertheless been found present. One remarkable instance of this has been related by M. de Jussieu, in the "Mémoires de l'Académie Royale des Sciences." A girl, aged fifteen, was seen by him whose tongue was altogether wanting, and who could nevertheless speak distinctly, swallow without difficulty, and distinguish tastes with nicety. No doubt in such a case as this the nerves, which ordinarily supply the tongue, terminated in the floor of the mouth, and the adjacent parts, and thus received impressions from sapid substances.—Gleason Edwards.

The University boat-race, about which we read so much in the papers for a month before it comes off, seems to require as many curious and technical terms as "our own correspondent" imports into his account of a horse-race. The Cambridge men, we are told, are not "up to sailing." Though many readers of the paper will not understand this phrase, few probably will connect it at this season with exercise on the ice. From general to the particular. The Pall Mall says: "Turnbull (6) is young and overgrown; he is short in his swing back; at the same time he is improving daily. Lecky-Browne (4) has a 'bucket' forward, and finishes his stroke in his lap instead of at his chest, but he does plenty of work. Robinson (8) is not in such good form as last year; his recovery from the chest is very dead, and he has no beginning to his stroke." This stroke without a beginning is perhaps more singular than the bucket forward, or Mr. Robinson with the dead recovery from the chest. To turn to the Oxford crew, we find they are "tidy on the feather,"—which expression has, probably, no reference at all to their feathering on the tide. In the interests of readers who are not awed at the doings of the sporting world, we wish that reports of races of all sorts could be managed with a little less slang. We believe they would be quite as intelligible as they are at present.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

Three minute diamonds which were said to have been discovered in the mineral called Xanthophyllite, found among the Ural mountains, turn out to be merely hollow cavities in the stone, produced by the action of acids. At least so asserts Dr. Knop of Carlsruhe, Germany.

THE native bread fungus of Australia was described not long since, at a meeting of the Edinburgh Botanical Society. It occurs as a cluster of tubers, joined to one another by slender roots, the largest tuber being as big as a man's head. The interior looks like rice pudding, and to Europeans seems much too insipid for food, although highly esteemed by the aborigines.

SPECKS IN COCHINEAL DYES.—It has long been noticed that fabrics colored with cochineal are apt to exhibit black specks, which have been ascribed to the presence of iron. According to Guignet, however, these are due to the formation of a carminate of lime, which occurs in the form of black powder, insoluble in water. This salt, of a red color, is soluble in acetic acid, without decomposition; and appears, on the drying of the solution, as a black residuum.

NICKEL-PLATED TYPE.—Type, electro-plated with nickel, are not only superior to copper-plated in their resistance to friction and pressure, being 10 times as durable as ordinary type, on account of the almost steel-like hardness of their surface, but, by reason of the smoothness of the coating even when the nickel is deposited in a very thin film, they render the finest lines more perfectly, and possess the decided advantage of allowing the use of inks of all colors, while the copper-plated change some of these inks, and are acted upon by others, as vermilion, &c.

AN EROSY STAIN FOR WOOD.—Apple, pear and walnut wood, especially of fine grain, give

perfect imitations of ebony under the following treatment: Boil in a glass vessel, with water, 100 grains, 1 oz. of logwood chips, 1 oz. vitriol, and 1/2 oz. crystallized verdigris; filter while warm, and brush the wood with the hot solution a number of times. The wood, thus stained black, is then to be coated two or three times (being allowed to dry completely after each coating) with a solution of 1 oz. of pure iron filings in a quart of good wine vinegar. This is to be prepared hot, and allowed to cool before use.

EFFECT OF RUBBER TUBES ON ILLUMINATING GAS.—The results of recent investigations by Zulowsky show that a diminution of intensity of the light, perceptible without photometric aids, is produced by the passage of ordinary illuminating gas through rubber tubes only 14 feet long, and that this diminution is not due to mixture of air by diffusion, but entirely to the partial absorption of some, perhaps all, of the illuminating ingredients. Furthermore, since these absorbed ingredients are given up in a vacuum, and without doubt also gradually to the air, the effect of such tubes is independent of the time they may have been in use.

