The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Strand Magazine, Vol. 27, January 1904, No. 157, by Various

Title: The Strand Magazine, Vol. 27, January 1904, No. 157

Author: Various

Release date: November 5, 2013 [EBook #44113]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Jane Robins, Jonathan Ingram and the Online
Distributed Proofreading Team at http://www.pgdp.net

Larger Image

"HE SPUN ROUND WITH A SCREAM AND FELL UPON HIS BACK."

(*See page 11.*)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxvii. JANUARY, 1904. No. 157.

THE RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

By A. CONAN DOYLE.

IV.—The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist.

FROM the years 1894 to 1901 inclusive Mr. Sherlock Holmes was a very busy man. It is safe to say that there was no public case of any difficulty in which he was not consulted during those eight years, and there were hundreds of private cases, some of them of the most intricate and extraordinary character, in which he played a prominent part. Many startling successes and a few unavoidable failures were the outcome of this long period of continuous work. As I have preserved very full notes of all these cases, and was myself personally engaged in many of them, it may be imagined that it is no easy task to know which I should select to lay before the public. I shall, however, preserve my former rule, and give the preference to those cases which derive their interest not so much from the brutality of the crime as from the ingenuity and dramatic quality of the solution. For this reason I will now lay before the reader the facts connected with Miss Violet Smith, the solitary cyclist of Charlington, and the curious sequel of our investigation, which culminated in unexpected tragedy. It is true that the circumstances did not admit of any striking illustration of those powers for which my friend was famous, but there were some points about the case which made it stand out in those long records of crime from which I gather the material for these little narratives.

On referring to my note-book for the year 1895 I find that it was upon Saturday, the 23rd of April, that we first heard of Miss Violet Smith. Her visit was, I remember, extremely unwelcome to Holmes, for he was immersed at the moment in a very abstruse and complicated problem concerning the peculiar persecution to which John Vincent Harden, the well-known tobacco millionaire, had been subjected. My friend, who loved above all things precision and concentration of thought, resented anything which distracted his attention from the matter in hand. And yet without a harshness which was foreign to his nature it was impossible to refuse to

listen to the story of the young and beautiful woman, tall, graceful, and queenly, who presented herself at Baker Street late in the evening and implored his assistance and advice. It was vain to urge that his time was already fully occupied, for the young lady had come with the determination to tell her story, and it was evident that nothing short of force could get her out of the room until she had done so. With a resigned air and a somewhat weary smile, Holmes begged the beautiful intruder to take a seat and to inform us what it was that was troubling her.

"At least it cannot be your health," said he, as his keen eyes darted over her; "so ardent a bicyclist must be full of energy."

She glanced down in surprise at her own feet, and I observed the slight roughening of the side of the sole caused by the friction of the edge of the pedal.

"Yes, I bicycle a good deal, Mr. Holmes, and that has something to do with my visit to you to-day."

My friend took the lady's ungloved hand and examined it with as close an attention and as little sentiment as a scientist would show to a specimen.

"You will excuse me, I am sure. It is my business," said he, as he dropped it. "I nearly fell into the error of supposing that you were typewriting. Of course, it is obvious that it is music. You observe [4]
the spatulate finger-end, Watson, which is common to both professions? There is a spirituality about the face, however"—he gently turned it towards the light—"which the typewriter does not generate. This lady is a musician."

Larger Image

"MY FRIEND TOOK THE LADY'S UNGLOVED HAND AND EXAMINED IT."

"Yes, Mr. Holmes, I teach music."

"In the country, I presume, from your complexion."

"Yes, sir; near Farnham, on the borders of Surrey."

"A beautiful neighbourhood and full of the most interesting associations. You remember, Watson, that it was near there that we took Archie Stamford, the forger. Now, Miss Violet, what has happened to you near Farnham, on the borders of Surrey?"

The young lady, with great clearness and composure, made the following curious statement:—

"My father is dead, Mr. Holmes. He was James Smith, who conducted the orchestra at the old Imperial Theatre. My mother and I were left without a relation in the world except one uncle, Ralph Smith, who went to Africa twenty-five years ago, and we have never had a word from him since. When father died we were left very poor, but one day we were told that there was an advertisement in the *Times* inquiring for our whereabouts. You can imagine how excited we were, for we thought that someone had left us a fortune. We went at once to the lawyer whose name was given in the paper. There we met two gentlemen, Mr. Carruthers and Mr. Woodley, who were home on a visit from South Africa. They said that my uncle was a friend of theirs, that he died some months before in great poverty in Johannesburg, and that he had asked them with his last breath to hunt up his relations and see that they were in no want. It seemed strange to us that Uncle Ralph, who took no notice of us when he was alive, should be so careful to look after us when he was dead; but Mr. Carruthers explained that the reason was that my uncle had just heard of the death of his brother, and so felt responsible for our fate."

"Excuse me," said Holmes; "when was this interview?"

"Last December, four months ago."

"Pray proceed."

"Mr. Woodley seemed to me to be a most odious person. He was for ever making eyes at me—a coarse, puffy-faced, red-moustached young man, with his hair plastered down on each side of his

forehead. I thought that he was perfectly hateful—and I was sure that Cyril would not wish me to know such a person."

"Oh, Cyril is his name!" said Holmes, smiling.

The young lady blushed and laughed.

"Yes, Mr. Holmes; Cyril Morton, an electrical engineer, and we hope to be married at the end of the summer. Dear me, how *did* I get talking about him? What I wished to say was that Mr. Woodley was perfectly odious, but that Mr. Carruthers, who was a much older man, was more [5] agreeable. He was a dark, sallow, clean-shaven, silent person; but he had polite manners and a pleasant smile. He inquired how we were left, and on finding that we were very poor he suggested that I should come and teach music to his only daughter, aged ten. I said that I did not like to leave my mother, on which he suggested that I should go home to her every week-end, and he offered me a hundred a year, which was certainly splendid pay. So it ended by my accepting, and I went down to Chiltern Grange, about six miles from Farnham. Mr. Carruthers was a widower, but he had engaged a lady-housekeeper, a very respectable, elderly person, called Mrs. Dixon, to look after his establishment. The child was a dear, and everything promised well. Mr. Carruthers was very kind and very musical, and we had most pleasant evenings together. Every week-end I went home to my mother in town.

"The first flaw in my happiness was the arrival of the red-moustached Mr. Woodley. He came for a visit of a week, and oh, it seemed three months to me! He was a dreadful person, a bully to everyone else, but to me something infinitely worse. He made odious love to me, boasted of his wealth, said that if I married him I would have the finest diamonds in London, and finally, when I would have nothing to do with him, he seized me in his arms one day after dinner—he was hideously strong—and he swore that he would not let me go until I had kissed him. Mr. Carruthers came in and tore him off from me, on which he turned upon his own host, knocking him down and cutting his face open. That was the end of his visit, as you can imagine. Mr. Carruthers apologized to me next day, and assured me that I should never be exposed to such an insult again. I have not seen Mr. Woodley since.

"And now, Mr. Holmes, I come at last to the special thing which has caused me to ask your advice to-day. You must know that every Saturday forenoon I ride on my bicycle to Farnham Station in order to get the 12.22 to town. The road from Chiltern Grange is a lonely one, and at one spot it is particularly so, for it lies for over a mile between Charlington Heath upon one side and the woods which lie round Charlington Hall upon the other. You could not find a more lonely tract of road anywhere, and it is quite rare to meet so much as a cart, or a peasant, until you reach the high road near Crooksbury Hill. Two weeks ago I was passing this place when I chanced to look back over my shoulder, and about two hundred yards behind me I saw a man, also on a bicycle. He seemed to be a middle-aged man, with a short, dark beard. I looked back before I reached Farnham, but the man was gone, so I thought no more about it. But you can imagine how surprised I was, Mr. Holmes, when on my return on the Monday I saw the same man on the same stretch of road. My astonishment was increased when the incident occurred again, exactly as before, on the following Saturday and Monday. He always kept his distance and did not molest me in any way, but still it certainly was very odd. I mentioned it to Mr. Carruthers, who seemed interested in what I said, and told me that he had ordered a horse and trap, so that in future I should not pass over these lonely roads without some companion.

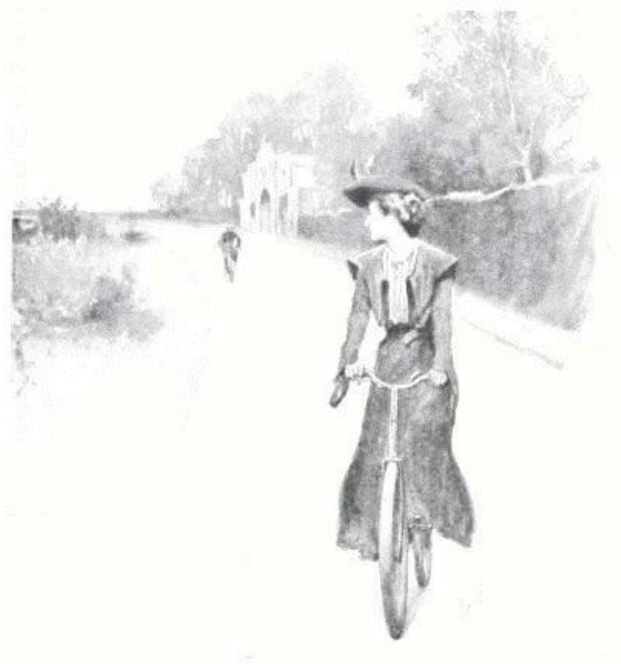
"The horse and trap were to have come this week, but for some reason they were not delivered and again I had to cycle to the station. That was this morning. You can think that I looked out when I came to Charlington Heath, and there, sure enough, was the man, exactly as he had been the two weeks before. He always kept so far from me that I could not clearly see his face, but it was certainly someone whom I did not know. He was dressed in a dark suit with a cloth cap. The only thing about his face that I could clearly see was his dark beard. To-day I was not alarmed, but I was filled with curiosity, and I determined to find out who he was and what he wanted. I slowed down my machine, but he slowed down his. Then I stopped altogether, but he stopped also. Then I laid a trap for him. There is a sharp turning of the road, and I pedalled very quickly round this, and then I stopped and waited. I expected him to shoot round and pass me before he could stop. But he never appeared. Then I went back and looked round the corner. I could see a mile of road, but he was not on it. To make it the more extraordinary, there was no side road at this point down which he could have gone."

Holmes chuckled and rubbed his hands. "This case certainly presents some features of its own," said he. "How much time elapsed between your turning the corner and your discovery that the road was clear?"

"Two or three minutes."

"Then he could not have retreated down the road, and you say that there are no side roads?"

[6]



Larger Image

"I SLOWED DOWN MY MACHINE."

"None."

"Then he certainly took a footpath on one side or the other."

"It could not have been on the side of the heath or I should have seen him."

"So by the process of exclusion we arrive at the fact that he made his way towards Charlington Hall, which, as I understand, is situated in its own grounds on one side of the road. Anything else?"

"Nothing, Mr. Holmes, save that I was so perplexed that I felt I should not be happy until I had seen you and had your advice."

Holmes sat in silence for some little time.

"Where is the gentleman to whom you are engaged?" he asked, at last.

"He is in the Midland Electrical Company, at Coventry."

"He would not pay you a surprise visit?"

"Oh, Mr. Holmes! As if I should not know him!"

"Have you had any other admirers?"

"Several before I knew Cyril."

"And since?"

"There was this dreadful man, Woodley, if you can call him an admirer."

"No one else?"

Our fair client seemed a little confused.

"Who was he?" asked Holmes.

"Oh, it may be a mere fancy of mine; but it has seemed to me sometimes that my employer, Mr. Carruthers, takes a great deal of interest in me. We are thrown rather together. I play his accompaniments in the evening. He has never said anything. He is a perfect gentleman. But a girl always knows."

"Ha!" Holmes looked grave. "What does he do for a living?"

"He is a rich man."

"No carriages or horses?"

"Well, at least he is fairly well-to-do. But he goes into the City two or three times a week. He is deeply interested in South African gold shares."

"You will let me know any fresh development, Miss Smith. I am very busy just now, but I will find time to make some inquiries into your case. In the meantime take no step without letting me know. Good-bye, and I trust that we shall have nothing but good news from you."

"It is part of the settled order of Nature that such a girl should have followers," said Holmes, as he pulled at his meditative pipe, "but for choice not on bicycles in lonely country roads. Some secretive lover, beyond all doubt. But there are curious and suggestive details about the case, Watson."

"That he should appear only at that point?"

"Exactly. Our first effort must be to find who are the tenants of Charlington Hall. Then, again,

how about the connection between Carruthers and Woodley, since they appear to be men of such a different type? How came they *both* to be so keen upon looking up Ralph Smith's relations? One more point. What sort of a *ménage* is it which pays double the market price for a governess, but does not keep a horse although six miles from the station? Odd, Watson—very odd!" [7]

"You will go down?"

"No, my dear fellow, *you* will go down. This may be some trifling intrigue, and I cannot break my other important research for the sake of it. On Monday you will arrive early at Farnham; you will conceal yourself near Charlington Heath; you will observe these facts for yourself, and act as your own judgment advises. Then, having inquired as to the occupants of the Hall, you will come back to me and report. And now, Watson, not another word of the matter until we have a few solid stepping-stones on which we may hope to get across to our solution."

We had ascertained from the lady that she went down upon the Monday by the train which leaves Waterloo at 9.50, so I started early and caught the 9.13. At Farnham Station I had no difficulty in being directed to Charlington Heath. It was impossible to mistake the scene of the young lady's adventure, for the road runs between the open heath on one side and an old yew hedge upon the other, surrounding a park which is studded with magnificent trees. There was a main gateway of lichen-studded stone, each side pillar surmounted by mouldering heraldic emblems; but besides this central carriage drive I observed several points where there were gaps in the hedge and paths leading through them. The house was invisible from the road, but the surroundings all spoke of gloom and decay.

