

Home Knowledge

MONTHLY REVIEW

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A SUMMARY OF CANADIAN AND FOREIGN LITERATURE.

VOL. 1

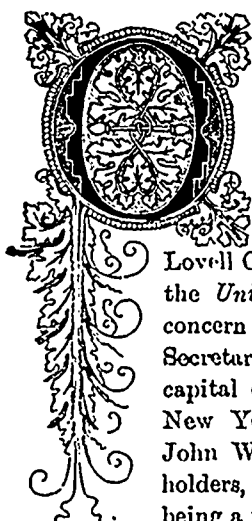
TORONTO, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1890

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THE HOME KNOWLEDGE REVIEW will be published every month and sent post paid for one year on receipt of \$1.00, and to members of the Home Knowledge Association who have paid their subscription. **BELDEN BROTHERS, Publishers, Toronto**



THE GIGANTIC BOOK TRUST KNOWN AS THE UNITED STATES BOOK COMPANY.

ON the 8th June last was consummated a movement that has been on foot for months, viz.: the capitalization of the Lovell Company, and its transformation into the *United States Book Company*. The new concern has filed articles of incorporation with Secretary of State of New Jersey, and have a capital of \$3,250,000, with headquarters in New York City. Mr. Erastus Wiman and John W. Lovell, two of the principal stockholders, are Canadians by birth, the former being a native of Peel Co., Ont., and the latter from Montreal. Associated with them are Horace K. Thurber, Samuel Thomas, Chester W. Chapin, Edward Lange, of New York City; M. A. Donahue, of Chicago; James D. Safford, of Springfield, Mass.; and James A. Taylor, Plainfield, N. J.

This Company have secured the plates and book stocks from most of the leading publishers in the U.S., including Hurst & Co., Worthington Company, W. L. Allison, the Aldine Book Company, Pollard & Moss, Frank F. Lovell & Co., National Publishing Company, G. W. Dillingham, Frank A. Munsey & Co., George Munro, Norman L. Munro, Dodd, Mead & Co., all of New York; Estes & Lauriat, De Wolfe, Fiske & Co., and the Aldine Book Publishing Company, of Boston; J. B. Lyon, of Albany; Donohue & Henneberry & Co., and Belford, Clarke & Co., of Chicago; J. B. Lippincott & Co., and Hubbard Bros., of Philadelphia; and will hereafter virtually control the trade and prices of standard works in the United States and Canada. Several of the above houses have sold this Company all the plates of their leading standard lines, and go out of the business. The whole of this business, including that of the Lovell's, has become the property of the

United States Book Company. Their publication business will be conducted in three large buildings on Worth St., New York. There is no question but that the publishing business has been run at a loss by many firms for years, and a very inferior class of book placed on the market. The effect of this combination has been to increase the prices of all the standard publications, and as this Company has no competition they are now selling books at higher prices, which yields them a living profit. In a circular issued by the United States Book Company they state that while their new editions will be much more expensive than at present, the quality will be so much superior as to warrant the increase of price and that book buyers will be pleased with the change.

We notified our members some months ago through the *HOME KNOWLEDGE REVIEW*, that this combination was being formed and that the prices of all kinds of standard publications would be increased. We purchased some thousands of dollars worth of books in June last, in anticipation of this increase, and were obliged to pay about 25 per cent. more for these books than we could have bought them for a few months previously.

In consequence of this advance in price we are compelled to fall back to our original prices, and would advise our customers to take advantage of these prices and stock their libraries with the cheap editions of the standard works while they can be obtained, as after the present editions are exhausted no more of the cheaper editions will be printed, but higher priced ones substituted. We shall of course continue to sell books at proportionately low prices, but it will not be within our power to supply the cheap editions as they will not be published. On another page of this *REVIEW* will be found lists of the standard publications, including 12 mos with our present prices, and while there is a slight advance we are still selling books much lower than they can be bought elsewhere.

We have gone into this matter rather fully in justice to ourselves as well as our members, and we trust the position will be appreciated by all.

PERSONAL GOSSIP ABOUT WRITERS

JULES VERNE.—The attempt has often been made to convert science into romance, to invest the laws of nature with the interest of a story. But signal success in this field of literature has been achieved only by Jules Verne, who combines imaginativeness with a sanity and clarity of vision that are essentially Gallic. *Nature*, one of the highest English authorities in matters of popular science, in reviewing one of his books, gave this explanation of Verne's power and the genuine value and instructiveness of his romances:

"There have been many books before his time in which the interest has centred in some vast convulsion of nature, or in nature generally being put out of joint, but in these there has been no attempt made to reach the *raisonnable*; indeed, in most cases, there has not been sufficient knowledge on the part of the author to connect his catastrophe either with any law or the breaking of one. But with Jules Verne for once, grant the possibility of his chief incident, and all the surroundings are *secundum artem*. The time at which the projectile was to be shot out of the Columbiad toward the moon was correctly fixed on true astronomical grounds, and the boy who follows its flight will have a more concrete idea of and interest in what gravity is and does than if he were to read half-a-dozen text-books in the ordinary way."

Verne was born at Nantes in 1828. Like many other famous authors, he began his career by studying law, but he found this profession uncongenial, and began to gratify his taste for writing. At that time the stage offered the best inducements to a young author, and he wrote plays and librettos, and for a time was secretary of the Théâtre Lyrique. In 1863 he published his "Five Weeks in a Balloon," and this decided his future. He had discovered his power to combine in the form of a story daring flights of the imagination with the operation of the laws of nature. The fortune that his books have brought him enabled him to make a home for himself and his wife in Amiens. His house, which is surrounded by spacious grounds, commands a fine view of the Cathedral and the town.