THE conjecture that the meteor showers which occurred so generally all over the earth on the 27th of November last, were due to the passage of our planet through a portion of Biela's comet, has been regarded with favor by some astronomers and denounced by others. The discovery of a comet in the Southern sky by Mr. Pogson, the Madras astronomer, on the 2d of December, was regarded as confirmatory of the supposition, as its place was that which Biela's comet would naturally occupy if the earth had just passed through it. Now, however, some persons deny that the comet which Mr. Pogson saw is really the lost comet of Biela, although its probable identity is maintained by Prof. Klinkerfues and by Prof. Oppolzer of Vienna.

ARTIFICIAL CLOUDS.—A few weeks ago we (English Mechanic) referred to an experiment about to be made at Surannes, on the possibility of preserving vines from the action of frost by artificial clouds. These experiments have taken place, before a large number of interested observers. In a vineyard of 20 hectares there were placed 360 iron vessels containing a heavy oil. All these fropots were lighted at once, and a thick black cloud was interposed between the vines and the sky. When the weather is calm and the sky clear (and it is in such circumstances that the frosts which so injure vines in spring mostly occur), this cloud continues all the time necessary to exercise its protective influence. The cost of the operation (including pots, oil, and labor) was estimated at about 5 francs per hectare, or 2 1/2 cents per acre; and all the viticulturists expressed themselves as struck with the advantages of this means of preservation.

FAMILY MATTERS.

SILVER CAKE.—Two cups of flour, one and one-half cups of sugar, one-half cup of sweet milk, one-half cup of butter, whites of four eggs, one scant teaspoonful of cream, of tartar, one-half scant teaspoonful of soda, and flavor with vanilla.

SINGLE ROOF, and indeed all wood-work, may be rendered less liable to take fire from falling cinders, &c., by coating it with a wash composed of lime salt, and fine sand or wood ashes. This compound also preserves the wood, and should be applied in the same manner as ordinary whitewash.

CALVES' FEET.—Germans have a very good way of cooking calves' feet, far superior to the simple paring and butter treatment. The feet are first boiled with a few herbs, salt, and vinegar, till they are tender; the bones are then taken out, the feet split, egged and bread-crumbed, and either fried or baked. Fried and served with sauce piquante they are excellent.

CLEANING TIN-WARE.—Acids should never be employed to clean tin-ware, because they attack the metal and remove it from the iron of which it forms a thin coat. Rub the articles first with rotten-stone and sweet oil, then finish with whiting and a piece of soft leather. Nothing else will give so good a polish.

To remove rust spots from cutlery, rub them with a common lead pencil and polish with paper or a cloth.

PRUNES A LA Russe.—Stew one pound of prunes with a little sugar and water till they are quite soft; take out the stones, crack them, and put back the kernels; then line the inside of a mould (first decorated with split almonds) with the prunes, and keep on pouring in a little jelly (a small breakfast-cupful of jelly or dissolved gelatine) to make the whole turn out. It may be made in a mould with a hole, which should be filled with whipped cream.

THE BEST WAY TO BOIL CLOTHES.—Aunt Rhody Bacon has been making us a visit. She is an ancient maiden, and is as full of information as an egg is of meat. It happened that she passed through the kitchen as my washerwoman was preparing to boil her clothes in a kettle filled with boiling water, and she could not refrain from remonstrating with her upon the subject, thus: "If you bile the clothes in boiling water, they'll be yellor, as sure as you're a gal," cried aunt Rhody. "Gal and woman, I've washed clothes for nearly sixty years, an' I'm old enough ter know what's what in washin'." But them clothes

inter cold water, let 'em kum slowly ter a bile, and bile 'em 'wenty minutes, an' I'll venter ter say you'll thank me for tellin' on you ter do it. "An' jist let me tell yer another thing. When your clothes stick ter the lines in winter time, instead o' pulling at 'em, bend or lift 'em right where the clothespin was stuck, an' they'll kum off jist as easy, an' won't tear at all. I've seen good clothes, an' sheets, an' pillar-cases, turn inter stripes by bein' pulled off the line when a little stiff with frost. So aunt Rhody had her say to Mrs. Flanigan, who, I hope, will profit by her advice.—Daisy Eyebright.