The heath was covered with golden patches of flowering gorse, gleaming magnificently in the light of the bright spring sunshine. Behind one of these clumps I took up my position, so as to command both the gateway of the Hall and a long stretch of the road upon either side. It had been deserted when I left it, but now I saw a cyclist riding down it from the opposite direction to that in which I had come. He was clad in a dark suit, and I saw that he had a black beard. On reaching the end of the Charlington grounds he sprang from his machine and led it through a gap in the hedge, disappearing from my view.

A quarter of an hour passed and then a second cyclist appeared. This time it was the young lady coming from the station. I saw her look about her as she came to the Charlington hedge. An instant later the man emerged from his hiding-place, sprang upon his cycle, and followed her. In all the broad landscape those were the only moving figures, the graceful girl sitting very straight upon her machine, and the man behind her bending low over his handle-bar, with a curiously furtive suggestion in every movement. She looked back at him and slowed her pace. He slowed also. She stopped. He at once stopped too, keeping two hundred yards behind her. Her next movement was as unexpected as it was spirited. She suddenly whisked her wheels round and dashed straight at him! He was as quick as she, however, and darted off in desperate flight. Presently she came back up the road again, her head haughtily in the air, not deigning to take any further notice of her silent attendant. He had turned also, and still kept his distance until the curve of the road hid them from my sight.

I remained in my hiding-place, and it was well that I did so, for presently the man reappeared cycling slowly back. He turned in at the Hall gates and dismounted from his machine. For some few minutes I could see him standing among the trees. His hands were raised and he seemed to be settling his necktie. Then he mounted his cycle and rode away from me down the drive towards the Hall. I ran across the heath and peered through the trees. Far away I could catch glimpses of the old grey building with its bristling Tudor chimneys, but the drive ran through a dense shrubbery, and I saw no more of my man.

However, it seemed to me that I had done a fairly good morning's work, and I walked back in high spirits to Farnham. The local house agent could tell me nothing about Charlington Hall, and referred me to a well-known firm in Pall Mall. There I halted on my way home, and met with courtesy from the representative. No, I could not have Charlington Hall for the summer. I was just too late. It had been let about a month ago. Mr. Williamson was the name of the tenant. He was a respectable elderly gentleman. The polite agent was afraid he could say no more, as the affairs of his clients were not matters which he could discuss.

Mr. Sherlock Holmes listened with attention to the long report which I was able to present to him that evening, but it did not elicit that word of curt praise which I had hoped for and should have valued. On the contrary, his austere face was even more severe than usual as he commented upon the things that I had done and the things that I had not.

"Your hiding-place, my dear Watson, was very faulty. You should have been behind the hedge; then you would have had a close view of this interesting person. As it is you were some hundreds of yards away, and can tell me even less than Miss Smith. She thinks she does not know the man; I am convinced she does. Why, otherwise, should he be so desperately anxious that she should not get so near him as to see his features? You describe him as bending over the handle-bar. Concealment again, you see. You really have done remarkably badly. He returns to the house and you want to find out who he is. You come to a London house-agent!" [8]

"What should I have done?" I cried, with some heat.

"Gone to the nearest public-house. That is the centre of country gossip. They would have told you every name, from the master to the scullery-maid. Williamson! It conveys nothing to my mind. If he is an elderly man he is not this active cyclist who sprints away from that athletic young lady's pursuit. What have we gained by your expedition? The knowledge that the girl's story is true. I never doubted it. That there is a connection between the cyclist and the Hall. I never doubted

that either. That the Hall is tenanted by Williamson. Who's the better for that? Well, well, my dear sir, don't look so depressed. We can do little more until next Saturday, and in the meantime I may make one or two inquiries myself."

Next morning we had a note from Miss Smith, recounting shortly and accurately the very incidents which I had seen, but the pith of the letter lay in the postscript:—

"I am sure that you will respect my confidence, Mr. Holmes, when I tell you that my place here has become difficult owing to the fact that my employer has proposed marriage to me. I am convinced that his feelings are most deep and most honourable. At the same time my promise is, of course, given. He took my refusal very seriously, but also very gently. You can understand, however, that the situation is a little strained."

"Our young friend seems to be getting into deep waters," said Holmes, thoughtfully, as he finished the letter. "The case certainly presents more features of interest and more possibility of development than I had originally thought. I should be none the worse for a quiet, peaceful day in the country, and I am inclined to run down this afternoon and test one or two theories which I have formed."

Holmes's quiet day in the country had a singular termination, for he arrived at Baker Street late in the evening with a cut lip and a discoloured lump upon his forehead, besides a general air of dissipation which would have made his own person the fitting object of a Scotland Yard investigation. He was immensely tickled by his own adventures, and laughed heartily as he recounted them.

"I get so little active exercise that it is always a treat," said he. "You are aware that I have some proficiency in the good old British sport of boxing. Occasionally it is of service. To-day, for example, I should have come to very ignominious grief without it."

I begged him to tell me what had occurred.

"I found that country pub which I had already recommended to your notice, and there I made my discreet inquiries. I was in the bar, and a garrulous landlord was giving me all that I wanted. Williamson is a white-bearded man, and he lives alone with a small staff of servants at the Hall. There is some rumour that he is or has been a clergyman; but one or two incidents of his short residence at the Hall struck me as peculiarly unecclesiastical. I have already made some inquiries at a clerical agency, and they tell me that there *was* a man of that name in orders whose career has been a singularly dark one. The landlord further informed me that there are usually week-end visitors—'a warm lot, sir'—at the Hall, and especially one gentleman with a red moustache, Mr. Woodley by name, who was always there. We had got as far as this when who should walk in but the gentleman himself, who had been drinking his beer in the tap-room and had heard the whole conversation. Who was I? What did I want? What did I mean by asking questions? He had a fine flow of language, and his adjectives were very vigorous. He ended a string of abuse by a vicious back-hander which I failed to entirely avoid. The next few minutes were delicious. It was a straight left against a slogging ruffian. I emerged as you see me. Mr. Woodley went home in a cart. So ended my country trip, and it must be confessed that, however enjoyable, my day on the Surrey border has not been much more profitable than your own."

The Thursday brought us another letter from our client.

"You will not be surprised, Mr. Holmes," said she, "to hear that I am leaving Mr. Carruthers's employment. Even the high pay cannot reconcile me to the discomforts of my situation. On [9]
Saturday I come up to town and I do not intend to return. Mr. Carruthers has got a trap, and so the dangers of the lonely road, if there ever were any dangers, are now over.

Larger Image

"A STRAIGHT LEFT AGAINST A SLOGGING RUFFIAN."

"As to the special cause of my leaving, it is not merely the strained situation with Mr. Carruthers, but it is the reappearance of that odious man, Mr. Woodley. He was always hideous, but he looks more awful than ever now, for he appears to have had an accident and he is much disfigured. I saw him out of the window, but I am glad to say I did not meet him. He had a long talk with Mr. Carruthers, who seemed much excited afterwards. Woodley must be staying in the neighbourhood, for he did not sleep here, and yet I caught a glimpse of him again this morning slinking about in the shrubbery. I would sooner have a savage wild animal loose about the place. I loathe and fear him more than I can say. How *can* Mr. Carruthers endure such a creature for a moment? However, all my troubles will be over on Saturday."

"So I trust, Watson; so I trust," said Holmes, gravely. "There is some deep intrigue going on round that little woman, and it is our duty to see that no one molests her upon that last journey. I think, Watson, that we must spare time to run down together on Saturday morning, and make sure that this curious and inconclusive investigation has no untoward ending."

I confess that I had not up to now taken a very serious view of the case, which had seemed to me rather grotesque and bizarre than dangerous. That a man should lie in wait for and follow a very handsome woman is no unheard of thing, and if he had so little audacity that he not only dared not address her, but even fled from her approach, he was not a very formidable assailant. The ruffian Woodley was a very different person, but, except on the one occasion, he had not molested our client, and now he visited the house of Carruthers without intruding upon her presence. The man on the bicycle was doubtless a member of those week-end parties at the Hall of which the publican had spoken; but who he was or what he wanted was as obscure as ever. It was the severity of Holmes's manner and the fact that he slipped a revolver into his pocket before leaving our rooms which impressed me with the feeling that tragedy might prove to lurk behind this curious train of events.

A rainy night had been followed by a glorious morning, and the heath-covered country-side with the glowing clumps of flowering gorse seemed all the more beautiful to eyes which were weary of the duns and drabs and slate-greys of London. Holmes and I walked along the broad, sandy road [10] inhaling the fresh morning air, and rejoicing in the music of the birds and the fresh breath of the spring. From a rise of the road on the shoulder of Crooksbury Hill we could see the grim Hall bristling out from amidst the ancient oaks, which, old as they were, were still younger than the building which they surrounded. Holmes pointed down the long tract of road which wound, a reddish yellow band, between the brown of the heath and the budding green of the woods. Far away, a black dot, we could see a vehicle moving in our direction. Holmes gave an exclamation of impatience.

"I had given a margin of half an hour," said he. "If that is her trap she must be making for the earlier train. I fear, Watson, that she will be past Charlington before we can possibly meet her."

From the instant that we passed the rise we could no longer see the vehicle, but we hastened onwards at such a pace that my sedentary life began to tell upon me, and I was compelled to fall behind. Holmes, however, was always in training, for he had inexhaustible stores of nervous energy upon which to draw. His springy step never slowed until suddenly, when he was a hundred yards in front of me, he halted, and I saw him throw up his hand with a gesture of grief and despair. At the same instant an empty dog-cart, the horse cantering, the reins trailing, appeared round the curve of the road and rattled swiftly towards us.

Larger Image

"'TOO LATE, WATSON; TOO LATE!' CRIED HOLMES."

"Too late, Watson; too late!" cried Holmes, as I ran panting to his side. "Fool that I was not to

allow for that earlier train! It's abduction, Watson—abduction! Murder! Heaven knows what! Block the road! Stop the horse! That's right. Now, jump in, and let us see if I can repair the consequences of my own blunder."

We had sprung into the dog-cart, and Holmes, after turning the horse, gave it a sharp cut with the whip, and we flew back along the road. As we turned the curve the whole stretch of road between the Hall and the heath was opened up. I grasped Holmes's arm.

"That's the man!" I gasped.

A solitary cyclist was coming towards us. His head was down and his shoulders rounded as he put every ounce of energy that he possessed on to the pedals. He was flying like a racer. Suddenly he raised his bearded face, saw us close to him, and pulled up, springing from his machine. That coal-black beard was in singular contrast to the pallor of his face, and his eyes were as bright as if he had a fever. He stared at us and at the dog-cart. Then a look of amazement came over his face.

"Halloa! Stop there!" he shouted, holding his bicycle to block our road. "Where did you get that dog-cart? Pull up, man!" he yelled, drawing a pistol from his side pocket. "Pull up, I say, or, by George, I'll put a bullet into your horse."

Holmes threw the reins into my lap and sprang down from the cart.

"You're the man we want to see. Where is Miss Violet Smith?" he said, in his quick, clear way. [11]

"That's what I am asking you. You're in her dog-cart. You ought to know where she is."

"We met the dog-cart on the road. There was no one in it. We drove back to help the young lady."

"Good Lord! Good Lord! what shall I do?" cried the stranger, in an ecstasy of despair. "They've got her, that hellhound Woodley and the blackguard parson. Come, man, come, if you really are her friend. Stand by me and we'll save her, if I have to leave my carcass in Charlington Wood."

He ran distractedly, his pistol in his hand, towards a gap in the hedge. Holmes followed him, and I, leaving the horse grazing beside the road, followed Holmes.

"This is where they came through," said he, pointing to the marks of several feet upon the muddy path. "Halloa! Stop a minute! Who's this in the bush?"

It was a young fellow about seventeen, dressed like an ostler, with leather cords and gaiters. He lay upon his back, his knees drawn up, a terrible cut upon his head. He was insensible, but alive. A glance at his wound told me that it had not penetrated the bone.

"That's Peter, the groom," cried the stranger. "He drove her. The beasts have pulled him off and clubbed him. Let him lie; we can't do him any good, but we may save her from the worst fate that can befall a woman."

We ran frantically down the path, which wound among the trees. We had reached the shrubbery which surrounded the house when Holmes pulled up.

"They didn't go to the house. Here are their marks on the left—here, beside the laurel bushes! Ah, I said so!"

As he spoke a woman's shrill scream—a scream which vibrated with a frenzy of horror—burst from the thick green clump of bushes in front of us. It ended suddenly on its highest note with a choke and a gurgle.

"This way! This way! They are in the bowling alley," cried the stranger, darting through the bushes. "Ah, the cowardly dogs! Follow me, gentlemen! Too late! too late! by the living Jingo!"

We had broken suddenly into a lovely glade of greensward surrounded by ancient trees. On the farther side of it, under the shadow of a mighty oak, there stood a singular group of three people. One was a woman, our client, drooping and faint, a handkerchief round her mouth. Opposite her stood a brutal, heavy-faced, red-moustached young man, his gaitered legs parted wide, one arm akimbo, the other waving a riding-crop, his whole attitude suggestive of triumphant bravado. Between them an elderly, grey-bearded man, wearing a short surplice over a light tweed suit, had evidently just completed the wedding service, for he pocketed his prayer-book as we appeared and slapped the sinister bridegroom upon the back in jovial congratulation.

"They're married!" I gasped.

"Come on!" cried our guide; "come on!" He rushed across the glade, Holmes and I at his heels. As we approached, the lady staggered against the trunk of the tree for support. Williamson, the ex-clergyman, bowed to us with mock politeness, and the bully Woodley advanced with a shout of brutal and exultant laughter.

"You can take your beard off, Bob," said he. "I know you right enough. Well, you and your pals have just come in time for me to be able to introduce you to Mrs. Woodley."

Our guide's answer was a singular one. He snatched off the dark beard which had disguised him and threw it on the ground, disclosing a long, sallow, clean-shaven face below it. Then he raised his revolver and covered the young ruffian, who was advancing upon him with his dangerous riding-crop swinging in his hand.

"Yes," said our ally, "I *am* Bob Carruthers, and I'll see this woman righted if I have to swing for it. I told you what I'd do if you molested her, and, by the Lord, I'll be as good as my word!"

"You're too late. She's my wife!"

"No, she's your widow."