The apartments in which the author does his work are at the top of the three-story house, and are reached by a spiral staircase. A corner room, with windows looking in two directions, is his combined study and bedroom. A plain camp bedstead stands against the wall, and near one of the windows is a small table, on which pens, ink, paper, and a few books are neatly arranged. Adjoining this workroom is M. Verne's library, a large room, the walls of which are covered with books of reference, etc. On the walls of the study is a picture of the yacht in which he used to spend much of his time cruising in the Mediterranean and thinking over the novel plots for his stories. A statue of Molière, whom he greatly admires, stands near by, and on the wall one sees a placard announcing a performance of "Michael Strogoff" in Boston. But the one thing in the room that the privileged visitor would be most eager to see and the most interested in is a large map of the world, on which the routes taken by the heroes of his romances are indicated by means of lines and

flags. If you find him writing or get a peep at his manuscript, you will see that his penmanship is small and that his pages are covered with corrections and interlineations. He rewrites his stories many times, having made ten copies of the manuscript of his last book before he got it to his satisfaction. For thirty-seven years he has written an average of two stories every year, the titles of which would nearly fill a column of this Review. His most popular books are, "A Journey to the Centre of the Earth," "Around the World in Eighty Days," "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea," "The Mysterious Island," "Michael Strogoff," and "From the Earth to the Moon Direct in Ninety-seven Hours, Twenty Minutes; and a Journey Around It."

M. Verne has many American correspondents whom he has never seen—readers of his books, who write to him for all sorts of reasons. He has filed away over two thousand letters from America. He was in the United States for a couple of weeks many years ago, and hopes to visit this country again. But the French are not travellers, and as his health is not the best his wish may never be realized. He would be warmly welcomed. For in social life he is cheery, hearty, and genial, and would find and make many friends.—*The Book Buyer*.

J. H. SHORRHOUSE.—The author of that splendid book, "John Inglesant," a romance remarkable for its finish, refinement, and chivalric spirit is a writer whose literary work is always marked by purity, nobility, loftiness of purpose, and deep spiritual suggestiveness. "My interest in English literature began very early," he says, "as my mother, who was an excellent reader, spared me no time or pains in reading to us, as soon as we could understand them, any of the best writers who she thought would be likely to entertain and improve us. In this way we were familiar when very little boys with the best parts of Sterne, Addison, Johnson, Cowper, Mary Howitt, Mrs. Sherwood, etc. My father was also a man of cultivated literary tastes. I do not suppose that it is easy to overestimate the influence of early training and heredity in this matter. My father took me from school early, about sixteen, and I had ample leisure, and tutors with whom I read French and Italian, besides keeping up some of my Latin and Greek. My father had a considerable library, and I had ample means of purchasing books, and became very early interested in seventeenth-century English. I mention this because I am convinced that seventeenth-century English—that of Jeremy Taylor, Sir Thomas Browne, Milton, and many others—is the foundation of a nervous, subtle, fruitful style, resembling in graphic fulness of thought the German more than any other. It requires toning down, but taken in conjunction with the study of the eighteenth-century English, I do not know that more is wanted. In the way of general advice, I can only suggest the taking of infinite pains, and the avoiding, like the plague, any attempts at affectation, or the use of vulgar, colloquial, penny-a-liner, or what are supposed to be humorous, phrases. I would allow very great latitude in the use of words. Your instinct and taste must be your guide in this. But, above everything, strive to form every sentence so as to express your meaning in the simplest way, and in accordance with the easiest, plainest rules of English grammar. I am not afraid of a picturesque style, or what is called fine writing, provided you get both grammar and sense."—*From Bainton's "Art of Authorship."*

LITERARY NEWS AND NOTES

CHARLOTTE M. YONGE is said to be now engaged upon her one hundred and first book.

THE publication of Mr. Crawford's "A Cigarette-Maker's Romance" is deferred until autumn.

DR. NANSEN'S account of his recent expedition to Greenland is not to be published till October.

SIR WILLIAM FRASER is making a collection of anecdotes of Lord Beaconsfield, which will be published in a single volume.

A fully illustrated life of Paul Revere by Elbridge H. Goss is announced as forthcoming by the J. G. Cupples Company, of Boston.

A continuation of Professor Mahaffy's "Greek Life and Thought," treating of the period from Polybius to Plutarch, is expected to be published in the autumn.

"MUNGO PARK AND THE NIGER" is the first volume in a new English series of the World's Great Explorers and Explorations. Park was born in Scotland in 1771, his father having been a small farmer.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD'S publishers in England recently stated that his poem, "The Light of Asia," had been through sixty editions in that country; it is said to have had a considerably larger number in America.

ACCORDING to a correspondent of the Worcester *Spy*, Colonel T. W. Higginson takes a daily ride on a tricycle, running out to Belmont, Watertown, Arlington, or even Lexington, from his home in Cambridge.

THE *Critic* estimates from figures published in the New York *Evening Post*, that 162,987 volumes have been added to the college libraries of the United States the past year, making the total number on their shelves 2,882,398.

LITTLE, BROWN & Co. have in preparation a new edition of "Epictetus," in two volumes, edited and revised by Thomas Wentworth Higginson. It will be printed from good, clear type and neatly bound, making a handsome edition for the library. They have also under way "Biography of Antoine Rubinstein," by Aline Delano, in a twelve mo volume with a fine etched portrait.

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that Mr. Browning, in the prefatory note to the last edition of his wife's poems, gave the date of her birth as March 6th, 1806, and the place Coxhoe Hall, Durham, Mr. William Sharp, in his recently published life of Browning in the Great Writers Series, gives the same date as does John H. Ingram in his life of Mrs. Browning in the Eminent Women Series—viz., March 4th, 1809. Mr. Ingram also says Mrs. Browning was born in London. As Mr. Browning, however, gives a copy of the parish register in verification of his statement, his word on this point must be accepted as final.

LESLIE STEPHEN, the English essayist and critic, who was the guest for several weeks of Mr. Lowell in Cambridge, and who received from Harvard the degree of LL.D., is thus described by Alexander Young, the Boston correspondent of the *Critic*: "He is by no means the traditional Englishman

in appearance, being tall and rather thin; and his manner is that of a gentle and refined scholar. Without being a fluent speaker he is never at a loss for an appropriate expression, and he has a vein of pleasant humor which enlivens his speech and conversation." Mr. Stephen has made two previous visits to Mr. Lowell—in 1863 and in 1868.

COLONEL DAVIDSON, in his recently published reminiscences, gives this glimpse of Tennyson and Carlyle at dinner: "In the course of conversation they spoke about the difficulty of making speeches, when Tennyson said if allowed to sit he might manage it, but it was severe upon the nerves to stand up when every one else was sitting. The question was discussed as to whether they would accept titles if offered. Tennyson was disposed to decline such honors for himself, and said no title could excel the simple name of 'Thomas Carlyle.' After dinner long clay pipes were laid on the table, and a smoking parliament began. When we went upstairs, it was most interesting to hear those two men talk, and I noticed that when Carlyle was at a loss for a poetical quotation, Tennyson promptly supplied it."