HINTS TO FARMERS.

A LIVERY stable man in Connecticut, who keeps over 60 horses, is offering manure at \$3.00 a load, and with each load he gives a chromo worth \$5. So he says.

A WESTERN local association of farmers have resolved to see to it "that no railroad attorney, or one of doubtful temperance principles, is placed on the bench of this district."

J. R. HOLMES, of Manchester has just sold five trees on his land in Clinton County, Mich., for \$400. Four of the trees were black walnut and the other was a cherry. They were bought for the Detroit market, and the same man offered \$380 for eighteen walnut trees standing on the same land, being the price that Holmes paid for the eighty acres.

ENGLISH farmers are admonished by The World of Science that the best means of destroying the larva of the cockchafer, which is so injurious to the roots of grass and wheat, is by deep plowing and encouraging the rooks to follow the plow and pick up the grubs. This is a reasonable hint for us to refrain from killing or interfering with the crow blackbirds or the crows, birds which eagerly search and devour all sorts of injurious grubs, and notwithstanding their sable color are not so black as they are painted.

VARIETIES OF POTATOES.—Notwithstanding the new varieties introduced within a few years we have not succeeded in supplanting the old Peach Blow with a better kind. Yet it has several faults, chief of which is the late period of ripening to dig it. It is almost impossible to get it into market time enough for shipment in the Fall. We want very much a potato which will keep as well as the Peach Blow, look as well, be as fine flavored, yet ripen from two weeks to a month earlier. The Harrison is abandoned; the Peerless grows large and hollow; is a good kind to raise for feeding hogs, but no new variety promises remarkably well. The Early Rose leads as an early variety, but it does not quite fill the place of the Peach Blow.

ROUGH ON THE PATENT RIGHTS MEN.—The Nebraska Legislature has enacted that a note given for a patent right shall have the words "Given for a Patent Right" stamped across the face, and that the value of the note may be impaired if subsequent investigation shall show that value was not received. Further, if one wishes to sell a patent right in the State, he must get a certificate or permit, which he must show whenever he offers to sell. Failing in these and other things, he is subject to criminal prosecution, and, on conviction, may be fined \$500 or be imprisoned six months, or both, at the discretion of the court, and he is also liable for damages in a civil action. It is objected that this law is unconstitutional, and cannot stand, and that it will not be enforced; but it is to be hoped that it may exercise a salutary influence in keeping quindlers in check.

ERRORS IN GROUTING.—At least one person in three of those who plant trees in groups or belts for ornamental purposes commits errors in consequence of not taking "one long look ahead." Probably in many instances mistakes are made in consequence of the ignorance of the parties directing the planting of trees, as they judge of the future size from the specimens in hand, the largest being selected for centre of groups or background of belts. A few years, however, is only required to develop and show errors, and the tall, slim Arbor Vitæ or Irish Juniper of today is soon overtopped by the stocky Norway or Hemlock Spruce. Planting ornamental trees is a work requiring some forethought, and it is not altogether for the present immediate effect that it is done, but for time far distant, and one needs to have the future form, size, and general appearance of the trees in his mind's eye at the beginning, if he would avoid making blunders that never can be corrected. It requires a practical and intimate acquaintance with all the trees used in forming groups, not only as they appear in their native forest, as well as when cultivated, for some show the effects of culture differently than others.

GOLDEN GRAINS.

A FOOLISH friend is more troublesome than a who enemy.

A GRAND safeguard for doing right is to hate all that is wrong.

WHERE the mouth is sweet and the eyes intelligent, there is always the look of beauty, with a right heart.

Good sense should be the judge of both ancient and modern rules; everything that does not conform to it is false.

A HEART truly Christian is open, generous, and ever ready to make allowances for the infirmities and weaknesses of poor wo-worn humanity.

If young and old persons would spend half the money in making others happy which they spend in dress and useless luxury how much more real pleasure it would give them.

It is a mistake to expect to receive welcome, hospitality, words of cheer, and help over rugged and difficult passes of life, in return for selfishness, which cares for nothing in the world but itself.