His revolver cracked, and I saw the blood spurt from the front of Woodley's waistcoat. He spun round with a scream and fell upon his back, his hideous red face turning suddenly to a dreadful mottled pallor. The old man, still clad in his surplice, burst into such a string of foul oaths as I have never heard, and pulled out a revolver of his own, but before he could raise it he was looking down the barrel of Holmes's weapon.

"Enough of this," said my friend, coldly. "Drop that pistol! Watson, pick it up! Hold it to his head! Thank you. You, Carruthers, give me that revolver. We'll have no more violence. Come, hand it over!"

"Who are you, then?"

[12]

Larger Image

"AS WE APPROACHED, THE LADY STAGGERED AGAINST THE TRUNK OF THE TREE."

"My name is Sherlock Holmes."

"Good Lord!"

"You have heard of me, I see. I will represent the official police until their arrival. Here, you!" he shouted to a frightened groom who had appeared at the edge of the glade. "Come here. Take this note as hard as you can ride to Farnham." He scribbled a few words upon a leaf from his note-book. "Give it to the superintendent at the police-station. Until he comes I must detain you all under my personal custody."

The strong, masterful personality of Holmes dominated the tragic scene, and all were equally puppets in his hands. Williamson and Carruthers found themselves carrying the wounded Woodley into the house, and I gave my arm to the frightened girl. The injured man was laid on his bed, and at Holmes's request I examined him. I carried my report to where he sat in the old tapestry-hung dining-room with his two prisoners before him.

"He will live," said I.

"What!" cried Carruthers, springing out of his chair. "I'll go upstairs and finish him first. Do you tell me that that girl, that angel, is to be tied to Roaring Jack Woodley for life?"

"You need not concern yourself about that," said Holmes. "There are two very good reasons why she should under no circumstances be his wife. In the first place, we are very safe in questioning Mr. Williamson's right to solemnize a marriage."

"I have been ordained," cried the old rascal.

"And also unfrocked."

"Once a clergyman, always a clergyman."

"I think not. How about the license?"

"We had a license for the marriage. I have it here in my pocket."

"Then you got it by a trick. But, in any case a forced marriage is no marriage, but it is a very serious felony, as you will discover before you have finished. You'll have time to think the point out during the next ten years or so, unless I am mistaken. As to you, Carruthers, you would have done better to keep your pistol in your pocket."

"I begin to think so, Mr. Holmes; but when I thought of all the precaution I had taken to shield

this girl—for I loved her, Mr. Holmes, and it is the only time that ever I knew what love was—it fairly drove me mad to think that she was in the power of the greatest brute and bully in South Africa, a man whose name is a holy terror from Kimberley to Johannesburg. Why, Mr. Holmes, you'll hardly believe it, but ever since that girl has been in my employment I never once let her go past this house, where I knew these rascals were lurking, without following her on my bicycle just to see that she came to no harm. I kept my distance from her, and I wore a beard so that she should not recognise me, for she is a good and high-spirited girl, and she wouldn't have stayed in my employment long if she had thought that I was following her about the country roads." [13]

"Why didn't you tell her of her danger?"

"Because then, again, she would have left me, and I couldn't bear to face that. Even if she couldn't love me it was a great deal to me just to see her dainty form about the house, and to hear the sound of her voice."

"Well," said I, "you call that love, Mr. Carruthers, but I should call it selfishness."

"Maybe the two things go together. Anyhow, I couldn't let her go. Besides, with this crowd about, it was well that she should have someone near to look after her. Then when the cable came I knew they were bound to make a move."

"What cable?"

Carruthers took a telegram from his pocket.

"That's it," said he.

It was short and concise:—

"The old man is dead."

"Hum!" said Holmes. "I think I see how things worked, and I can understand how this message would, as you say, bring them to a head. But while we wait you might tell me what you can."

The old reprobate with the surplice burst into a volley of bad language.

"By Heaven," said he, "if you squeal on us, Bob Carruthers, I'll serve you as you served Jack Woodley. You can bleat about the girl to your heart's content, for that's your own affair, but if you round on your pals to this plain-clothes copper it will be the worst day's work that ever you did."

"Your reverence need not be excited," said Holmes, lighting a cigarette. "The case is clear enough against you, and all I ask is a few details for my private curiosity. However, if there's any difficulty in your telling me I'll do the talking, and then you will see how far you have a chance of holding back your secrets. In the first place, three of you came from South Africa on this game—you Williamson, you Carruthers, and Woodley."

"Lie number one," said the old man; "I never saw either of them until two months ago, and I have never been in Africa in my life, so you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, Mr. Busybody Holmes!"

"What he says is true," said Carruthers.

"Well, well, two of you came over. His reverence is our own home-made article. You had known Ralph Smith in South Africa. You had reason to believe he would not live long. You found out that his niece would inherit his fortune. How's that—eh?"

Carruthers nodded and Williamson swore.

"She was next-of-kin, no doubt, and you were aware that the old fellow would make no will."

"Couldn't read or write," said Carruthers.

"So you came over, the two of you, and hunted up the girl. The idea was that one of you was to marry her and the other have a share of the plunder. For some reason Woodley was chosen as the husband. Why was that?"

"We played cards for her on the voyage. He won."

"I see. You got the young lady into your service, and there Woodley was to do the courting. She recognised the drunken brute that he was, and would have nothing to do with him. Meanwhile, your arrangement was rather upset by the fact that you had yourself fallen in love with the lady. You could no longer bear the idea of this ruffian owning her."

"No, by George, I couldn't!"

"There was a quarrel between you. He left you in a rage, and began to make his own plans independently of you."

"It strikes me, Williamson, there isn't very much that we can tell this gentleman," cried Carruthers, with a bitter laugh. "Yes, we quarrelled, and he knocked me down. I am level with him on that, anyhow. Then I lost sight of him. That was when he picked up with this cast padre here. I found that they had set up house-keeping together at this place on the line that she had to pass for the station. I kept my eye on her after that, for I knew there was some devilry in the wind. I saw them from time to time, for I was anxious to know what they were after. Two days ago Woodley came up to my house with this cable, which showed that Ralph Smith was dead. He asked me if I would stand by the bargain. I said I would not. He asked me if I would marry the girl myself and give him a share. I said I would willingly do so, but that she would not have me. He said, 'Let us get her married first, and after a week or two she may see things a bit different.' I said I would have nothing to do with violence. So he went off cursing, like the foul-mouthed

blackguard that he was, and swearing that he would have her yet. She was leaving me this week-end, and I had got a trap to take her to the station, but I was so uneasy in my mind that I followed her on my bicycle. She had got a start, however, and before I could catch her the mischief was done. The first thing I knew about it was when I saw you two gentlemen driving back in her dog-cart." [14]

Larger Image

"HOLMES TOSSED THE END OF HIS CIGARETTE INTO THE GRATE."

Holmes rose and tossed the end of his cigarette into the grate. "I have been very obtuse, Watson," said he. "When in your report you said that you had seen the cyclist as you thought arrange his necktie in the shrubbery, that alone should have told me all. However, we may congratulate ourselves upon a curious and in some respects a unique case. I perceive three of the county constabulary in the drive, and I am glad to see that the little ostler is able to keep pace with them; so it is likely that neither he nor the interesting bridegroom will be permanently damaged by their morning's adventures. I think, Watson, that in your medical capacity you might wait upon Miss Smith and tell her that if she is sufficiently recovered we shall be happy to escort her to her mother's home. If she is not quite convalescent you will find that a hint that we were about to telegraph to a young electrician in the Midlands would probably complete the cure. As to you, Mr. Carruthers, I think that you have done what you could to make amends for your share in an evil plot. There is my card, sir, and if my evidence can be of help to you in your trial it shall be at your disposal."

In the whirl of our incessant activity it has often been difficult for me, as the reader has probably observed, to round off my narratives, and to give those final details which the curious might expect. Each case has been the prelude to another, and the crisis once over the actors have passed for ever out of our busy lives. I find, however, a short note at the end of my manuscripts dealing with this case, in which I have put it upon record that Miss Violet Smith did indeed inherit a large fortune, and that she is now the wife of Cyril Morton, the senior partner of Morton and Kennedy, the famous Westminster electricians. Williamson and Woodley were both tried for abduction and assault, the former getting seven years and the latter ten. Of the fate of Carruthers I have no record, but I am sure that his assault was not viewed very gravely by the Court, since Woodley had the reputation of being a most dangerous ruffian, and I think that a few months were sufficient to satisfy the demands of justice.

"*Happy Evenings.*"

[15]

ORDINARILY the High Street fairly stewed with juvenile humanity. But to-night, for a wonder, the High Street, Plimsoll Lane, Byles's Rents, and all the adjacent squalid courts and avenues were deserted. Something more than a mild fog was needed to effect such a transformation out of school hours. Neither was there evidence, ocular or auricular, of any hand-organ, or a trained bear, or a free fight enlivening the neighbourhood. How was it possible to account for the peaceful condition of the streets? Surely the ordinary denizens of the gutter couldn't be at school? Well, not exactly at school, but at the school-house. A ragged little urchin of seven volunteered to be our pilot.

"'Appy evenin'? Yessir, I'm goin' there myself. I'll show you."

"What's your name, my boy?"

"Saunders, sir; but they allers calls me 'Magsie,' all along o' my twin-sister wot uz named Marguerite."

"And why isn't your little sister with you to-night?"

"'Cos she got scarlet fever."

"Scarlet fever? Good gracious, boy!"

"An' she died—more'n a year ago."

"Oh, I see."

"The lidy wot we calls the Countess 's goin' to be at the 'Appy Evenin' to-night. Look! That's 'er—see—with the 'at an' the little black fevvers."

We proved to be just in time. Several ladies and gentlemen had doffed their furs and overcoats, and stood smiling at one end of a large school-room, whilst in the middle some two or three hundred meanly-clad, but clean and happy-looking, children of all ages under twelve or thirteen trooped along merrily to the notes of a piano in the corner.

"This is our overture," explained the gentle-eyed lady with the "fevvers." "We always begin this way and they seem to enjoy it." She raised her jewelled finger and the music stopped. So did the promenaders. There was a silence, punctuated by giggles, as the Countess observed, "And now for our games this evening. What girls for the quiet room?"

Larger Image

A PRELIMINARY SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY.

From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd.

Twenty hands went up instantly.

"What boys?"

Half-a-dozen—not more—two of whom were cripples.

"And the noisy room? And the fairy-tale room? And the toy room? And the painting room? And the dolls' room?"

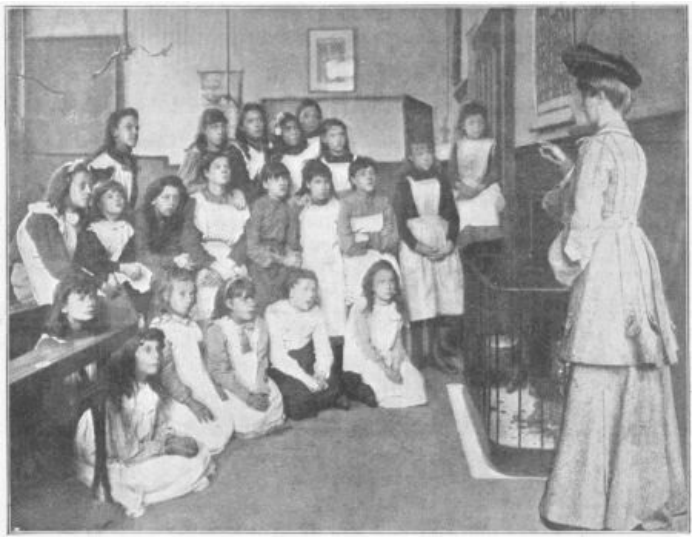
Thus were these denizens of the gutter in one of the most notorious slums of London granted their hearts' wishes for this evening. As they made a choice, so they were marched off under the wing of a lady or gentleman to a separate room, and the music struck up again for a Sir Roger de Coverley.

[16]

THE COUNTESS OF JERSEY—PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.

From a Photo. by Gillman, Oxford.

"There is no use," explains one of the ladies, "forcing a child to romp if it doesn't want to romp. Perhaps its tastes are in quite another direction—indeed, we know that there are thousands of wretched little mites in London who pine for quiet and seclusion. Then there are kiddies who are passionately fond of fairy stories. They could listen to them by the hour—perhaps by the day—yet possibly outside of a Happy Evening they never hear one that really interests them. Our girls' fairy-teller here, I may tell you, has a wonderful gift. She really mesmerizes the children. Would you like to be mesmerized, too?"



Larger Image

A FAIRY TALE.

From a Photo. by*] [*George Newnes, Ltd.

"With all the pleasure in life," we reply, and the handle of the fairy-tale room is slowly turned. We may mention it for a fact, and as a tribute to the lady's powers, that the noise of our entrance is absolutely without effect on this little audience. Oh, what would not a pulpit orator, a politician, a lecturer—yes, even a great actor—give to hold his auditors' minds thus in the hollow of his hand? They see nothing, hear nothing but the speaker.

"'So, so,' cried the Genie, in an angry voice; 'if that is the case then you must quickly step upon this strip of carpet.' And he laid a piece of red and yellow carpet on the ground.

"'What for?' asked the young Prince. You see, he didn't know about the magic in the carpet—nobody had ever told him.

Larger Image

"'IT 'IM ON THE NOB, MAGSIE."

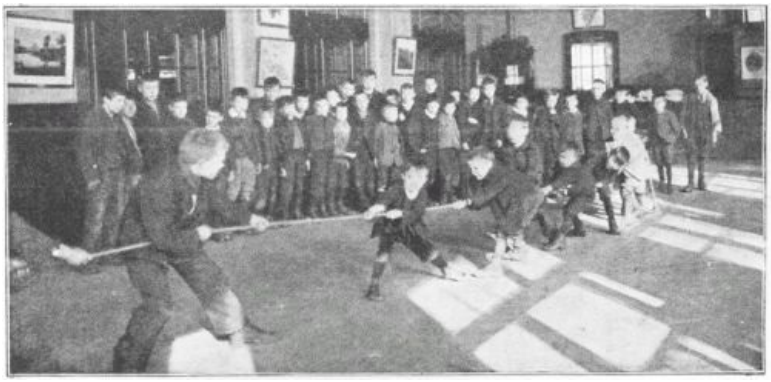
From a Photo. by*] [*George Newnes, Ltd.