THE mortuary chapel in which lies the body of Marie Bashkirtseff, and which is said to have cost \$20,000, is thus described by the *Pal. Mall Gazette*:

The monument is divided into two parts—the basement or vault, and a chapel above. The latter, which can only be seen by the ordinary visitor through a glass door, has been fitted up like a corner of the studio we have just quitted. Her rocking-chair, little table, half dozen favorite books—there is something grotesquely horrible and yet pathetic in the sight. On the walls, inscribed in letters of gold, are the titles of her paintings, "The Meeting," now in the Luxembourg Gallery, "Spring," etc. There, also, are the verses written by Coppée and several of his brother poets in remembrance of the young Russian girl who so loved France. A short flight of marble stairs leads to the vault where stand the sarcophagus. A life-size, startlingly life-like portrait of Marie done in oils stands opposite the flower covered bier, before which a light is kept always burning.

AN English periodical, *The Bookworm*, has an interesting paragraph about Mr. Gladstone, who has been a book collector for more than three-quarters of a century. "He kindly informs me," writes Mr. W. Roberts, "that he has two books which he acquired in 1815, one of which was a present from Miss H. More. At the present time he estimates his library to contain from 22,000 to 25,000 books, arranged by himself into divisions and sections in a very minute manner. The library is so exceedingly miscellaneous that Mr. Gladstone himself does not venture to state which section preponderates, although he thinks that 'theology may be one-fourth.' There are about twenty editions of Homer, and from thirty to forty translations, whole or part. He has never sympathized to any considerable extent with the craze for modern first editions, but 'I like a tall copy,' is Mr. Gladstone's reply, made with all the genuine spirit of the true connoisseur, to an inquiry on the subject. And so far as regards a preference for ancient authors, in old but good editions, to modernized reprints, the verdict is emphatically in favor of the former."

NEW BOOKS

ARMOREL OF LYONESSE. By Walter Besant.—After the death of her great-grandmother, Armorel Rosevean, who was born on one of the Chilly Islands, finds herself the heir to a large fortune, which consists of a considerable sum in gold, and of numberless pieces of old gold and silver plate, jeweled daggers, golden chains, watches, laces, silks, etc., the spoils of many generations of Roseveans who had been pilots, smugglers, wreckers, and farmers. She goes abroad to obtain a good education, and returns after five years to London where she makes the acquaintance of a distant relative, a Rosevean also, who is very proud of his Viking Ancestors of the Scilly Islands.—Harper, \$1.25, .50.

CHESS AT ODDS OF PAWN AND MOVE. Compiled by Baxter Wray.—A complete analysis of the opening, exemplified in two hundred and fifty games, from actual play, contested between some of the best exponents of the last fifty years, arranged in tabular form, with notes, etc., facilitating reference, and showing the results of the many variations in this opening. Odds giving at chess has never received the attention it deserves from analysts of the game, yet it is very popular, and, in fact, often absolutely necessary for players to introduce odds into games, with hitherto little or nothing to guide them as to best means of commencing play.—W. W. Morgan, London; Brentano's, \$1.40.

THE AZTEC TREASURE-HOUSE. A Romance of Contemporaneous Antiquity. By Thomas A. Janvier. Illustrated.—A story of adventure and peril, told by Professor Thomas Palgrave, Ph. D., who, in company with Rayburn and Young and Fray Antonio and the boy Pablo, went in search after and found the great treasure that was hidden in a curiously secret place among the Mexican mountains, more than a thousand years ago, by Chaltzantzin, the third of the Aztec kings. The Professor started with the purpose of searching for the remnants of primitive civilization.—Harper, \$1.50.

LUCIE'S MISTAKE. By W. Heimbürg. Translated by Mrs. J. W. Davis. Illustrated.—Lucy Adler, a penniless young girl, who is on her way to the home of her future parents-in-law, meets on the road an old friend, who tells her that she

has been married to Count von Löwen, and is now a widow. Lucy makes the acquaintance of her lover's mother, who is a thin, parsimonious, sharp, and generally rustically disagreeable old woman. Countess von Löwen is engaged to be married again, but her father's disgrace—he has cheated at cards—causes the match to be broken off. She tries to commit suicide but is discovered by Lucy.—Worthington Co., \$1.25.

BELLA'S BLUE BOOK; THE STORY OF AN UGLY WOMAN. By Marie Calm. Translated from the German by Mrs. J. W. Davis.—The ugly woman's diary begins with the days of her early youth, but its greater part is taken up by the story of her married life. A rejected suitor, a vindictive, dangerous scoundrel, poisons her life by telling her, under the seal of secrecy, that the husband whom she adores only married her to win a wager. The psychological side of the situation is cleverly handled, and the book is notably free from that morbid introspective writing which in these days passes for genius.—Worthington Co., N. Y., \$1.25, .75.

The Best Elizabethan Plays is the title of a book containing specimens of what the editor, William R. Thayer, considers the best work of the five dramatists who stand highest among the contemporaries of Shakespeare. The plays selected are "The Jew of Malta," by Marlowe; "The Alchemist," by Jonson; "Philaster," by Beaumont and Fletcher; "The Two Noble Kinsmen," by Fletcher and Shakespeare, and "The Duchess of Malfi," by Webster. Lines that are not in accord with the taste of the present day have been struck out, and the plays as they stand will serve well to acquaint the student or the general reader with the capacity of Shakespeare's contemporaries.—Ginn, 12mo, \$1.40.

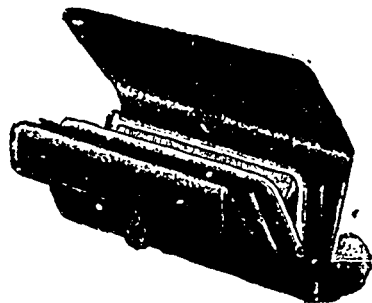
The wonderful advances that have been made in the past decade by German and French investigators of the science of hypnotism are brought to the attention of the general public by a volume in the Contemporary Science Series—*Hypnotism*, by Albert Moll, of Berlin. Hypnosis, it may be superfluous to explain, is a state in which the subject is deprived of his will and of some or all of his sense perceptions. Hypnotism is the name of the whole science which deals

with the phenomena of the hypnotic state. At the outset Mr. Moll gives an interesting history of animal magnetism out of which hypnotism has developed, and then he passes into a popular examination of all phases of the subject, including the cognate states of sleep, dreams, somnambulism, etc. Both the physiological and the mental causes and effects of hypnosis are discussed in detail, and the medical and legal aspects of hypnotism are elaborately treated. The value and interest of the work for the general or professional reader lie in the vast number of facts that are cited from all sources.