TRUE LIFE.—The mere lapse of years is not life. To eat, drink, and sleep—to be exposed to darkness and light—to pace round in the mill of habit, and turn thought into an implement of trade—this is not life. Knowledge, truth, love, beauty, goodness, faith, alone can give vitality to the mechanism of existence.

SPEND WISELY.—Look most to your spending. No matter what comes in, if more goes out you will always be poor. The art is not in making money, but in keeping it; little expenses, like mice in a barn, when they are many, make great waste. Hair by hair heads get bald; straw by straw the thatch goes off the cottage, and drop by drop the rain comes into the chamber. A barrel is soon empty, if the tap leaks but a drop a minute.

TRUE PHILOSOPHY.—When I could not obtain large pleasures, I put together as many small ones as possible. Small pleasures lie about as thick as daisies; and for that very reason are neglected, trodden under foot, instead of being worn in our button-holes. We cannot afford to buy roses at Christmas, or camellias at any time; and so we couple buttercups with vulgarity, and things that grow in the hedge-side we let wither where they grow, for no other reason than that the king's highway is not a royal garden.

THE LESSON OF THE NEEDLE.—"How little notice is taken of you in the world?" said a pin to a needle. "You are always about your work, slipping in and out so softly, but never stopping to be praised. When a pretty dress is finished, who thinks of the needle that sewed it? Even the holes that you make are so small that they close up directly behind you." "I'm content to be useful," said the needle. "I do not ask to be praised. I do not remain in my work, it is true; but I leave behind me a thread which shows that my course has not been in vain." So let us pass through life, doing our duty as we go, remembered for some good work left behind when we ourselves have departed.

THE STRUGGLE WITH VANITY.—It is hard to resist the temptation to be drawn into the vortex of showy, fashionable life. To live simply, to keep within one's means, to hold indulgence within safe bounds, to be content with such pleasures as may be innocently enjoyed, to make friends of the plain and unpretending, is not easy. It demands a long discipline in patience and self-denial, but the discipline is of utmost value. The most sterling and gracious qualities spring from it—tranquility of mind, ease of conscience, peace of heart, temperance, sobriety, chastity, satisfaction with common joys, delight in humble pleasures, the taste for good books, the appreciation of good people, the uncomplaining and grateful temper, the moral integrity that is proof against corruption. In many cases the struggle with vanity is the providential way by which such qualities are gained.

BE SENSIBLE.—Do not be above your business. He who turns up his nose at his work quarrels with bread and butter. He is a poor smith who is afraid of his own sparks; there is some discomfort in all trades except chimney sweeping. If sailors give up going to sea because of wet; if bakers left off baking bread because it is hot work; if ploughmen would not plough because of cold and heat; if tailors could not make our clothes for fear of pricking their fingers, what a pass we would come to. Nonsense, my fine fellow, there's no shame about an honest calling; don't be afraid of soiling your hands, there's plenty of soap to be had.

You must not be afraid of work if you wish health and wealth. You cannot get honey if you are frightened at bees, nor plant corn if you are afraid of getting mud on your boot. When bars of iron melt under the south wind; when you can dig the fields with toothpick; blow ships along with fans; mature the crops with lavender water, and grow plum cake in flower pots, there will be fine times for dandle; but until the millennium comes we shall all have a deal to put up with.

HUMOROUS SCRAPS.

TRUE TO THE CORE.—A good apple. CHIFFONIERS.—Men who live by hook and by crook.

WHAT is that which never uses its teeth for eating purposes?—A comb.

A TRUE American is too proud to beg and too honest to steal. He gets trounced.

NEW READING OF AN OLD PROVERB.—Man proposes, and woman seldom refuses.

WHAT to do if you split your sides with laughter. Run till you get a stitch in them.

CLASSICAL AND COMMERCIAL.—When is a blundering schoolboy like a fraudulent shopkeeper? When he makes a false quantity.

WHAT would you do if you had some land that would not grow trees? Why, have it measured, and you would then have some poles and perches.

"KEPATOMEATATEHIN," was the note sent by a farmer to a school-teacher in the potato-digging season, to explain his boy's absence from school.