"'What for?' replied the Genie. 'Why, because——' and he told him then and there. And he put on his hat and stepped upon the carpet, and like a flash——"

We stole out at this juncture, leaving the children open-mouthed and open-eyed, oblivious of our presence and retreat, and ascending a flight of steps found ourselves ushered into a totally different scene. The uproar was terrific, which was not surprising considering that a hundred and fifty boys were yelling at the top of their lungs.

"Punch 'im, 'Magsie'; 'it 'im on the nob!"

And "Magsie," suiting the action to the word, actually landed his opponent one on the "nob." It was a boxing match—presided over by a peer's son. Physically the combatants were most unequally matched, one lad being nearly thirteen and the other—my original cicerone of the evening—only seven. But they equalize these matters at the Happy Evenings, and "Pokey" was on his knees, while Billy was the possessor of much pugilistic science. With each fairly-planted blow the yelling was terrific, but nobody objected; they encouraged it, if anything. What's the good of being happy if you can't yell? And so the hundred and fifty yelled. They have a proper contempt for girls. Girls only giggle and scream.



Larger Image

THE GREAT CONTEST: THORPE'S MEWS *v.* BYLES'S RENTS.

From a Photo. by*] [*George Newnes, Ltd.

But the chief event of the evening among the juvenile male section was the tug-of-war—the denizens of Thorpe's Mews *versus* Byles's Rents, a truly Homeric contest, as it would have appeared to Liliput. Powerfully-built tatterdemalions boasting fully three feet of stature were matched against a lesser number of giants of four feet six. The rope swayed now this side—now [18]
that—of the chalked line. Was ever so much sinew built up of stale bread-crusts and fried fish before? But the Byles's Rents men—pale, perspiring, and panting—ultimately pulled their rivals across the line and on to their knees pell-mell, and the ceiling threatened to splinter and send down pounds of plaster upon the heads of the spectators at shouts over this triumph. It was thrice repeated, and then, lo! a few steps and the scene had changed and we were in the dolls' room.

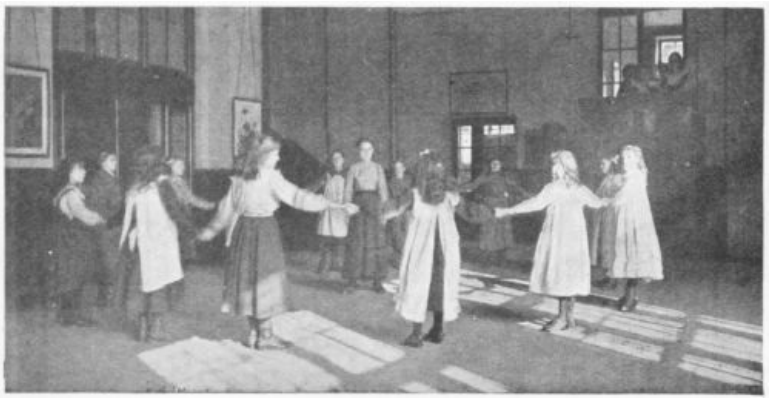
Larger Image

"PLEASE, LADY, MAY I 'AVE THE FAIRY DOLL NEXT TIME?"

From a Photo. by*] [*George Newnes, Ltd.

Every year in November there is a brave show of dolls dressed for the Happy Evenings children at Bath House, Piccadilly, and some of these dolls were here now, tended, oh, so gently, almost worshipped, as they are taken out of their cupboard resting-places and dressed and undressed.

"Please, lady, may I 'ave the fairy doll next time?" pleaded a golden-haired little child, with an earnest, wistful look.



Larger Image

A PEEP INTO THE NOISY ROOM.

From a Photo. by*] [*George Newnes, Ltd.

"Yes, if your hands are the cleanest. The little girl with the very cleanest hands shall dress the fairy doll." [19]

There is a buzz of pleased anticipation, and then a small voice is heard:—

"Oh, Kitie Jimes, will your mother lend my mother your kike o' smellin' soap next Tuesday evenin', an' you can 'ave our fryin'-pan?"

Larger Image

THE SACK RACE.

From a Photo. by*] [*George Newnes, Ltd.

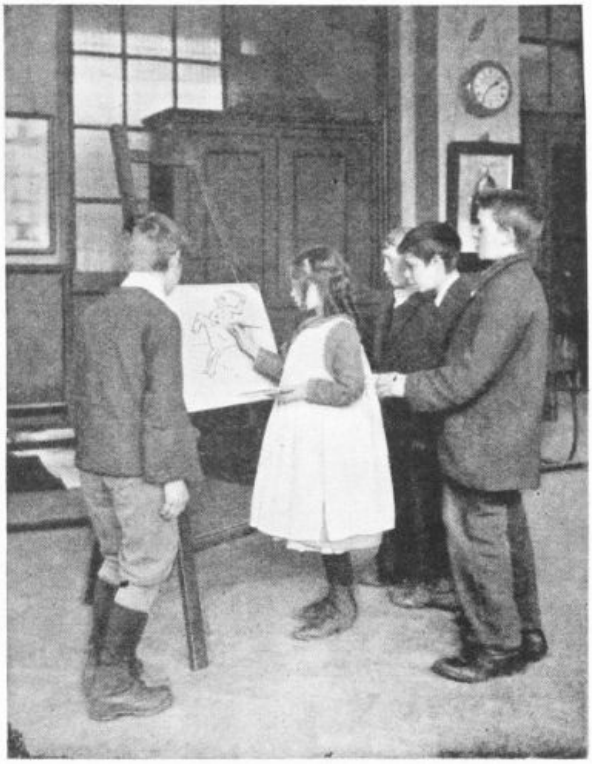
In the girls' noisy room they were playing "London Bridge" and "Kiss-in-the-Ring," but it was tame work in comparison with the uproarious diversions of the stern sex below. When the boys' boxing contest was over they had a sack race, but a small group of youngsters were observed making for the door.

"W'ere you goin', 'Arry?" asked a friend.

"Me? Oh. I'm goin' with Johnson."

"W'ere's Johnson goin'?"

"Darnstairs. Johnson's father's a 'ouse-painter, and 'e knows something, Johnson does. We promised to go an' see Millie White paint in the paintin' room. You orter see 'er dror a 'orse. I promised to 'old her cup an' Johnson's 'oldin' her paints. P'r'aps, if you come, she'll let you 'ave a brush to 'old."



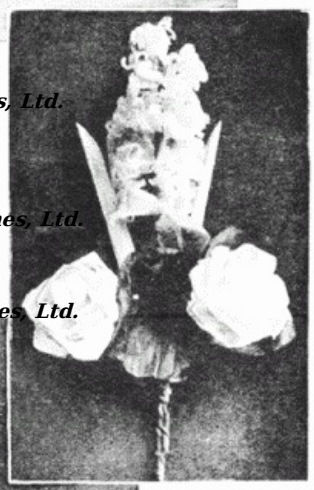
Larger Image

A GROUP OF ADMIRERS.

From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd.

This is gallantry and this is appreciation of art. Five minutes later, after seeing the champion of Byles's Rents again victorious in the sack race, we descend to the painting room to find Miss Millie White (ætat eight), the celebrated animal painter, daughter of Larry White; the well-known Shoreditch navvy, surrounded by her admirers. In another part of the same room we come upon quite an animated group of talented colourists. Some of the designs done by these children of the [20] slums are most creditable, and at least their faces are radiant with happiness, which is the chief thing after all. The articles produced in the toy-making room are vastly ingenious. Out of the most unpromising materials—such as reels of cotton and match-boxes, fortified by cardboard and coloured paper—the most delectable toys are produced.

THE PAINTING ROOM.
From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd.



ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS
MADE BY THE CHILDREN.
From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd.

ARTICLES MADE BY THE CHILDREN.
From a Photo. by [***George Newnes, Ltd.***

As the famous chef, Brillat-Savarin, could create an exquisite soup out of a kid glove and a pint of boiling water, so these tiny artisans manage to manufacture butchers' shops, chests of drawers, tables, sofas, Christmas crackers, and luxuriant flowers out of the meanest ingredients. One of the favourite diversions of the smaller children is cutting out and colouring fashion-plates, decapitating the heads and fitting on instead portraits of their favourite "great ladies" of the [21]
Happy Evenings Association which they have found in the newspapers. These are afterwards stiffened with cardboard and made to stand up in a group, which at a distance gives a very good idea of a swell reception amongst the "hupper suckles"—if it did not more nearly suggest a wax-work gathering at Madame Tussaud's. Two of these figures we photographed for The Strand—Lady Northcote and Lady Margaret Rice—both indefatigable workers of the Children's Happy Evenings Association.

LADY NORTHCOTE.

As constructed by the children.

And what—the reader may ask at this stage—what is the Happy Evenings Association? Well, it is a body of kind-hearted ladies and gentlemen—numbering some of the highest and noblest names that you will find in "Burke" or "Debrett"—who take a pleasure in going down amongst the slums of London and teaching the slum waifs how to play. For the London guttersnipe doesn't know how to play. As a rule, he or she can maunder about and fight and scream and exchange badinage and throw stones in the gutter, but of true games the gamin is as ignorant as his parents are of *entrées* or Euclid. Before the association was started in 1891 there was no one to teach them the mysteries of battledore and shuttlecock, sack races, kiss-in-the-ring, picture-books, dolls, and doll dressmaking. As their motto expressed it, the association, whose first efforts began at the Waterloo Road Schools, was "to put a thought beneath their rags to ennoble the heart's struggle."

LADY MARGARET RICE.

As constructed by the children.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES AND HER FAMILY—THE PRINCESS IS THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION.

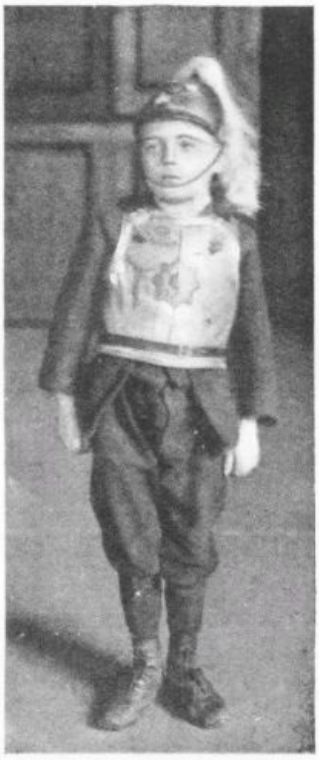
From a Photo. by Wilkinson & Co., Norwich. Published by the London Stereoscopic Co.

The gutters were full—the Board schools after school-hours were empty. Why not get permission to use these empty Board schools for the little ones to play in? And so in a modest fashion the first of the Happy Evenings was carried out by Miss Heather Bigg at Waterloo Road Schools in January, 1891. The association grew and workers came forward until now it is one of the most influential, as it is the "smartest," charity in London. It has for its president that mother of so many little children—the Princess of Wales; its chief of council is the Countess of Jersey, and among its helpers are the Marchioness of Zetland, Lady Ludlow, Lady Cadogan, Lady Iddesleigh, Mrs. Bland-Sutton, etc. Moreover, the children of the rich are brought to serve the children of the poor, the example being set by children no less highly placed than the little Princes and the little Princess at Marlborough House, whose dolls and toys find their way into the Happy Evenings gatherings. When little Prince Edward first heard of the Happy Evenings he turned to his Royal mamma and said:— [22]

MRS. BLAND-SUTTON—HON. SECRETARY OF THE ASSOCIATION.

From a Photo. by E. W. Evans.

"Mayn't I give my helmet and breast-plate? It's such good fun to dress up as a soldier. I'm sure those little boys would like it." And so a little gamin was pointed out to us at a Happy Evening, prancing about in the martial and metallic raiment which had lately enclosed the person of another boy—the future King of England.



PRINCE EDWARD'S ARMOUR.

From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd.

Some wag has called these gatherings "Juvenile Parties for Guttersnipes," and although the secretary naturally resents the terms of such description, yet perhaps, on the whole, it gives a fair idea to the average observer of what these gatherings really mean. "We do not, however, aim at making our Happy Evenings a juvenile party. We try and make the pastimes of the children approximate closely to those of a well-ordered nursery or school-room, and the children are encouraged to vary their amusements on their own initiative, and to choose by preference those games which involve co-operation."

Larger Image

EAST-END CHILDREN IN LADY JERSEY'S CHILD-DRAMA "ST. GEORGE."

From a Photo. by W. S. Bradshaw & Sons.

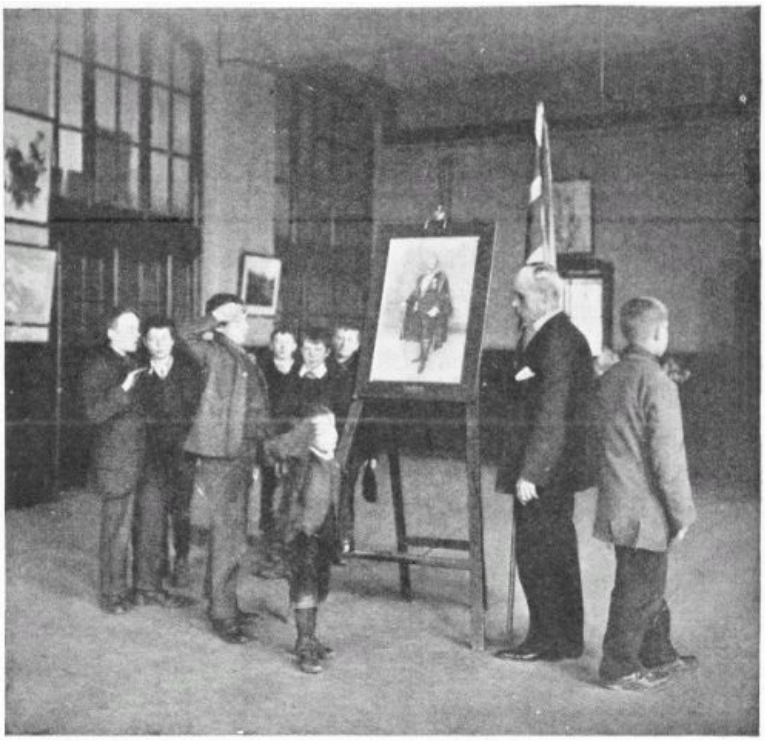
Occasionally the elder children get together and arrange rough-and-ready presentments of historic incidents, such as the Battle of Cressy, the Execution of Mary Queen of Scots, the Indian Mutiny, Alfred and the Cakes, the Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, etc. The *Mayflower*, in this last tableau, was represented by a large newspaper boat capable of holding the two feet of one child comfortably. The other Pilgrim Fathers apparently preferred to wade. [23]

The picture on page 22 shows a party of East London children in Lady Jersey's play, "St. George of England," and in their brave costumes they certainly compare very favourably with any equal body of children from more fashionable regions.

A DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

From a Photo. by **[*Lady Margaret Rice.*]**

But perhaps the greatest event of the whole year for the children of the Happy Evenings occurs in summer, when each branch president invites them for a merry day in the country. Somehow or other the girls manage to rake up cheap cotton frocks for the occasion of various tints and degrees of wear—and the boys are carefully washed, brushed, and patched; and then off to one of the stately homes of England, where they may romp in the grass or in the woods and pick wild flowers to their hearts' content. You would scarcely recognise these half-fed, prematurely old London children in the laughing faces and buoyant forms of this picture taken at Osterley Park.



A HAPPY EVENING CONCLUDED—SALUTING HIS MAJESTY.

From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd.

One other picture taken has a special interest as showing that lessons of loyalty are inculcated at the Happy Evenings. It represents the conclusion of the sports and games; the boys are seen filing before a portrait of His Majesty and the Union Jack and saluting as they pass, while the piano plays "God Save the King."

The Conversion of Aunt Sarah

[24]

Larger Image

By Archibald Marshall.

I.

When young Lord Otterburn vowed before the altar of Grace Church, 114th Avenue, Chicago, to endow Miss Sadie M. Cutts with all his worldly goods, that fortunate young lady obtained a husband of attractive appearance, agreeable manners, and a sweet temper; a coronet, a beautiful but dilapidated castle in Northumberland, surrounded by an unproductive estate, and a share in the family attentions of Aunt Sarah. In exchange for these blessings she brought, as her contribution to the happiness of the married state, a warm appreciation of her husband's good qualities, a dowry which, when reckoned in dollars, touched seven figures, a frank and fearless character, and a total ignorance of the importance of Aunt Sarah in the domestic well-being of the noble house of Otterburn.

She was not left long in ignorance on this point. She had only had time to refurnish the whole of Castle Gide, to instal electric light, to rebuild the stables, adapting part of them to the requirements of a stud of motor-cars, to take the gardens in hand, and to relet most of the farms, when Aunt Sarah was upon the newly-married couple with a proposal for a visit.

"And who is Aunt Sarah, anyway?" inquired Lady Otterburn, when her husband handed her that lady's letter over the breakfast-table.

"Aunt Sarah," replied Otterburn, "is the bane of the existence of all the members of my family who can afford to keep their heads above water."

"Sounds kind of cheering," observed her ladyship. "How does she get her clutch in?"

"She proposes herself for short visits, and has never been known to leave any house where the cooking is decent and the beds comfortable under a month. She is my Uncle Otterburn's widow, and, having been left exceedingly poor, exercises the right of demanding bed and board from members of my family in rotation as often as it is convenient to her."

"If she's poor," said Lady Otterburn, "it won't harm us to give her a shake-down and a sandwich or two as often as she wants 'em. I apprehend she'll make herself agreeable in return."

"That's where you make a mistake," replied Otterburn. "Aunt Sarah has never been known to make herself agreeable in her life. In fact, she prides herself upon doing the reverse. She'll tell you before you have known her two minutes that she always says what she thinks. And she won't be telling you a lie." [25]

"Two can play at that game," said Lady Otterburn. "Most times I say what I think myself."

"But you only think pleasant things," replied her husband. "My flower of the prairie!"

Now, Chicago is not exactly a prairie, but the young Countess of Otterburn was pretty and graceful enough to deserve the most high-flown compliments, and appreciated them when they came from her husband. She therefore graciously accepted his latest flight of imagination, and told him to write to Aunt Sarah and invite her to come to Castle Gide and stay as long as she found it convenient.

Aunt Sarah came a week later with a considerable amount of luggage, but no maid. The motor-omnibus was sent to the station to meet her, in spite of her nephew's warnings.

"She'll arrive as cross as can be," he said. "She hates motors of every description, and I don't suppose has ever been on one in her life."

"Then it's time she tried it," said Lady Otterburn. "There isn't a horse in the place that could draw a buggy fourteen miles to the depôt and back and bring her here in time for dinner."

"Well, you'll see," said Otterburn. "She'll tell us what she thinks of us when she gets here."

She did. The powerful motor-omnibus drew up before the door of Castle Gide—at which Lord and Lady Otterburn were standing to receive their guest—having completed the seven-mile journey from the station in about five-and-twenty minutes. The driver and the footman beside him wore expressions of apprehensive discomfort, and the latter jumped down off his seat to open the door at the back of the vehicle with some alacrity.

There emerged a tall and formidable-looking old lady, with an aquiline nose and abundant, well-arranged grey hair. She wore an imposing bonnet and a dress not of the latest fashion, which rustled richly. There was a cloud on her magnificent brow, her mouth was firmly closed, and she showed no signs of agreeable feeling at arriving thus at her journey's end.

Larger Image

"'HOW DO YOU DO, AUNT SARAH?' SAID OTTERBURN."

"How do you do, Aunt Sarah?" said Otterburn, hastening down the steps to greet her. "Very pleased to see you again. Hope the old 'bus brought you along comfortably."

"No, Edward," replied Aunt Sarah, rigidly, "the old 'bus, as you term it, did not bring me along comfortably. I had vowed never to trust myself to one of these detestable new inventions, and I am surprised at your sending such a contrivance to meet me. This, I suppose, is your wife. How do you do, my lady? I shall probably be able to tell better how I like your appearance when I have [26] recovered from the perilous journey to which I have been subjected. I should like to be shown at once to my room. I am much too upset by my late experience to think of joining you downstairs to-night."

"Why, certainly," said Lady Otterburn. "I'll take you upstairs, and you shall have your supper just when and how you please—right here and now if you prefer it. I want that you should make yourself at home in this house."

Aunt Sarah transfixed her with a haughty glare.

"Considering that this house was my home for five-and-thirty years," she said, "I think I can promise to do that. Thank you, Lady Otterburn. I will not detain you any longer. This was the third best bachelor's room in my day; I know my way about it well. No doubt you have other more important guests for whom the better rooms are reserved. I will wish you good-night."

"My!" said the Countess of Otterburn, on the other side of a firmly-closed door. "She's a peach!"

II.

The most consistently disagreeable people are not without their moments of relenting, and Aunt Sarah came downstairs about noon of the following day in a far better humour than she had carried to her room on her arrival at Castle Gide. In the first place she had discovered that the erstwhile bachelor rooms had been converted into a perfect little suite, with the appointments of which even a luxury-loving old lady determined to find fault with everything could hardly quarrel. During her voluntary seclusion she had been made as comfortable and waited on as well as if she were a rich woman in her own house, and the little dinner which had been served to her in the privacy of her own bijou salon was far superior to any meal that had ever been served to her before in Castle Gide, even when she had been mistress of it. Morning tea, therefore, found Aunt

Sarah mollified, a dainty breakfast served to put her almost into an attitude of peace and goodwill towards mankind, and a glass of pale sherry and a dry biscuit after her toilet had been made and the morning papers read sent her downstairs with the definite intention of being civil to her nephew's wife, whom she had come to Castle Gide prepared cordially to hate.

This frame of mind lasted for several hours. Lady Otterburn devoted herself to the old lady's entertainment, and, to her husband's unconcealed astonishment, roused more than once a grim chuckle of amusement, as she rattled her clever Transatlantic tongue across the luncheon-table. Aunt Sarah pleased! Aunt Sarah laughing! Aunt Sarah allowing someone else to monopolize the conversation! He had known her all his life, but such a spectacle had hitherto been denied him.

"My dear, you're a marvel," he said to his American countess when luncheon was over and Aunt Sarah had retired to her own apartments, still in high good-humour. "You bowled me over the first time we met. That was nothing. But Aunt Sarah! I couldn't have believed it possible. I wish I had asked all my uncles and aunts and cousins to see it."

"You don't know enough to run when you're in a hurry," replied Lady Otterburn. "You'd find her a real beautiful woman if you all took her the right way."

"Well, we shall see," said Otterburn. "You've had a grand success so far, but the experience of years teaches me that seasons of calm in Aunt Sarah's life are not lasting. Much depends on the afternoon nap."

Alas! Aunt Sarah's afternoon nap was a troubled one. It may have been the lobster salad, of which she had eaten too largely; it may have been the iced hock-cup, of which she had drunk too freely, that disturbed her slumbers. Whatever it was she came down again what time the tea-table was spread in the hall with her usual inclination to make herself disagreeable strongly in the ascendant, and, if possible, augmented by the reaction from her previous state of amiability. The first audacious sally made by her hostess, which would have been received with tolerant amusement at the luncheon-table, only drew a scandalized glare from Aunt Sarah, and the ominous words: "I must ask you to remember in whose presence you find yourself, if you please."

Lady Otterburn may have been surprised at this sudden change of atmosphere, but she seemed entirely unconcerned, and took no notice of her husband's surreptitious kick underneath the tea-table, which said as plain as speech, "I told you so." She talked with gay wit, but gave no opportunity for a further rebuke. But Aunt Sarah's twisted temper was not to be softened by the most searching tact, and her next contribution to the sociability of the occasion was the remark, "This tea is positively not fit to drink. In my day Withers would not have dared to keep such stuff in his shop."

"He don't keep it now," answered her hostess. "I have it bought in China and shipped overland. It costs four dollars the pound." [27]

"I have no doubt it is expensive," retorted Aunt Sarah, "although there is no occasion to poke your money down my throat. It is the way it is made. No servant can be trusted to make tea. I always have two teapots and make it myself. I find it is never fit to drink unless I do so."

"I'd just love to have you make some for yourself," said Lady Otterburn. "I'll ring the bell for two more teapots. It's too bad you shouldn't have it as you like it."

Larger Image

"I'LL RING THE BELL FOR TWO MORE TEAPOTS."

Aunt Sarah, who was secretly rather ashamed of having mistaken caravan-borne tea for that sold by the village grocer, suffered herself to be softened again, and became almost amiable when her hostess insisted upon drinking from the fresh brew which was presently made, and declared that it was a great improvement on the old.

"I think it *is* better," admitted Aunt Sarah. "I may say that I have never yet met anyone who could make tea as I can. You will excuse me for having commented on yours, but, as Edward knows, I always say what I think."

Edward did know it to his cost. But again he was astonished at the sight of Aunt Sarah charmed back to good-humour when apparently in one of her most relentless moods, and with further

astonishment he reminded himself that his experience did not afford a precedent for her apologizing for any word of blame that may have fallen from her lips. But he had no time to ponder on these things. Developments were proceeding.

"You find it a good plan always to say what you think?" asked Lady Otterburn, sweetly.

"It is the only honest plan," replied Aunt Sarah. "If everybody would do it instead of telling lies on all occasions, great or small, there would be a good deal less hypocrisy in the world than there is now."

"Well, I guess you are right," said Lady Otterburn. "I guess I'll commence right away and follow your example. And so will Edward. Now, mind, Edward, don't you dare to say a single word that you don't mean, and just you tell your Aunt Sarah exactly what you think as long as she's with us. And so will I. And all the people who are coming this evening shall be told to do the same."

"Eh? What?" exclaimed Aunt Sarah.

III.

When Aunt Sarah came down into the great hall at twenty minutes to nine that evening she found it full of young men and women who had arrived about an hour before, and whom she had kept waiting ten minutes for their dinner. She did not apologize for her late appearance. That was not [28] her custom. She singled out a young man of the company and said, "How do you do, Henry? I am pleased to see you at Castle Gide again. You used to come here frequently in happier times."

"They were not happier times for me, Aunt Sarah," replied the young man, rather nervously. "My chief recollection of them is that I was generally sent to bed before dinner for getting into mischief."

"Ah!" said Aunt Sarah. "That is the way to treat mischievous boys. And you don't bear malice."

"I am afraid I do," said the young man. "I was treated most unjustly."

"By whom, pray?" inquired Aunt Sarah, beginning to bridle.

"Very occasionally by Uncle Otterburn," said the young man. "Invariably by you."

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Aunt Sarah. "That is a pretty way to talk!"

"He must say what he thinks, you know," said Lady Otterburn. "We are all going to play at that as long as we are together. Anybody who is convicted of an insincere speech is to pay half a crown to the hospital fund. Here is the box. It contains a contribution from Edward, who told Lady Griselda that she was not at all late when she came down five minutes ago. Edward, take Aunt Sarah in to dinner. She has kept us waiting for nearly a quarter of an hour."

"Have I got into a company of lunatics?" inquired Aunt Sarah, as she took her nephew's arm.

Larger Image

"THERE WAS A REGULAR HUBBUB OF CONVERSATION ROUND THE DINNER-TABLE."

No member of the party with the exception of Aunt Sarah had reached middle-age. Most of the men were contemporaries of Otterburn's, the years of whose pilgrimage were thirty. Some of them were married and had their wives with them, but the majority were unattached, and there were several girls, some English and some American. Otterburn's grouse-moors were the ostensible excuse for their finding themselves collected at Castle Gide, but they were so well mixed that they would probably have succeeded in enjoying themselves even if there had been no shooting to occupy the days. There was a regular hubbub of conversation round the dinner-table on this first evening, and loud peals of laughter, rising above the din and clatter of twenty tongues all moving at once, seemed to indicate that Lady Otterburn's game was adding to the gaiety of the occasion.