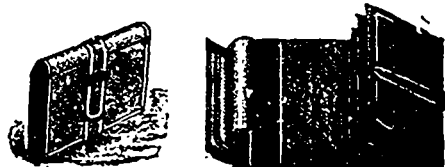
No one who has read Thomas Stevens's "Around the World on a Bicycle" need be told that he is a brave, hardy traveller whom no obstacles or dangers can daunt. This quality was useful in the venture which he has described in *Scouting for Stanley in East Africa*. Stevens went to East Africa as the representative of the *New York World* for the purpose of meeting Stanley and "interviewing" him on his arrival. This book is the story of his adventures during that quest. He headed a party which penetrated from the coast into the land of the savage Masai warriors, in the expectation that Stanley would take this route to the ocean. But the explorer took a different road; and Stevens, after spending five or six months among the native tribes and in hunting, returned to the coast to go through a diplomatic warfare with the German authorities, who did what they could to prevent him from going to meet Stanley. Stevens tells, with the gusto of a genuine newspaper man, how he outwitted the Germans and a rival newspaper correspondent, and was able to give Stanley and Emin Pasha their first news of the outside world. His writing is fresh, bright and lively, and his book, while it adds nothing of any particular value to what is already known, is entertaining reading. It has numerous illustrations from photographs made by the author. [Cassell, 8vo, \$2.00.]

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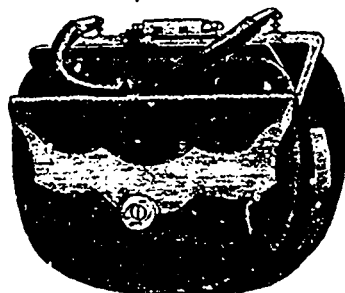
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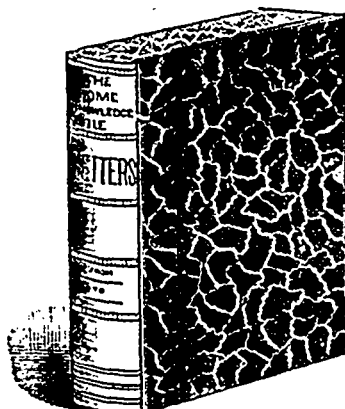


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MR. MEESON'S WILL

shoulders, inasmuch as the judgment was not delivered till a week after the great case of Meeson vs. Addison and Another had been settled.

About a week after Augusta's adventure in Regent street a motion was made in the court of probate on behalf of the defendants, Messrs. Addison and Roscoe, who were the executors and principal beneficiaries under the former will of November, 1885, demanding that the court should order the plaintiff to file a further and better affidavit of scripts, with the original will set up by him attached, the object, of course, being to compel an inspection of the document. This motion, which first brought the whole case under the notice of the public, was strenuously resisted by Mr. James Short, and resulted in the matter being referred to the learned registrar for his report. On the next motion day this report was presented, and, on its appearing from it that the photography had taken place in his presence and accurately represented the tattoo marks on the lady's shoulders, the court declined to harass the "will" by ordering her to submit to any further inspection before the trial. It was on this occasion that it transpired that the will was engaged to be married to the plaintiff, a fact at which the court metaphorically opened its eyes. After this the defendants obtained leave to amend their answer to the plaintiff's statement of claim. At first they had only pleaded that the testator had not duly executed the alleged will in accordance with the provisions of 1 Vic., cap. 26, sec. 2, and that he did not know and approve the contents thereof. But now they added a plea to the effect that the said alleged will was obtained by the undue influence of Augusta Smithers, or, as one of the learned counsel for the defendants put it much more clearly at the trial, "that the will had herself procured the will, by an undue projection of her own will upon the unwilling mind of the testator."

And so the time went on. As often as he could, Eustace got away from London, and went down to the little riverside hotel, and was as happy as man can be who has a tremendous lawsuit hanging over him.

Never a day passed but some fresh worry arose. James and John, the legal twins, fought like heroes, and held their own, although their experience was so small—as men of talent almost invariably do when they are put to it. But it was difficult for Eustace to keep them supplied even with sufficient money for out of pocket expenses; and, of course, as was natural in a case in which such enormous sums were at stake, and in which the defendants were already men of vast wealth, they found the fowler of the entire talent and weight of the bar arrayed against them. Naturally Eustace felt, and so did Mr. James Short—who, notwithstanding his pomposity and the technicality of his talk, was both a clever and a sensible man—that more counsel, men of weight and experience, ought to be briefed; but there were absolutely no funds for this purpose, nor was anybody likely to advance any upon the security of a will tattooed upon a young lady's back. This was awkward, because success in law proceedings so very often leans toward the weightiest purse, and judges, however impartial, being but men after all, are more apt to listen to an argument which is urged upon their attention by an attorney general than on one advanced by an unknown junior.

However, there the fact was, and they had to make the best of it; and a point in their favor was that the case, although

or a most remarkable nature, was comparatively simple, and did not involve any great mass of documentary evidence.

CHAPTER XIX.

MEESON VS. ADDISON AND ANOTHER.

The most wearisome times go by at last if only one lives to see the end of them, and so it came to pass that at length on one fine morning about a quarter to 10 of the law courts' clock, that projects its ghastly hideousness upon unoffending Fleet street, Augusta, accompanied by Eustace, Lady Holmhurst and Mrs. Thomas, the wife of Capt. Thomas, who had come up from visiting her relatives in the eastern counties in order to give evidence, found herself standing in the big entrance to the new law courts, feeling as though she would give five years of her life to be anywhere else.