"WHAT'S THAT?" said a teacher, pointing to the letter X, to a little rugged urchin.—"Daddy's name."—"No, my boy."—"Yes, it is; I've seen him write it a good many times."

How to make one's self obnoxious—to walk down a crowded thoroughfare carrying a ladder on your shoulder, and to turn round every other minute to see if any one is looking at you.

A VERMONTIER chap who held a bronchial trochee in his mouth all night without producing any effect on his sore throat, was disgusted when he discovered that he had been chewing a tin button.

A MALICIOUS libel is going the rounds that vegetation is so scarce at Cape Cod that two mullein stalks and a whortleberry bush are called a grove. The truth is that unless there are three whortleberry bushes they never think of saying grove.

THE muddiest man in Camden is Smith. He wound up his clock regularly every night for fifteen years, and then discovered it was an eight-day clock. He muses on the work that he might have done in those wasted minutes, and his anger is dreadful.

OUR PUZZLER.

60. ENIGMA.

In the halls of the great, when the wine passeth round, On the rich laden tables, I am o'er to be found. (1) When the guests have all gone, and the night is far past, The slumbering inmates I shield from the blast. (2) I roam o'er the world, on land and on sea, And our proud, boasted navy would be nought without me. (3) I am flat, I am round, I'm square, I am bright, (4) Sometimes of no value, sometimes a rare sight. I'm a brook, flowing river, a nation's great pride. (5) Yet in books you will find me, the page, side by side. (6) Sometimes I'm so strong, a storm would but shake me, (7) But oftimes so weak you would easily break me. (8) Of many materials I'm made, 'twill be seen, Of iron, (9) brass, and copper, (10) and gold, too, I ween, (11) But not always these, as for lowlier use, I'm made of base clay, the potter's produce. (12) Go wherever you will, you'll find me employed, Closely kept as a treasure, yet often destroyed, I am useful to all, am employed every day, And you greatly would miss me if I were away. J. E. BOULTON.

61. DECAPITATIONS.

1 Complete, I'm a shrill exclamation, beheaded, I'm a rich substance, again, and I'm a quantity of paper; transposed, I'm a female quadruped; curtailed, I injure; transposed, I'm a male quadruped; beheaded and transposed, I'm a parental appellation; again curtailed, I'm a thousand. 2 Complete, I'm trade; beheaded, I'm a rude construction; again, and I'm a ship term; transposed, I'm plump; out away my centre, and I'm short for a measure; beheaded, and I'm an abbreviation of musical term. 3 Complete, I'm a number; beheaded, I signify the heart; again, and I'm a metal; transposed, and I'm found in fish; curtailed and transposed, I'm an adverb, and curtailed, I'm nothing. 4 Complete, I'm of great value, beheaded, I rank high in society; curtailed, I'm part of the human frame; transposed, I'm a portion of time; again, and I'm part of the verb to be. 5 My whole is to lacerate; beheaded, I'm a corner; beheaded and transposed, I'm a valley; curtailed and transposed, I'm a human limb; twice curtailed, and I'm fifty. A. L'ARKEIL.

62. ARITHMETICAL PUZZLE.

If you strike out the heart of Nun, And put a pig's therein, Then add an eagle's head for fun, A number will be seen.

ANSWERS.

57. CHARADES.—1, Bur-dock; 2, Cock-roach; 3, But-(ub)ton; 4, Bondage; 5, Log-wood; 6, Wave-ring.

58. SQUARE WORDS.— 1. MONTH 2. MISEN OPIKA INANI NKYER SATAN TREAT ESATOT HARTS ENTS

59. DECAPITATIONS.—1, Frills, rills, lls, L; 2, Gown, own, now, no, on, O.

Two Events in a Quiet Life.

BY A. CLAXTON.

CHAPTER I.

It was the third of December, and the fourth was fixed for my wedding-day. For some weeks the weather had been bitterly cold; we had had one heavy fall of snow, then a few days of hard frost, and now the air was again filled with large feathery flakes. At four o'clock, when I went to my own room wearied out both in mind and body, it was nearly dark.