"No," said a demure young lady, in answer to a request from her neighbour. "I will not play accompaniments for you after dinner. It is quite true, as you say, that I read music extraordinarily well. I have always politely denied it before, but I know I do. Your singing, however, is so

distasteful to me that I am sorry I cannot oblige you."

"I have got a good voice," said her neighbour, "and I have studied under the best masters."

"You have not profited by your studies," replied the lady; "and your voice, so far from being good, is very thin and of no quality whatsoever." [29]

"I guess," said a fair American, surveying the company, "that we're a good-looking crowd round this table. And, among all the women, I have a conviction that I go up for the beauty prize. I have had to hug that conviction in secret for a very long time, and now it's out."

Thus and thus was the House of Truth built up stone by stone, and Aunt Sarah's position was pitiable. Hitherto she had made her mark in whatever society she found herself by sheer insistence on her right to be frankly and critically disagreeable. On any ordinary occasion she would have had the whole tableful of young people prostrate under the terror of her biting tongue, and not a whit would she have cared for consequent unpopularity so long as she had made herself acknowledged as the dominating spirit of the assembly. Now she was met and foiled by the dexterous use of the very weapons which she had wielded so long and so unmercifully, and no arrogant speech could she make but its sting was removed by an equally outspoken reply.

Thus, to her right-hand neighbour, a young man with smooth black hair and a preternaturally solemn face: "I don't know who you are, but by your long upper lip I should judge you to be a Mortimer."

"My name and appearance are both undoubtedly Mortimer," he replied, gravely. "My character, I am happy to say, is not."

"Perhaps you do not know," said Aunt Sarah, "that I am a Mortimer?"

Larger Image

"'I WILL NOT STAND THIS INSOLENT BEHAVIOUR ANY LONGER,' SHE SAID."

"I am perfectly aware of it," was the answer. "It would cost me half a crown to congratulate you on the fact."

"And may I ask what fault you have to find with the family whose name you have the honour of bearing?"

"They are insufferably cantankerous and domineering."

"Not all of them," interrupted Otterburn, anxious above all desire for unsullied truth to avert the impending storm which was gathering around him. "You must not take his criticisms as personal, Aunt Sarah."

"Pass the box this way," said the solemn young man. "Otterburn will contribute another half-crown."

Before dinner was half-way through Aunt Sarah was in as black a rage as had ever darkened even her Olympian brow. By the time the ladies left the room she had delivered herself of as many insulting speeches as it usually took her a day to achieve, and her average output was no small one. But it was all to no purpose. Her most ambitious efforts, instead of striking a chill of terror to the hearts of her listeners, were warmly applauded, with an air of the utmost politeness, and from every quarter she received as good as she gave. It took her some time to realize that she was affording considerable amusement to her nephew's guests, but when she did arrive at that

state of knowledge she could hardly command herself sufficiently to leave the room without doing bodily hurt to someone.

"I will not stand this insolent behaviour any longer," she said to Lady Otterburn when the door of the dining-room had been closed behind them. "How dare you treat me in this way?"

"Why, bless me, Aunt Sarah," exclaimed Lady Otterburn, in well-feigned surprise, "you said [30] yourself that if everyone spoke the truth always, as you pride yourself on doing, it would be a real lovely thing. We are all speaking the truth under a penalty, and you are speaking it so well that you haven't been fined once."

"Psshtschah!" is the nearest possible orthographic rendering of the exclamation of contempt and disgust that forced itself from Aunt Sarah's lips. "I have had enough of this insensate folly," she continued. "I shall go straight to my room, and if I do not receive more respectful treatment in this house, where I so long reigned as undisputed mistress, I shall leave it to-morrow. Do you understand me?"

"I understand you very well," said Lady Otterburn. "And I will ask you to try and understand me. The respect which you demanded as mistress of this house is now due to me, and I look to receive it from my guests. If you discover that it is not within your power to grant it I shall not press you to prolong your visit."

Aunt Sarah again gave vent to the exclamation indicated above, and sailed up the broad staircase to her own apartments with anger and disgust marked on every line and curve of her figure.

IV.

Aunt Sarah had never been so angry before in her life. She was an extraordinarily disagreeable old woman—disagreeable in a masterly, cold-blooded, incisive way, partly because disagreeable speech was a genuine expression of her nature, partly because she had discovered in the course of years that she gained more by being disagreeable, which came easy to her, than by being pleasant, which did not. One of the weapons of her armoury was the feigning of anger, and few could stand upright before her wrath. But for this very reason she had seldom been opposed in such a way as to make her really angry, and now that this had happened to her she was almost beside herself with rage.

When she reached the cosy little sitting-room which had been devoted to her special use, having closed the door with a bang which re-echoed along the corridors, she found herself surrounded by just that atmosphere of personal comfort in which her sybaritic old soul delighted. A cheerful fire burned in the grate. Before it was drawn up the easiest of easy chairs. At the side of the chair stood a table upon which was a tray containing those refreshments, solid and liquid, with which Aunt Sarah loved best to fortify herself for the hours of darkness, a collection of papers and magazines, and half-a-dozen new books. The gay chintz curtains were close-drawn, and the electric lights behind their rosy shades threw just the right amount of light upon this pleasant interior.

Aunt Sarah had often before left a company of people in displeasure and retired to her own apartment with a bang of the door behind her. But once shut in by herself the expression of her face had usually changed, and with a grim chuckle at her own astuteness, and the remembrance of her effective departure, she had settled herself down with a mind wiped clean of emotion to the enjoyment of her own society.

But to-night Aunt Sarah took no delight in her own society, nor did her angry old face change as she closed the door on the cosy warmth of her room. It is true that she sat down in the easy chair in front of the fire. Women do not pace the room in their rage as is the custom with men. All the same, a consuming rage held her. It had in it a tinge of helplessness, and it shook her wiry old frame like an ague. Aunt Sarah was beaten, and she had the sense to recognise it.

By-and-by she began to feel rather alarmed at her state of mind. Helpless anger is not a soothing emotion, and Aunt Sarah, in spite of her well-nourished vigour, was an old woman. It was very uncomfortable to be so angry, and it was still more uncomfortable to realize that her power of keeping her own personality in the ascendant had been wrested from her by "a chit of a low-born foreigner," as she expressed it to herself.

When her anger had tired her sufficiently the feeling of helplessness increased, and sorely against her will Aunt Sarah began to pity herself. She fought against the feeling of self-pity for some time—she was made of sterner stuff than those who cherish it as a mild luxury—but it overpowered her at last. She suddenly saw herself old and, for all her many relations and acquaintances, friendless—worse than friendless, feared and disliked. She was also, for the time being, homeless. She had let her little box of a house in London for the winter, and had intended to stay at Castle Gide for at least a month. If she carried out her threat of leaving the next morning she had nowhere to go to, and she was accustomed to run things so close that she actually had not the money to take her to some place suitable to her exalted station and to keep [31] herself there for four weeks.

Then she suddenly realized that in the depths of her queer, twisted heart she was fond of her nephew; also that her nephew's American bride had brought her both deference and entertainment as long as she had treated her with ordinary courtesy. She also discovered that she had a sentiment for Castle Gide, which had been her own home for thirty-five years, that was

not wholly dependent upon its capabilities of affording her the degree of luxurious living which she most appreciated. At this point something happened which had not happened for fully half a century. Two large tears trickled down Aunt Sarah's face. She knew herself for a lonely, disagreeable old woman, very, very poor.

Larger Image

"SHE KNEW HERSELF FOR A LONELY, DISAGREEABLE OLD WOMAN."

When Otterburn came out of the dining-room with the rest of the men he drew his wife a little aside and said to her: "Look here, old lady, I don't think we can carry this on. I am afraid Aunt Sarah will have a fit if we bait her much more. Her eyes rolled most unpleasantly at dinner. Where is she, by-the-bye?"

"She has gone upstairs looking mighty ugly," replied her ladyship. "She is going to express her baggage home to-morrow."

"Oh, she mustn't do that," said Otterburn. "She has always gone on like that, and her bark is worse than her bite. You go and calm her down, and we'll stop this game."

"We've won," said Lady Otterburn. "But I don't feel very spry over the victory. She is an old lady, and I guess we'll just have to let her play by herself as long as she camps here. I'll go up to her right now."

So Lady Otterburn entered Aunt Sarah's room just in time to catch her drying the two tears aforesaid and a few more that had followed them. A wave of compunction passed over her, and she felt that she and her husband and their guests had all behaved with the most unmannerly brutality.

"Dear Aunt Sarah," she said, "I hate that you should be all alone up here while we are enjoying ourselves downstairs. Won't you come down and hear Mrs. Vanhooten sing? They call her the nightingale of Cincinnati in the States."

Now, if Lady Otterburn had followed the impulse that came to her to kneel by the side of the old woman and mix tears, she would almost certainly have been repulsed and would have found Aunt Sarah once more encased in a full suit of prickles; for, however much in a moment of weakness that redoubtable old lady may have pitied herself, she certainly would have permitted no one else to pity her. But Lady Otterburn was a young woman of considerable tact as well as generosity of feeling, and her method of approach proved to be the best she could have chosen.

"Not to-night," replied Aunt Sarah. "I confess to being slightly upset at what has occurred, and I do not feel equal to mixing with your guests at present."

"I guess we must have offended you with our little game," said Lady Otterburn. "But we didn't mean any harm, and we have left off playing it now."

"It has served its purpose," said Aunt Sarah, slowly. "I have been thinking matters over since I came upstairs. It is not easy for a woman of my age and character to confess herself in the wrong, but as far as you are concerned, my dear, I—I—really think that by showing mutual respect and consideration we may, perhaps, get on very well together."

The speech had not ended quite in the manner Aunt Sarah had intended when she began it, but the habits of a lifetime are not changed in a moment, and its underlying meaning was, at any rate, clear. Aunt Sarah had come as near as she had ever done in her life to an unreserved apology for her behaviour. [32]

Lady Otterburn was prepared to meet her a good deal more than half-way.

"Of course, you feel seeing me here in your place," she said. "I don't wonder. But both Edward and I want you to look upon Castle Gide as your home just the same as before." (This was not strictly true so far as Edward was concerned, but it must be admitted to have been generous.) "And I'm new to this country and to a position to which you were born. There are so many ways in which you could help, Aunt Sarah."

"My dear," said the old woman, "any help I can give you you shall have. But I think you are quite capable of holding your own anywhere, and—and of adorning any position."

So the treaty of peace was concluded, and the Countess and the Dowager Countess of Otterburn spent a pleasant hour together talking amicably of many things.

When Aunt Sarah came downstairs the next morning she found everybody very anxious to please her. The general attitude of the party was that of people who had committed a breach of courtesy and were ashamed of themselves. Probably this attitude drove compunction into Aunt Sarah's soul more completely than any other could have done. She met advances with amiability, and exercised her fearless tongue and her undoubtedly sharp intellect to the general amusement rather than to the general terrifying of the company. By the time that the house-party broke up she had discovered, possibly to her amazement, that ascendency could be maintained as completely and far more pleasantly by force of character combined with wit and good-humour than by force of character supported by aggressive arrogance alone.

And thus, fortified by experience of its efficacy, Aunt Sarah's conversion was permanent. This is not to say that from a most objectionable old woman she changed at a bound into an exceedingly attractive one. The simile of the leopard and the Ethiopian still holds good. But there was an all-round improvement in her attitude towards the world at large which, whenever she found herself at Castle Gide, was an improvement which seemed to approach the miraculous.

Larger Image

"THE TWO LADIES OTTERBURN WORSHIPPING TOGETHER AT A CRADLE SHRINE."

A year after the events of this story, when the two Ladies Otterburn had been worshipping together for an hour at a cradle shrine plentifully bedecked with lace, the younger of them said to her husband:—

"Dear Aunt Sarah! She has a real loving heart. I guess it was warped by her never having a baby of her own."

How a Chromo-Lithograph is Printed.

By L. Gray-Gower.

MANY readers have no doubt wondered how the vivid and faithful reproductions of celebrated pictures, with which the public has latterly become so familiar, are reproduced. There is a vague idea that it is the result of some occult colour-process that involves several distinct printings, but exactly what that process is remains commonly a sealed book. But there must be many readers who know nothing whatever of lithographic stones and colour-printing. Let us briefly, then, explain the principle.

About a hundred years ago a struggling Bavarian printer, Alois Senefelder by name, having no paper at hand with which to indite his washing bill, used for the purpose a flat slab of peculiarly soft stone which he had in his workshop. The ink he used was a rude and greasy mixture. The appearance of the writing on the stone suggested to him the possibility of reproducing the writing. His experiments were crowned with success, and lithography naturally took its place amongst the great industrial arts of the world.

If you enter any great lithographer's workshop to-day, like that of the Dangerfield Company at St. Albans, you will notice huge slabs of stone, two or three inches thick, ranging in size from that of a large bedstead to that of a small book. All these stones may be said to come from one place—Solenhofen, in the district of Monheim.

At the Dangerfield Company's works the writer seemed to be passing through a miniature quarry, or through a tombstone warehouse. The stones arrive at the works in their rough condition. They are prepared for use by being ground face to face with sand and water.