"This way, my dear," said Eustace. "Mr. John Short said that he would meet us by the statue in the hall." Accordingly they passed into the archway by the oak stand where the cause lists are displayed. Augusta glanced at them as she went, and the first thing that her eyes fell on was: "Probate and Divorce division, court 1, at 10:30, Meeson vs. Addison and another," and the sight made her feel sick. In another moment they had passed a policeman of gigantic size, "monstrum horrendum, infome ingens," who watches and wards the folding doors through which so much human learning, wretchedness and worry pass day by day, and were standing by the long but narrow and ill proportioned hall which appears to have been the best thing that the architectural talent of the Nineteenth century was capable of producing.

To the right of the door on entering is a statue of the architect of a pile of which England has certainly no cause to feel proud, and here, a black bag full of papers in his hand, stood Mr. John Short, wearing that air of excitement upon his countenance which is so commonly to be seen in the law courts.

"Here you are," he said; "I was beginning to be afraid that you would be late. We are first on the list, you know; the judge fixed it specially to suit the convenience of the attorney general. He's on the other side, you know," he added, with a sigh. "I'm sure I don't know how poor James will get on. There are more than twenty counsel against him, for all the legatees under the former will are represented. At any rate, he is well up in his facts, and there does not seem to me to be very much law in the case."

Meanwhile they had been proceeding up the long hall till they came to a poky little staircase which had just been dug out in the wall, the necessity for a staircase at that end of the hall, whereby the court floor could be reached, having, to all appearance, originally escaped the attention of the architect. On getting to the top of the staircase they turned to the left and then to the left again. If they had had any doubt as to which road they should take it would have been speedily decided by the long string of wigs which were streaming away in the direction of divorce court No. 1. Thicker and thicker grew the wigs; it was obvious that the cause celebre of Meeson vs. Addison and Another would not want for hearers. Indeed, Augusta and her friends soon realized the intensity of the public interest in a way that was as impressive as it was disagreeable, for just past the admiralty court the passage was entirely blocked by an enormous mass of barristers; there might have been five hundred or more of them. There they were, choked up to-

gether in their white wigged ranks, waiting for the door of the court to be opened. At present it was guarded by six or eight attendants, who, with the help of a wooden barrier, attempted to keep the surging multitude at bay—while those behind cried, "Forward!" and those in front cried, "Back!"

"How on earth are we going to get through?" asked Augusta, and at that moment Mr. John Short caught hold of an attendant who was struggling about in the skirts of the crowd like a fly in a cup of tea, and asked him the same question, explaining that their presence was necessary to the show.

"I'm bothered if I know, sir; you can't come this way. I suppose I must let you through by the underground passage from the other court. Why," he went on, as he led the way to the admiralty court, "hang me, if I don't believe that we shall all be crushed to death by them there barristers. It would take a regiment of cavalry to keep them back. And they are a 'ungry lot, they are, and they ain't no work to do, and that's why they comes kicking and tearing and worrying just to see a bit of painting on a young lady's shoulders."

By this time they had passed through the admiralty court, which was not sitting, and then conducted down a sort of well that terminated in the space occupied by the judge's clerks and other officers of the court. In another minute they found themselves emerging in a similar space in the other court.

Before taking the seat that was pointed out to her and the other witnesses in the well of the court, immediately below those reserved for queen's counsel, Augusta glanced round. The body of the court was as yet quite empty, for the seething mob outside had not yet burst in, though their repeated shouts of "Open the door!" could be plainly heard. The jury box was full, not with a jury, for the case was to be tried by the court itself, but of various distinguished individuals, including several ladies, who had obtained orders. The little gallery above was also crowded with smart looking people. As for the seats devoted to counsel in the cause, they were crammed to overflowing with the representatives of the various defendants—so crammed, indeed, that the wretched James Short, sole counsel for the plaintiff, had to establish himself and his papers in the center of the third bench sometimes used by solicitors.

"Heavens!" said Eustace to Augusta, counting the heads; "there are twenty-three counsel against us. What will that unfortunate James do against so many?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Augusta, with a sigh. "It doesn't seem quite fair, does it? But then, you see, there was no money."

Just then John Short came up. He had been to speak to his brother, Augusta being a novelist, and therefore a professional student of human physiognomy, was engaged in studying the legal types before her, which she found resolved themselves into two classes—the sharp, keen faced class and the solid, heavy jawed class.

"Who on earth are they all?" she asked. "Oh," he said, "that's the attorney general. He appears with Fiddlestick, Q. C., Pearl and Bear for the defendant Addison. Next to him is the solicitor general, who, with Playford, Q. C., Middlestone, Blowhard and Ross, is for the other defendant, Roscoe. Next to him is Turphy, Q. C., with the spectacles on; he is supposed to have a great effect on a jury. I don't know the name of his junior, but he looks as though he were

going to eat one—doesn't he? He is for one of the legatees. That man behind is Stickon; he is for one of the legatees also. I suppose that he finds probate and divorce an interesting subject, because he is always writing books about them. Next to him is Howles, who, my brother says, is the best comic actor in the court. The short gentleman in the middle is Telly; he reports for The Times. You see, as this is an important case, he has got somebody to help him take it—that long man with a big wig. He, by the way, writes novels, like you do, only not half such good ones. The next—but at this moment Mr. John Short was interrupted by the approach of a rather good looking man who wore an eyeglass continually fixed in his right eye. He was Mr. News, of the great firm of News & News, who were conducting the case on behalf of the defendants.

"Mr. Short, I believe?" said Mr. News, contemplating his opponent's youthful form with pity, not unmingled with compassion.

"Yes."

"Um, Mr. Short, I have been consulting with my clients, and—um, the attorney and solicitor general and Mr. Fiddlestick, and we are quite willing to admit that there are circumstances of doubt in this case which would justify us in making an offer of settlement."

"Before I can enter into that, Mr. News," said John, with great dignity, "I must request the presence of my counsel."

"Oh, certainly," said Mr. News, and accordingly James was summoned from his elevated perch, where he was once more going through his notes and the heads of his opening speech, although he already knew his brief—which, to do it justice, had been prepared with extraordinary care and elaboration—almost by heart, and next moment, for the first time in his life, found himself in consultation with an attorney and a solicitor general.

"Look here, Short," said the first of these great men, addressing James as though he had known him intimately for years, though, as a matter of fact, he had only that moment ascertained his name from Mr. Fiddlestick, who was himself obliged to refer to Bean before he could be sure of it—"look here, Short; don't you think that we can settle this business? You've got a strongish case; but there are some ugly things against you, as no doubt you know."

"I don't quite admit that," said James.