My uncle's house, of which I had been an inmate for some years—for I was an orphan—was in a remote part of Cambridgeshire, five miles from a town, and it may easily be imagined what an event a wedding was in such a quiet village. Every one, including myself the bride elect, had to work hard for days beforehand, and my aunt had little sympathy for the weak or the idle.

Two or three guests had arrived, and as there now seemed nothing more to be done excepting to entertain them, I was sent up-stairs to rest until seven o'clock, when my intended husband and his groomsman were expected. The dog-cart was to be sent to meet them at Eldon station, about three miles off.

I found the unusual luxury of a bright fire burning in my grate, with an easy-chair cozily drawn up to it. For a moment or two I warmed my frozen fingers, and then I went to the window, and leaning my cold forehead against the colder pane, looked out upon the dreary landscape. Now the moment was come in which to realise my position.

For weeks I had been in a dream—a passive, hopeless creature, carried along, as it seemed, by the will of others to a certain end—now on the eve of my wedding-day I felt miserably awake. Could there then be no respite—nothing to hope for?

"Ah, Harry! Harry!" I exclaimed, "where are you now? Why this long, long time without a line, without a word? Have I not, in spite of taunts and entreaties, waited the seven years I promised, and more? Was it not only when the bread of charity grew too bitter, and no means permitted me for earning my own livelihood—when no hope remained of seeing you again—that I gave way?"

"Twice I had refused Mr. Denton's hand. What could I do when he offered it the third time? I mean, Heaven knows I mean to make him a good wife. I am grateful to him, for why should he choose me—a girl without a penny, and no heart worth having? They say I have a pretty face; I suppose it was that. Harry used to like my blue eyes and wavy hair years ago."

"This is the last night I may think of you, Harry, the bonny lad I loved so well! Where are you now? Still beyond the wide Atlantic, striving for the money to enable us to marry? Or, as they would wish me to believe, dead? I am in sore distress, Harry. Surely, bound up as we were in one another, my spirit can hardly thus be moved without stirring some chord in yours, wherever you may be—whether in far America, or in that still stranger and more unknown country from whence no traveller returns."

"God help me," I cried in my anguish; "God help me, I sorely need it!"

Then I opened the window, and looked out over the flat country lying so still in its white shroud; and I gazed up into the grey, stony sky, but it was obscured by the flakes of snow, which came down thicker and thicker until at last nothing else was to be seen in earth or heaven.

"Miss Nellie! Miss Nellie!" said the warning voice of the old housekeeper, "what are you doing, my dear? Trying to catch your death of cold? and to-morrow your wedding-day!" She drew me away, and closed the window, "I've got a nice cup of tea for you: come and sit down love, and drink it. I don't wonder you feel anxious like, for it's awful weather."

Then the good old soul sat down by the fire, and told me various stories, which she assured me were authentic, of similar snow-storms under similar circumstances, and how when her own mother was married, in Staffordshire, the wedding party had to walk to church over the tops of the hedges on frozen snow.

Then my aunt came in; she was naturally a stern, managing woman, and we had never been very good friends; but she spoke kindly to me then, and told me not to be anxious if the train were delayed a little. My uncle soon followed her, and gave me a kiss, saying, "Cheer up, Nellie! they'll be here sooner or later."

Ah! what a hypocrite I was! None of them knew my dread of the coming morrow; how I had prayed like a criminal for a reprieve. And yet, to do myself justice, I did honor Mr. Denton, I meant to obey, and hoped in time to love him. But the hours passed on, and even I began to grow anxious for his safety.

Ten o'clock came, and the groom had not returned from the station. Old Willie, the gardener, who had managed to struggle in from his cottage, about a hundred yards' distance, gave it as his opinion that they would not come that night.

"Lor' bless you, sir," he said, "James knows what he's about, and he'd never risk crossing Eldon Moor such weather as this; it's as much as their lives are worth."

My uncle kissed me again. "Never mind,

Nellie; they won't hurt in the station for one night, with a big fire, and we'll have them over the first thing in morning;" and so at last we retired for the night.

To bed, but not to sleep. A new hope had sprung up, which I hardly dared acknowledge to myself. If the storm would only continue until after twelve o'clock the next day, so as to make the wedding impossible, who could tell what might happen next? I might be taken ill; had I not pains in all my limbs, and was not my head burning already?