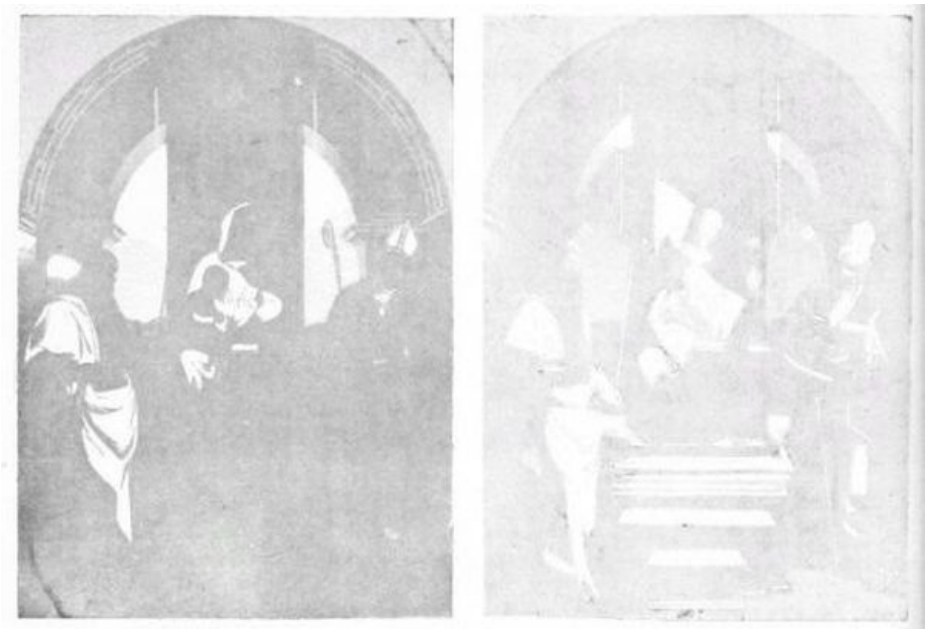
The broad principles of lithography consist, of course, in the strong adhesion of greasy substances to calcareous stone, the affinity of one greasy body for another, and the antipathy of such bodies to water. When water is applied to the surface of the stone it remains only on such portions as are not covered with grease, so that, if a roller charged with greasy ink be passed over the stone, the ink will only adhere to the greasy portions, while the moist parts will resist the ink and remain clean. In consequence, when a sheet of paper is pressed upon the stone, it only receives an impression in ink from the greasy line. This is the whole theory of lithography.

And now comes in the task of the expert colour-master. There has been growing up of late years a class of experts in colour for whom the entire National Gallery is only a collection of tints on canvas more or less adroitly combined. These men are master-lithographers. For them the most divine creations of Raphael, Titian, Claude, and Turner are workmanlike colour-combinations, which it is their business to analyze and resolve into their separate constituents. To-day the dead walls and hoardings of the kingdom are covered with wonderful posters and the shop windows lined with gorgeous lithographs evolved by men whose chromatic perception is so acute that they can tell you at a glance what the great Turner himself did not know: how many colours go to the making of one of Turner's pictures.

Larger Image

THE ARTISTS' ROOM AT THE DANGERFIELD COMPANY'S WORKS, SHOWING THE LITHOGRAPHIC STONES.

From a Photo. by **[*the Dangerfield Co.***



FIRST STONE—LIGHT YELLOW. **THIRD STONE—LIGHTEST BLUE.**

There are very few artists who can say exactly how their colour-effects were produced, or precisely what pigments were employed to attain certain tones. They work away, slowly painting and repainting until the end desired is reached.

SECOND STONE—DARK YELLOW. **FOURTH STONE—LIGHT FLESH TINT.**

"We have master-lithographers in our employ," said Mr. Adolphe Tuck to the writer, "who can tell almost at a glance how many colours and shades go to the making of any given picture, no matter how complex." [35]

FIFTH STONE—DARK BROWN.

Take the case of one of the most successful reproductions of one of the old masters, "The Madonna Ansidei," which hangs in the National Gallery. The colour-master of whom we have spoken quickly resolved this picture into eighteen colours, involving the use of eighteen lithographic stones, each printing a separate tint and being of itself almost a separate picture, until by repeated printings the whole masterpiece was gradually built up. This is the example of which we present illustrations in this article, and is the work of Mr. Adolphe Tuck.

SIXTH STONE—LIGHT BROWN.

But what an eye for colour! What a gift for the realities and essentials of tone to be able, without any mixings of paint or other analytic experiments, to divine straight away just what colours are needed, and prepare stone after stone with the absolute certainty that the combination would produce such a result!

SEVENTH STONE—LIGHT BLUE.

To illustrate the almost marvellous capability of the colour-expert in analyzing the colours of a picture submitted to him, one may mention that the late Sir Charles Eastlake, P.R.A., once ventured to assert that there were sixteen colours or shades visible in a picture by Van Dyck. The lithographic colour-expert declared there were only eleven. Accordingly an accurate copy was [36] painted at the National Gallery of the picture, so accurate that it was difficult to discern a difference between the copy and the original. This was duly analyzed and placed on the stones, eleven in number, and the eleventh printing disclosed an exact facsimile of the copy, and therefore of the original.

EIGHTH STONE—PINK.

NINTH STONE—MEDIUM GREY.

Sir Charles Eastlake acknowledged himself beaten, and readily paid tribute to the wonderful analytic powers of an artist, or, rather, of a scientist, who could not paint a picture but could tell just what a picture was made of.

TENTH STONE—MEDIUM BLUE.

In the case of the Ansidei Madonna, the canvas was copied at the National Gallery under the eye of the Director. The first stage of reproduction was to transfer upon the stone a sort of yellowish-grey base or silhouette of the whole picture (No. 1). It will be noticed that the high lights are upon portions of St. John's and Mary's garments and the mitre of St. Nicholas.

The picture on the next stone, which is to overlay the first, gives more detail.

Gradually these pictures, each done by a separate artist, under the eyes of the colour expert or master-lithographer, assume greater perfection, as colour by colour is added, one from every stone, until in No. 9 one would fain think, as the artist himself may have thought, that the picture was finished, or at least approaching completion. But, as a matter of fact, it is only half completed. It is still lacking many necessary qualities; the reds and the greens and the greys and [37]
the gold have yet to be added. What a quaint enigma is presented by Nos. 11, 12, 14, and 15! Taken by themselves they seem meaningless, but combined with their forerunners and successors they are seen to be essential to the finished picture.

ELEVENTH STONE—MEDIUM YELLOW.

In the very final stages the stones are devoted to greys, which by overlaying one another impart a roundness and solidity to the design which it would otherwise lack. It may be mentioned that this reproduction is, according to Mr. Tuck, the most successful, as it is the most elaborate, colour-lithograph ever attempted.

TWELFTH STONE—DARK RED.

THIRTEENTH STONE—DARK FLESH TINT.

In the case of an ordinary colour-drawing the usual method is to prepare a keystone—that is to say, an outline of the picture, together with the black or grey portions. It is then marked off into colours, each colour requiring, as has been said, a separate stone. Of the uncoloured outline as many copies are printed as there are to be colours in the finished picture, and each of these serves as a key or guide in determining in what position on each stone the separate colour shall be. Each artist then sets to work on his own part of the picture, which is very often, as will be seen by our illustrations, a picture by itself. The master-lithographer knows just how many of these pictures will be necessary to achieve a facsimile. It may be that one colour will frequently [38] have to be printed over another in order to produce the precise effect.

FOURTEENTH STONE—DARK BLUE.

For colour-printing the stone is polished. Naturally the order in which the colours succeed each other is very important, and must be carefully considered. But perhaps the great object of the maker of pictures from stones, after the picture in its various phases has been prepared, is to see that each colour falls accurately into its proper place on the paper. Nothing is more common, in a badly done lithograph, than to find in the face of the human subject, say an attractive young lady, the flesh colour overlapping the collar or the hat, or even extruding itself out into space beyond the ear. All this implies bad "registering." The drawing on each stone must be made to fit in, or register, with the preceding one, so that, as the paper is passed through the printing machine, the picture is built up colour on colour, each, however, being allowed to dry before the next is

applied.

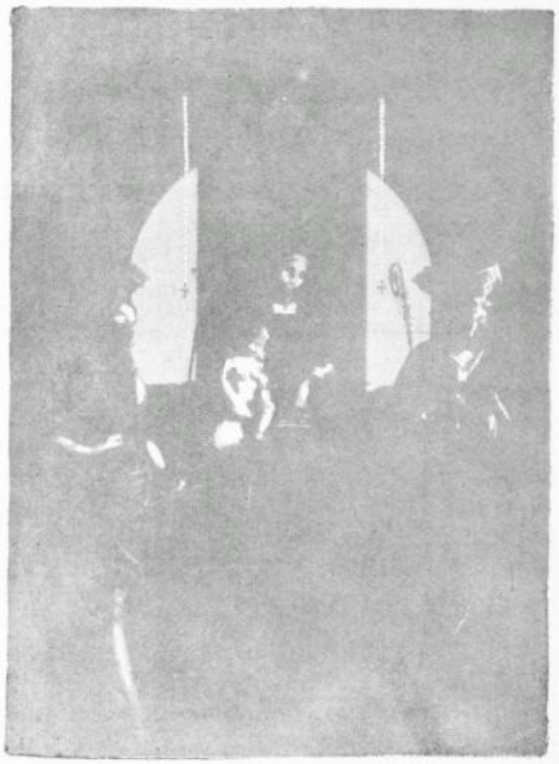
In preparing the stone to take the picture extreme care has to be exercised, for so great is its affinity for grease that even a finger-mark will become perpetuated. After a drawing on the stone is finished it is a precaution to coat it with a solution of gum-arabic and nitric acid, which fills up the pores of the stone in the unfilled parts and prevents the drawing from spreading.

FIFTEENTH STONE—LIGHT RED.

SIXTEENTH STONE—DARK GREY.

Having described the manner in which the picture on stone is prepared, we now come to the printing of it. To begin with, there is the "proving-press," which is employed in preparing the stones for the machine. The gummy solution is first washed off, but sufficient remains in the pores of the stones to offer a resisting influence to the ink when the time for printing comes. At this stage the stone is damped and a roller charged with printing ink is passed over its surface, every part of the design being brought in contact with the ink. Accidental grease spots are removed by scraping, polishing, or the application of acid, otherwise they would develop and spoil the result. [39]

SEVENTEENTH STONE—GOLD.



EIGHTEENTH STONE—LIGHT GREY.

When the stone is thus rectified it is subjected to what is technically termed etching; that is, a weak solution of gum and nitric acid is applied, which causes the surface of the bare part of the stones to be gently eroded, and gives a stronger "tooth" to the design. Although the ink of the design itself may now be washed away and the picture be invisible, yet it is there, ready to receive any desired colour which forms the part of the picture. The stones have to be damped and inked before each impression is taken, but nevertheless the printing proceeds with great rapidity, ranging from six hundred to one thousand impressions per hour.

Larger Image

THE FINISHED CHROMO-LITHOGRAPH:
"THE MADONNA ANSIDEI" (AFTER RAPHAEL).

[40]

Sadi the Fiddler.

AN INCIDENT IN THE SIEGE OF STRASBURG.

By Max Pemberton.

ADI the fiddler, carrying the little black case under his arm, locked the door of his garret as carefully as though it had contained the wealth of the Cæsars. It was the night of Monday, the twenty-first day of September, in the year 1870. Sadi had not tasted food for twenty hours, and, though he well understood that there was very little to eat in the town of Strasburg, he went forth bravely in quest of it. After all, someone might throw him a bone, even though he were nothing more than a poor, crazy fiddler.

"Heaven knows they have music enough here," he said to himself, as he descended the narrow staircase and came out beneath the eaves of the old houses. This was the thirty-second night since the hated Prussians had come swarming down from Wörth and had invested the city like an army of human locusts. There was scarcely a minute by day or night when the great guns ceased to thunder, or the shots to play havoc with the ancient streets of gallant Strasburg. Even as the fiddler walked away from his own house that night a great shell, thrown from one of the batteries to the north-west, came singing and sighing above him, and then fell with a mighty crash upon the roof next to his own. It was an incendiary shell, Sadi hazarded, and presently a tongue of flame leaping up from the doomed building told him that he had guessed aright. He knew that his worldly possessions, such as they were, would soon be engulfed in that raging furnace of smoke and fire; and he reflected with a sigh, odd fellow that he was, on a picture which he would have given much to save. Sadi wondered now that he had not brought the picture with him. Standing there upon the narrow pavement, while the flames licked about the window of his attic, he remembered the day when Lucy, the daughter of Ludenmayer, the artist from Bad Nauheim, had given the portrait to him and had written the words "In grateful remembrance" upon one corner of it. "We shall never return to Strasburg—never meet again, dear friend," she had said. He knew that it was true, admitted that she could be nothing to him—and yet his eyes were dim when he turned from the burning house and set off to wander aimlessly through the terrible streets.

He had never been a rich man, but the outbreak of the war between France and Prussia robbed him in a day of his employment and left him a beggar. Nero had fiddled while Rome was burning, but no one in Strasburg desired to emulate that incomparable artist; and while there had been days when Sadi might have earned a good dinner by playing the Marseillaise to patriotic hosts, his pride forbade him and his violin was silent. The same sense of the dignity of his art kept him from the public distribution of food ordered by the Mayor and the brave General Uhrich. He, Sadi Descourcelles, had the blood of kings in his veins. A philosophic observer might have remarked that it ran thin and sluggish upon that twenty-first day of September, for he, Sadi, was famishing, ravenous, desperate with the gnawing hunger as of youth and strenuous life. He felt that he could commit any crime for bread. He searched the very gutters with his eyes for any scrap of food that fortune might have cast there. Such lighted windows as showed to him the tables spread for dinner or supper moved him to frenzies of desire. Why should some eat when others were starving? And the Prussians killed all indiscriminately, he said, rich or poor, old and young, mothers and children. What folly resisted the right of Bismarck and the Red Prince? Sadi prayed that the city might fall and bread be given to him; but with the next breath he was cursing the blue-coats and hoping in his heart that Strasburg might never surrender. For he was a patriot in spite of his poverty.

It was a warm night of September, with a starry sky to be seen here and there between the clouds of sulphurous smoke which floated above the ramparts. Few walked abroad, for there was danger in the streets, and scarcely any cessation of the flying shells which the Prussians hurled upon the doomed city. Sadi was accustomed to the awful sounds and sights which accompanied the siege, and they were powerless any longer to affright him. Even the dead in the gutters—the [41]
children who had not made the war but paid the price of it with their young blood—found him callous and without sympathy. As these had died, so he would die and be at rest. He envied them as they lay there—the flare of the burning houses showed him the white faces and they seemed to sleep. Sadi believed that when next he slept it would be as these—eternally and without pain.

Larger Image

"THE TWO PARTED SURLILY."

He was indifferent to the danger; nevertheless some little measure of prudence remained to him, and he walked in the centre of the street to avoid the flying fragments and the falling timbers. Doleful cries from stricken houses fell upon deaf ears so far as Sadi the fiddler was concerned. The warnings of a friendly soldier, who told him that he was drawing perilously near the zone of fire, he received with a curt word of thanks. Had the man given him a crust he would have kissed him on both cheeks; but the fellow was hungry himself, and the two parted surlily—the one to a beer-shop, the other toward the ramparts.