"Of course—of course," said Mr. Attorney; "but still in my judgment, if you will not be offended at my expressing it, you are not quite on firm ground. Supposing, for instance, your young lady is not allowed to give evidence?"

"I think," said a stout gentleman behind, who wore upon his countenance the very sweetest and most infantile smile that Eustace had ever seen, breaking in rather hastily, as though he was afraid that his learned leader was showing too much of his hand, "I think that the case is one that, looked at from either point of view, will bear settlement better than fighting—eh, Fiddlestick? But then, I'm a man of peace," and again he smiled most seductively at James.

"What are your terms?" asked James.

The eminent counsel on the front bench turned round and stuck their wigs together like a lot of white-headed crows over a bone, and the slightly less eminent but still highly distinguished juniors on the second bench craned forward to listen.

"They are going to settle it," Eustace heard the barrister who was reporting for The Times say to his long assistant.

"They always do settle every case of

public interest," granted the long man in answer; "we sha'n't see Miss Smithers' shoulders now. Well, I shall get an introduction to her, and ask her to show them to me. I take a great interest in tattooing."

Meanwhile, Fiddlesticks, Q. C., had been writing something on a strip of paper and handed to his leader, the attorney general (who, Mr. James Short saw with respectful admiration, had five hundred guineas marked upon his brief). He nodded carelessly, and passed it on to his junior, who gave it in turn to the solicitor general and Playford, Q. C. When it had gone the rounds, Mr. News took it and showed it to his two privileged clients, Messrs. Addison and Roscoe. Addison was a choleric-looking, fat-faced man. Roscoe was sallow, and had a thin, straggly, black beard. When they looked at it, Addison groaned fiercely as a wounded bull and Roscoe sighed, and that sigh and groan told Augusta—who, woman like, had all her wits about her, and was watching every act of the drama—more than it was meant to do. It told her that these gentlemen were doing something that they did not like, and doing it because they evidently believed that they had no other course open to them. Then Mr. News gave the paper to Mr. John Short, who glanced at it and handed it on to his brother, and Eustace read it over his shoulder. It was very short, and ran thus:

"Terms offered: Half the property, and defendants pay all costs."

"Well, Short," said Eustace, "what do you say?—shall we take it?"

James removed his wig and thoughtfully rubbed his bald head. "It is a very difficult position to be put in," he said. "Of course, a million is a large sum of money; but there are two at stake. My own view is that we had better fight the case out; though, of course, this is a certainty, and the result of the case is not."

"I am inclined to settle," said Eustace; "not because of the case, for I believe in it, but because of Augusta—of Miss Smithers; you see she will have to show that tattooing again, and that sort of thing is very unpleasant for a lady."

"Oh, as to that," said James, loftily, "at present she must remember that she is not a lady, but a legal document. However, let us ask her."

"Now, Augusta, what shall we do?" said Eustace, when he had explained the offer; "you see, if we take the offer you will be spared a very disagreeable time. You must make up your mind quick, for the judge will be here in a minute."

"Oh, never mind me," said Augusta, quickly; "I am used to disagreeables. No, I shall fight. I tell you they are afraid of you. I can see it in the face of that horrid Mr. Addison. Just now he positively glared at me and ground his teeth, and he would not do that if he thought that he was going to win. No, dear; I shall fight it out now."

"Very well," said Eustace, and he took a pencil and wrote, "Declined with thanks" at the foot of the offer.

Just at that moment there came a dull roar from the passage beyond. The doors of the court were being opened. Another second and in rushed and struggled a hideous sea of barristers. Heavens, how they fought and kicked! A maddened herd of buffaloes could not have behaved more desperately. On rushed the white wave of wigs, bearing the strong men who held the door before them like wreckage on a breaker. On they came, and in forty seconds the court was crowded to its utmost capacity and still there were hundreds of white-wigged men behind.

It was a fearful scene.

"Good gracious!" thought Augusta to herself, "how on earth do they all get a living?" a question that many of them would have found it hard enough to answer.

Then suddenly an old gentleman near her, whom she discovered to be the usher, jumped up and called sile' co in commanding accents, without producing much effect, however, on the pulpitating mass of humanity in front. Then in came the officers of the court, and a moment afterward everybody rose as the judge entered, and looking, as Augusta thought, very cross when he saw the crowded condition of the court, bowed to the bar and took his seat.

CHAPTER XX.

JAMES BREAKS DOWN.

The registrar, not Augusta's dear Doctor Probate, but another registrar, rose and called on the case of Meeson vs. Addison and Another, and in an instant the wretched James Short was on his legs to open the case.

"What is that gentleman's name?" Augusta heard the judge ask of the clerk, after making two or three frantic efforts to attract his attention—a proceeding that the position of his desk rendered very difficult.

"Short, my lord."

"Do you appear alone for the plaintiff, Mr. Short?" asked the judge, with emphasis.

"Yes, my lord; I do," answered James, and as he said it every pair of eyes in that crowded assembly fixed themselves upon him, and a sort of audible smile seemed to run round the court. The thing not unnaturally struck the professional mind as ludicrous and without precedent.

"And who appears for the defendant?"

"I understand, my lord," said the learned attorney general, "that all my learned friends on these two benches appear, together with myself, for one or other of the defendants, or are watching the case in the interest of legatees."

Here a decided titter interrupted him.

"I may add that the interests involved in this case are very large indeed, which accounts for the number of counsel connected in one way or other with the defense."

"Quite so, Mr. Attorney," said the judge; "but, really, the forces seem a little out of proportion. Of course the matter is not one in which the court can interfere."

"If your lordship will allow me," said James, "the only reason that the plaintiff is so poorly represented is that the funds to brief other counsel were, I understand, not forthcoming. I am, however, well versed in the case, and, with your lordship's permission, will do my best with it."

"Very well, Mr. Short," said the learned judge, looking at him almost with pity; "state your case."

James, in the midst of a silence that could be felt, unfolded his pleadings, and, as he did so for the first time, a sickening sense of nervousness took hold of him and made him tremble, and, of a sudden, his mind became dark. Most of us have undergone this sensation at one time or another, with less cause than had poor James. There he was, put up almost for the first time in his life, to conduct, single handed, a most important case, upon which, it was scarcely too much to say, the interest of the entire country was concentrated. Nor was this all. Opposed to him were about twenty counsel, all of them men of experience, and includ-

ing in their ranks some of the most famous leaders in England, and, what was more the court was densely crowded with scores of men of his own profession, every one of whom was, as he felt, regarding him with curiosity not unmingled with pity. Then, there was the tremendous responsibility which literally seemed to crush him, though he had never quite realized it before.