I rose several times during the night, and looked out. Still snowing heavily, as far as I could see. In the morning there was no change, and a very gloomy and depressed party met at the breakfast-table. A few unsuccessful attempts were made to be cheerful during the meal, but when it was over all was silence, except an occasional whisper from one of the anxious faces at the windows, trying vainly to peer through the thick white veil.

That it was useless to dress, all had agreed, and wrapped in a large shawl, I lay on the sofa by the fire, with my eyes fixed on the clock. Ten o'clock—eleven. At the half-hour my heart almost stopped beating. Twelve o'clock at last

came, and then my uncle tried to lead me away.

I understood now how it was.

"He is dead!" I said, and I fell heavily on the stone floor.

CHAPTER II.

It is nearly two years since I wrote anything in my diary, for I seem now too busy to attend to it, and yet things have altered very much in the last two years. My surroundings are changed, and I trust there is a change for the better in myself. During my long illness, which followed that awful snow-storm, my aunt heard of the death of her son-in-law in India, my cousin Edith's husband, and it was arranged for the widow and her only child to return to the old home. This rendered my presence even less necessary than ever, and made it all the more easy for my dear old friend and doctor to propose a scheme he had formed for the mutual benefit of his wife and myself, as he kindly put it.

It was for me to live with them as companion, housekeeper, and in fact daughter, for they

will happen in the chances and changes of life, but I shall never forget him. He will choose some other wife, and I hope they will be happy, but she will not love him better than the Nellie of old.

Here I was interrupted by a ring at the bell, and a note. To my great surprise it was from Mrs. Leedon (Harry's mother), asking me to call upon her in the afternoon. What could she want? Nine years ago she and my aunt broke off the engagement between Harry and me.

Ah! it was a hard and cruel time! We were, as they said, foolish, penniless young creatures; but then we loved each other, and he was willing to work, and I to wait. But that was all over now.

After our early dinner I made the invalid comfortable for her afternoon nap, and started for my two-mile walk.

A bright winter afternoon, clear pale sky, hard roads, and glittering hoar-frost lying on trees and hedges. I soon reached Mrs. Leedon's cottage. She looked, I thought, much aged, and there was an unusual nervousness in her manner.

After a little attempt at conversation she said, "Ellen, I hope in what happened some years ago you gave me, at least, credit for conscientious motives."

"Mrs. Leedon," I replied hastily, "that time is long past, and I have no wish to recall it."

"But, my dear, you must see now what an imprudent thing an engagement would have been."

I rose to go. "It is all over, Mrs. Leedon, I repeat. Right or wrong what was then done can never be undone."

"Stay a moment, Ellen. What I have to tell you is of such importance, that I must beg you to hear me patiently." She took my hand and drew me to the sofa by her.

"At that time I acted, as I still think, for the best; but two years ago I fear I made a mistake—that is, your aunt and I. Soon after your engagement to Mr. Denton, I received a letter from my son, considerably after date, enclosing one for you. He told me that he purposed coming home in a few months, and as he had now an appointment which would enable him to marry, he hoped to persuade you to return with him as his wife. As your uncle had forbidden any correspondence, he enclosed the letter for you in mine."

I sprang to my feet. "And why did I not have that letter?"

"Be calm, Ellen. Indeed, my dear, I am now very sorry. I took my letter to show to your aunt and aunt, and by their advice destroyed the enclosure. They thought you were at last settled in your mind, and happy; and of course, wished to avoid such a terrible upset as a renewal of the past would have caused."

"It was a shameful breach of trust, Mrs. Leedon," I exclaimed vehemently, "and cruel, very cruel! I was no young child to be treated so," and I buried my face in my hands. Where now was my boasted self-possession? I was sobbing bitterly. At last I raised my head.

"And what did Harry say when he heard of it?"

"My poor child," said Mrs. Leedon, "he said nothing—only that there was now no reason for his return to England."

"I must go now," I said faintly, for I felt worn out and miserable. "Do not send for me, or ever speak of it again, please."

Her eyes were full of tears as she accompanied me to the door.