"May it please your lordship," he began; and then, as I have said, his mind became a ghastly blank, in which dim and formless ideas flitted vaguely to and fro.

There was a pause—a painful pause.

"Read your pleadings aloud," whispered a barrister who was sitting next him, and realized his plight.

This was an idea. One can read pleadings when one cannot collect one's ideas to speak. It is not usual to do so. The counsel in a cause states the substance of the pleadings, leaving the court to refer to them if he thinks necessary. But still there was nothing absolutely wrong about it; so he snatched at the papers and promptly began:

"1. The plaintiff is the sole and universal legatee under the true last will of Jonathan Meeson, deceased, late of Pompadour Hall, in the county of Warwick, who died on the 23d of December, 1885, the said will being undated, but duly executed on, or subsequent to, the 22d day of December, 1885."

Here the learned judge lifted his eyebrows in remonstrance, and cleared his throat preparatory to interfering; but apparently thought better of it, for he took up a blue pencil and made a note of the date of the will.

"11." went on James. "On the 21st day of May, 1886, probate of an alleged will of the said Jonathan Meeson was granted to the defendants, the said will bearing date the 10th day of November, 1885. The plaintiff claims:

"1. That the court shall revoke probate of the said alleged will of the said Jonathan Meeson, bearing date the 10th day of November, 1885, granted to the defendants on the 21st day of May, 1886.

"2. A grant of letters of administration to the plaintiff with the will executed on or subsequent to the 22d day of December 1885, annexed. (Signed)

"JAMES SHORT."

"May it please your lordship," James began, again feeling dimly that he had read enough pleadings, "the defendants have filed an answer pleading that the will of the 22d of December was not duly executed in accordance with the statute, and that the testator did not know and approve its contents, and an amended answer pleading that the said alleged will, if executed, was obtained by the undue influence of Augusta Smithers"—and once more his nervousness overcame him, and he pulled up with a jerk.

Then came another pause even more dreadful than the first.

The judge took another note, as slowly as he could, and cleared his throat; but poor James could not go on. He could only wish that he might then and there expire, rather than face the hideous humiliation of such a failure. But he would have failed, for his very brain was whirling like that of a drunken man, had it not been for an occurrence that caused him forever after to bless the name of Fiddlestick, Q. C., as the name of an eminent counsel is not often blessed in this ungrateful world. For Fiddlestick, Q. C., who, it will be remembered, was one of the leaders for the defendants, had been watching his unfortunate antagonist, till, realizing how sorry was his plight, a sense of pity filled his learned breast. Perhaps

so may have remembered some occasion, in the dim and distant corner of the past, when he had suffered from a similar excess of frantic terror, or perhaps he may have been sorry to think that a young man should lose such an unrivaled opportunity of making a name. Anyhow, he did a noble act. As it happened, he was sitting at the right hand corner of the queen's counsel seats, and piled up on the desk before him was a tremendous mass of law reports which his clerk had arranged there, containing cases to which it might become necessary to refer. Now, in the presence of these law reports, Mr. Fiddlestick, in the goodness of his heart, saw an opportunity of creating a diversion, and he created it with a vengeance. For, throwing his weight suddenly forward as though by accident, or in a movement of impatience, he brought his bent arm against the pile with such force that he sent every book, and there must have been more than twenty of them, over the edge of the desk, right on the head and shoulders of his choleric client, Mr. Addison, who was sitting immediately beneath, on the solicitor's bench.

Down went the books with a crash and a bang, and carried away by their weight, down went Mr. Addison on to his nose among them—a contingency that Fiddlestick, Q. C., by the way, had not foreseen, for he had overlooked the fact of his client's vicinity.

The judge made an awful face, and then, realizing the ludicrous nature of the scene, his features relaxed into a smile. He bounded up off the floor, books slipping off his back in every direction, and, holding his nose (which was injured) with one hand, came skipping right at his learned adviser.

"You did it on purpose!" he almost shouted, quite forgetting where he was; "just let me get at him; I'll have his wig off!" And then, without waiting for any more, the entire audience burst out into a roar of laughter, which, however unseemly, was perfectly reasonable, during which Fiddlestick could be seen apologizing in dumb show, with a bland smile upon his countenance, while Mr. News and Mr. Roscoe between them dragged the outraged Addison to his seat and proffered him handkerchiefs to wipe his bleeding nose.

James saw the whole thing, and, forgetting his position, laughed too, and, for some mysterious reason, with the laugh his nervousness passed away.

The usher shouted "Silence!" with tremendous energy, and before the sound had died away James was addressing the court in a clear and vigorous voice, conscious that he was a thorough master of his case and the words to state it in would not fail him. Fiddlestick, Q. C., had saved him!

"May it please your lordship," he began, "the details of this case are of as remarkable an order as any that to my knowledge have been brought before the court. The plaintiff, Eustace Meeson, is the sole next of kin of Jonathan Meeson, Esq., the late head of the well known Birmingham publishing firm of Meeson, Addison & Roscoe. Under a will, bearing date the 8th day of May, 1880, the plaintiff was left sole heir to the great wealth of his uncle—that is, with the exception of some legacies. Under a second will, now relied on by the defendants, and dated the 10th November, 1885, the plaintiff was entirely disinherited, and the present defendants, together with some six or eight legatees, were constituted the sole beneficiaries. On or about the 22d December, 1885, however, the testator executed a third testamentary document,

under which the plaintiff takes the entire property, and this is the document now propounded. This testamentary document, or, rather, will—for I submit that it is in every sense a properly executed will—is tattooed upon the shoulders"—[sensation in court]—"is tattooed upon the shoulders of a young lady, Miss Augusta Smithers, who will presently be called before your lordship; and to prevent any misunderstanding I may as well at once state that since this event this lady has become engaged to be married to the plaintiff. [Renewed sensation.]

"Such, my lord, are the main outlines of the case that I have to present for the consideration of the court, which I think your lordship will understand is of so remarkable and unprecedented a nature that I must crave your lordship's indulgence if I proceed to open it at some length, beginning the history at its commencement."

By this time James Short had completely recovered his nerve, and was, indeed, almost oblivious of the fact that there was anybody present in the court, except the learned judge himself. Going back to the beginning, he detailed the early history of the relationship between Eustace Meeson and his uncle, the publisher, with which this record has nothing to do. Thence he passed to the history of Augusta's relation with the firm of Meeson & Co., which, as nearly everybody in the court, not excepting the judge, had read "Jemima's Vow," was very interesting to its auditors. Then he went on to the scene between Augusta and the publisher, and detailed how Eustace had interfered, which interference had led to a violent quarrel, resulting in the young man's disinheri- tance. Passing on, he detailed how the publisher and the publisher had taken passage in the same vessel, and the tragic occurrences which followed down to Augusta's final rescue and arrival in England, and finally ended his spirited opening by appealing to the court not to allow its mind to be influenced by the fact that since these events the two chief actors had become engaged to be married, which struck him, he said, as a very fitting climax to so romantic a story.

At last he ceased, and amid a little buzz of applause, for the speech had really been a very fine one, sat down. As he did so he glanced at the clock. He had been on his legs for nearly two hours, and yet it seemed to him but a very little while. In another moment he was up again, and had called his first witness—Eustace Meeson.

Eustace's evidence was of a rather formal order, and was necessarily limited to an account of the relations between his uncle and himself, and between himself and Augusta. Such as it was, however, he gave it very well, and with a complete openness that appeared to produce a favorable impression on the court.

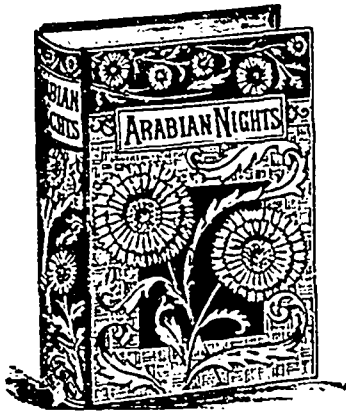
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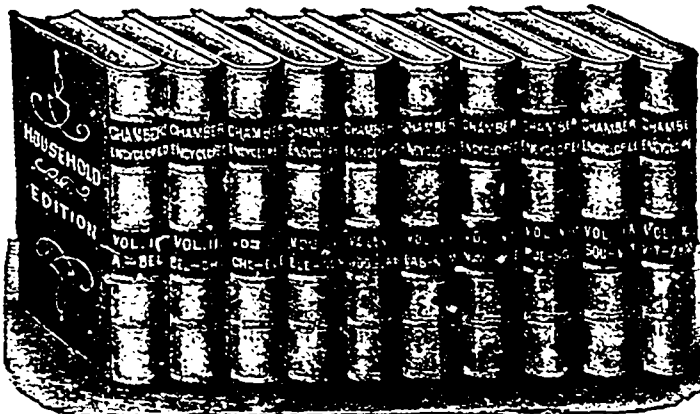
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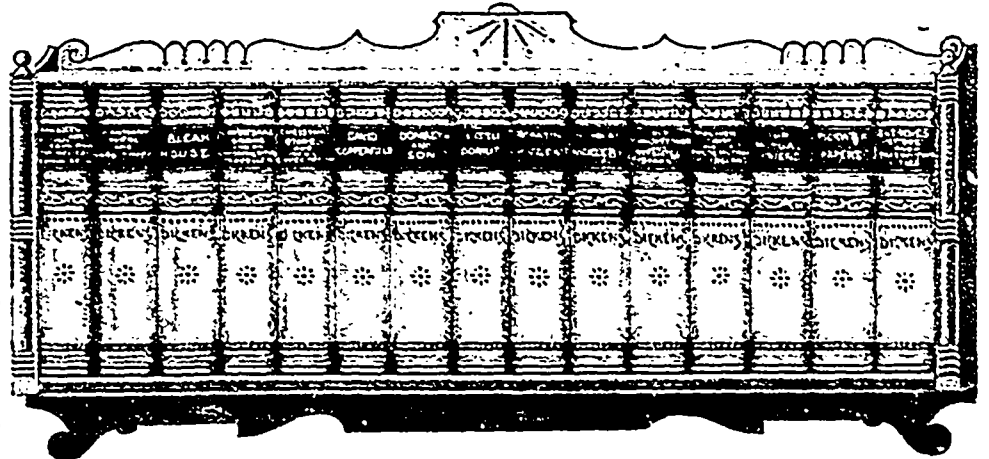
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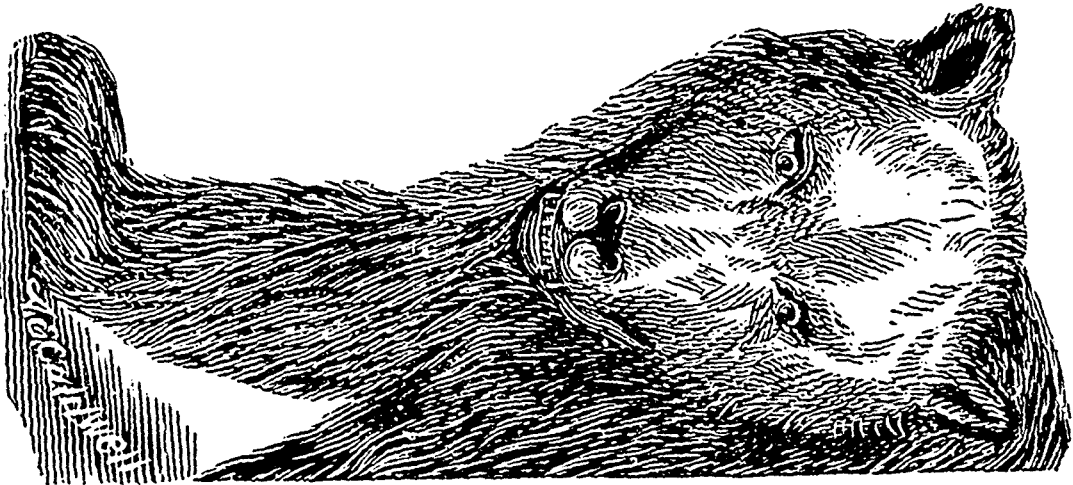
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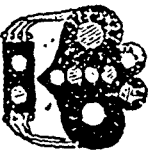
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