"Try to forgive me, Nellie. I would give much for you to meet each other again. At all events, he knows the truth now. Don't think too hardly of me!"

As I crossed the field which lay between Mrs. Leedon's house and the high road my mind was full of confusion; grief and indignation predominated, and then a wild hope suddenly sprang up, but that brought me to myself. "This is madness," I thought, "I am but laying the foundation for future disappointment and sorrow."

Before I passed through the gate I folded my hands upon it, closed my eyes, and muttered, "Thy will be done;" then I dried my eyes, and walked quickly homewards. As I gazed round on the wide, flat fields, and straight road, I could not help likening the landscape to my life—sameness, monotony, and, when it should please God to take my one kind friend from me, great loneliness. And yet it need not be unhappy. Summer would come in its season to brighten the fields, and even now the hoar-frost was sparkling in the sun. And then I had the privilege of a straight path of duty which could not be mistaken.

The long road seemed to stretch on to the horizon, and straight before me the sun, round and crimson, had just touched the earth.

The road was very lonely, and as I could only see one solitary human being approaching me in the distance, I quickened my steps, for Mrs. Fanshawe was apt to be nervous when I came out late. As he approached I perceived it was a tall man, wrapped in a plaid. My eyes were too much dazzled by the sun for me to see his face, but I thought he was looking earnestly at me. He walked a few steps past me, and then returned, saying, "Will you kindly direct me to Mrs. Leedon's cottage at Earlswood?"

I turned round and looked at him, then I involuntarily held out my hands. They were warmly clasped, and in a moment I was pressed to this breast.

"Harry!"

"Nellie, darling, are you glad to see me again?"



THE PLAYMATES.

—and so the reprieve had come. But hardly had the final stroke sounded when a maid-servant burst into the room.

"Come quick, sir; there is a messenger!"

My aunt and uncle followed her quickly. I rose also, but staggered and sank back on the sofa.

"Sit still, Nellie," said my bridesmaid, Mary Lee; "I'll come and tell you all about it," and she ran after them, followed by the other guests.

They seemed a long time away, and at last I got up, and like one in a dream groped my way to the kitchen.

It was a large, gloomy place at any time, and that morning there was no light from without, the panes were so blocked up with snow; only the fire lighted up the group before me. The messenger—a tall, strong navy, but evidently much exhausted—sat by the hearth, the melting snow forming a pool around him. My aunt, seated at the table, looked as if she were fainting, while my uncle questioned the man in a subdued voice. Every face looked pale and horrified.

"What is the matter?" I asked, and my voice sounded to myself as if it were a long way off.

"There has been an accident with the dog-cart, Nellie," said Mary Lee, putting her arm round me.

"Is any one hurt?"

A pause. "Mr. Denton is hurt, my dear," said my uncle.

"Much?" I whispered, for my voice seemed to have gone from me.

I looked from one to the other as no answer

had never had children of their own, and his wife was a confirmed invalid. With this new home health returned both to body and mind. For some years I had lived in a world of my own, with but one object and one end in view. I thought that I tried to do my duty—to bear patiently the monotonous routine of my uncle's house—not to reply to my aunt's often harsh words. I taught in the schools, made flannels for the poor; and yet I lived really and truly for myself, with but little sympathy for those immediately around me.

There was a different atmosphere in Dr. Fanshawe's house. His noble, untrifling work amongst the sick and suffering filled me with wonder and admiration, and so did the patience and unselfishness of his gentle, ladylike wife, who had been confined to her couch with a spinal complaint for many years.

In a few months, however, came a great trial. The strong man fell sick, and died; I nursed him to the last, and I promised never to leave his poor wife. It was a sad blow to her at first, but borne with her usual quiet resignation. Now she is quite cheerful again. I know she thinks her time here will be but short, and the hope of a happy meeting with him she loves is her chief solace. I too am resigned and happy. The doctor's will has removed one source of anxiety as to the future, and I am now eight-and-twenty, and feel that I can settle down thankfully in that state of life in which it has pleased a good God to place me.

I can even write calmly of Harry, who I know is alive and getting on well. Of course he is nothing to me now, and I dare say has almost forgotten me in all these years. Well! such things