"You can play them a tune, old fellow," the soldier said.

Sadi answered, "Why so, friend, since the houses dance already?"

Yes; the houses danced indeed, and the mad music of the guns waxed more terrible as Sadi approached the ramparts and could see the cannon for himself. It was just like a display of fireworks in the gardens of the Tuileries, he said. From minute to minute the dark background of the sky would be cleaved by a line of fire, which marked the path of an incendiary shell as it soared above the quivering city and fell in a shower of flame upon house, or church, or citadel. The hither ground was a mighty waste of rubble, a desert of rubbish, where a few weeks ago houses had stood up proudly, and churches had invited worshippers, and children had found their homes. And all this misery, this untold and savage destruction, was the work of the hated Prussians over yonder, where the night was red and the darkness behind it shielded the assassins. Sadi, in the presence of those who were doing something for France, asked himself what he had done. The answer was, "Nothing." He reflected upon it a little bitterly and turned away toward the west, walking from the ramparts of that unhappy quarter of the city which the Prussians had destroyed ten days ago and now forgotten.

The path was desolate—none trod it but Sadi the fiddler, and he stumbled often as he went. So completely had the Prussians demolished the quarter that the very contour of the streets was lost and a dismal plain presented itself—an open field of rubbish, broken here and there by great abysses which once had been the cellars of the houses. Sadi did not know why he walked in such [42] a place or what hope of bread it could give him; but when he stumbled upon an open cellar he reflected that, after all, the house had been quitted in haste, and that some provision might have been left in its larders. The bare possibility appealing to his ravenous hunger sent him climbing down into the cellar like a schoolboy upon a forbidden venture. Impatiently, and with a strength he did not know that he possessed, he delved among the rubble, thrust at the great beams, and wormed his way toward the vault. None would interfere with him, he argued; there was no law, military or civil, which forbade a man to share a bone with the dogs. Sadi was like a miser seeking for his gold; and when at length he stood upright in that which undoubtedly had been the larder of a house, he felt all the joy of an explorer who has discovered an unknown city. Unhappily, such a transport endured for the briefest of moments. Sadi was just telling himself that he was a very lucky fellow when a great hand, thrust out of the darkness, clutched at his throat, and the rays of a lantern shining full in his face blinded him to any other sights.

"Well, my body-snatcher," cried a voice in guttural French, "and what may you be doing here?"

A German spoke; there was no doubt of it at all. Moreover, he was a huge fellow, probably a Prussian from the North; and although he wore the uniform of a French regiment of chasseurs, it was ridiculously small for him and showed its deficiencies when his cloak fell aside. Quick-witted and mentally alert, Sadi guessed the fellow's business there at the first hazard. He could be no

one else than one of the many Prussian spies who then found their way in and out of Strasburg so readily. This desert waste of the city would harbour him surely—perchance he waited an opportunity to recross the lines, and was hiding meanwhile in this labyrinth like a fox that has gone to earth. All this passed through Sadi's mind in a moment, but it was accompanied by a cold shiver as though icy water were running down his back. For he perceived at once that the Prussian carried a revolver in his right hand and that the finger itched upon the trigger. A word, a step, might cost him his life. Sadi stood rigid as a statue, while the sweat gathered in heavy drops upon his brow.

"Come, no nonsense!" the Prussian repeated, menacingly. "You had better be honest with me. What is your business here? I will give you the half of a minute to tell me."

Sadi breathed heavily, but he spoke apparently without emotion.

"I have had nothing to eat for twenty hours," he said; "naturally I came here for food."

The Prussian interrupted him with a brutal laugh.

"Then you certainly live on vermin, my bag of bones," he retorted, with a jeer. "Come, your time is nearly up, and my fingers are impatient. You will really be very foolish if you are not candid with me."

He raised the pistol slowly, and deliberately touched Sadi's forehead with the cold barrel. The lantern's light showed a hard face and small eyes set above puffy cheeks. He wore a moustache in the French fashion and an uncouth imperial, which added to his grotesque appearance. Sadi knew that such a man would think it no greater crime to shoot a Frenchman than to drown a dog. Heroically as he had philosophized about death ten minutes ago, the nearer presence of it was very dreadful to him. He could imagine the sting of the bullet as it crashed through his forehead, the sudden giddiness, the voice which said, "Never again shall you speak, or breathe, or look up to the sun." A desperate desire of life came to him. He trembled violently, pressed his hand to his heart, but could not utter a single word. The Prussian watched him without compassion. He began to count ironically, "One, two, three," he said; "I will count ten, *canaille*," and he started off from the beginning again. He was at the number "five" when a second voice in the cellar caused him to turn sharply upon his heel and then to salute in the rigid German fashion.

"Ah, Herr Lieutenant, here is a job for you," he exclaimed, as though glad to be quit of the responsibility. "I found this rat in the hole here. Look at him for yourself and see what kind of a rogue he is."

The new-comer was quite a youth, a fair, freckled German lad, in little more than his twentieth year. He, too, wore a French uniform, but it was that of the artillery, and Sadi observed that it was a better fit than the loose clothes of the rough customer who had just been threatening him. Such trifling facts occupied the fiddler's mind to the exclusion of all else. He believed that he was about to die, and yet could count the buttons on the lieutenant's tunic, guess at the State he came [43] from, and hazard the colour of his eyes. The lad was a Bavarian, he said, a merry, laughing youngster. Impossible to believe that he would sanction a brutal murder. Sadi breathed quickly—he appealed to the lad's sympathy in an earnest, manly voice.

Larger Image

"HE RAISED THE PISTOL SLOWLY."

"Herr Lieutenant, it is nothing of the kind," he protested; "I am a poor wretch of a fiddler, whose garret your people have just burned."

It was not a wise thing to have said, and the young soldier's interruption told Sadi as much.

"My people, sir!" he cried, sharply, and with feigned astonishment. "What people do you mean, then?"

"It is as I say," interrupted the trooper; "he is a spy who has tracked us to our hole, Herr Lieutenant. Better make an end of him while there is time."

"But not with a pistol, trooper," retorted the boy, with a little laugh. "At least, let us sup first."

Sadi breathed again, while the two Prussians discussed the pros and cons in a low voice. "If these men would but quarrel!" was his idea. They, however, had no intention of doing anything of the kind, for presently they ceased to wrangle, and the young soldier exclaimed, with some severity:—

"You say that you are a fiddler. What proofs of that can you give us?"

"My fiddle," answered Sadi, almost joyously; "you will find it on the stones upstairs, sir."

The answer surprised the men very much.

"Go and look for it, trooper," said the officer, quietly; "there is plenty of time before daylight to settle this fellow's affair. Besides, the captain is fond of a little music."

The trooper clambered up out of the cellar at the word of command, while the lieutenant calmly lighted a cigar and surveyed Sadi with an ironical glance.

"Poor business, yours, just now, is it not?" he asked.

"So poor that I am starving," said Sadi, with dignified simplicity.

"Ah! And you look for your supper on the dust-heaps. Just like a fiddler."

"I have walked to the ramparts and back every evening for three years," rejoined Sadi, whose self-possession remained to him. "The habit clings to me; besides, what is the harm?" he asked.

"The captain will teach you that; don't let me deceive you at all; he will certainly shoot you, old fellow. For myself, I am sensitive; it is my weakness to prefer live bodies to dead ones. I could not —no, I could not harm a fly, my Stradivarius. That is why you are now allowed to say your prayers."

His own humour amused him, and presently he continued:—

"But perhaps you do not want to say your prayers, my Amati. Other people generally do that when Frenchmen are fiddling. Here is your violin, I see. Let us play it together." [44]

The trooper returned while he spoke, carrying the frayed black leather case which stood for all that life could give to Sadi Descourcelles. When the lieutenant seized upon it with rough hands it was as though someone had struck Sadi a blow.

"Gently, for Heaven's sake, sir," he cried. "Do you know that my fiddle is worth five thousand francs?"

"To us possibly a good deal more," retorted the lieutenant, uncompassionately. "The captain shall read your music, my little Paganini. This way, if you please, and mind your precious neck if you prefer pistols."

It was the lieutenant's evident idea that the violin-case contained the private papers of a common spy, who had fallen by some lucky chance into the hands of the very men he would have betrayed to the French. Proud at the capture, and confident of applause from his superior officers, he now pushed Sadi across the cellar in which they stood to a door upon the far side of it, whence a flight of steps led downward to a second cellar, more spacious and less encumbered. Here candles burned upon a rude table, a fire flickered upon a tiled hearth, and burly figures moved about a copper, whence a fragrant smell diffused itself. Sadi perceived at once that he had been conducted into a very nest of Prussians. He had no doubt whatever that these were the men who had been carrying news of Strasburg to the Red Prince since the siege began; their startled exclamations when the door opened, the quick exchange of sign and counter-sign, left no other conclusion possible. And he understood what he had to hope from them—he, who knew their secret and could, by a word, bring a rabble there which would tear them limb from limb.

The trooper thrust Sadi forward toward the fire, while coarse, stubbly faces peered into his own, and more than one hand reached out for a candle to examine him more closely. To the hurried questions: "Whom have you here; what cattle is this?" the lieutenant answered, simply: "I must see the captain; please to wake him." In a tense interval, during which someone entered a lunette of the cellar and touched a sleeping figure upon the shoulder, the ruffian by the copper asked Sadi if he were hungry, and, being answered "Yes," he took a ladleful of the boiling soup and poured it over the prisoner's fingers. Sadi cried out sharply; but before the act could be repeated a burly man strode out of the alcove and gave the fellow a box on the ear which sounded like a pistol-shot.

"What do you mean by that, sergeant?" the new-comer asked.

"A spy from the ramparts. I was keeping him warm, Herr Captain," was the answer.

"But this is no spy; this is Sadi the fiddler."

Sadi turned with a cry of joy.

"Ludenmayer! You, my friend!" he exclaimed.

"Sadi! Old Sadi the fiddler! Impossible!"

"Indeed, it is possible. Old Sadi, as you say, and so hungry that he could eat the bones off your dishes."

"Then he shall sup with us. A hungry man makes friends with strange company, and we are that, as you guess, Maître Sadi. Come, sergeant, fill our friend a bowl of soup. Let him spy out that to begin with. Eh, Sadi, you will not refuse a bowl of soup even from the Prussians? Then let us see you fall to. We can talk of old friends afterwards."

There were some murmurs at this from the men about the table, but the sergeant obeyed the order sullenly, and a bowl of the hot soup was set before the astonished Sadi almost before he had realized that a lucky accident had saved his life—for the moment, at any rate. Ludenmayer, honestly glad to see an old acquaintance, even under such circumstances, began to assure the rest that they had nothing to fear from Sadi; but at this the fiddler put down his spoon and flatly contradicted his friend.

"Not so," he said, blandly; "if it were in my power I would hang the lot of you!"

They laughed at him now—laughed at him for a foolish crank, airing his absurd patriotism even at the pistol's mouth. While some of them said that he would soon have Prussians enough for his neighbours in Strasburg, others promised the city twenty, thirty, forty hours of her freedom.

"And we shall have you for our guest, friend Sadi," Ludenmayer said, affably. "We like you so much that we cannot part with you. No, we must certainly keep you until the Red Prince comes in; after that we will send you to Munich to fiddle at the opera. Eh, my boy, there's a career—to scrape this new Wagner stuff and hear the madmen say that you are a genius. Will you come to [45] Munich and see little Lucy again? I know that you will, Sadi."

Sadi sighed, but did not answer his friend. If the name of Lucy were a sweet remembrance to him, this promise of Strasburg's surrender and of the humiliation it must put upon France cut him to the quick. These men about him, jesting in the face of death, defiant of all risks—how much, perchance, they had done in the terrible weeks of the siege to bring about this inevitable cataclysm and the ruin and death which attended it! Their reward would be promotion and applause from those who had contrived France's misfortunes. None would punish them, none bring them to account, Sadi reflected bitterly; and, reflecting, he asked himself of a sudden if he were not the appointed agent—he, the humble fiddler, sent there by the chances of the night to discover and, it might be, to betray them.

"IF IT WERE IN MY POWER I WOULD HANG THE LOT OF YOU."

The idea came to him quite unexpectedly while the Prussians were at their supper. In another he would have scoffed at it, but Sadi had long been fretting upon his own uselessness and the poor part he had played at the time of his country's need; and now it came to him as in a flash that this was the appointed hour. That he would lose his own life in the endeavour to give these men up to France he was quite convinced; but this contemplation of sacrifice pleased him, and there was but one regret—that he could do nothing which would not wound the father of her he had so greatly loved. Yes, if he could call Frenchmen to this hiding-place they would spare none, and Ludenmayer would perish with the others. Sadi said that many a daughter mourned a father in [46] Strasburg that day—why should little Lucy be spared? And yet he could not bring himself to harm his old friend. Did he not owe his life to him?

It was a strange scene—the big cellar lighted by guttering candles, the red fire flickering upon

the hearth, and the sombre figures of the burly Prussians lolling over their dishes or their pipes. From time to time one or other would quit the place stealthily, returning anon with news from the ramparts or the streets. The young lieutenant disappeared altogether toward midnight, and Sadi knew that he had re-crossed the lines while his friends were pledging him in giant bumpers of champagne. As the hours went on the hilarity became reckless and, as it seemed to Sadi, even dangerous. Ludenmayer called for silence more than once, but the men, warmed with the wine, obeyed him reluctantly, and were soon talking and laughing again. It was at the height of such an outburst that Sadi touched his friend upon the shoulder and bethought him of the very first lie he had told in all his life.

"Did you say good-bye to the Herr Lieutenant?" he asked, in a low voice; and then continued, "I hope so, for you will never see him again, friend Ludenmayer."

The captain, who had been squatting upon a heap of straw by Sadi's side, laughed a little incredulously, but his nervousness was evident when he asked:—

"And why should we not see him again, Sadi?"

"Because they know where he will recross to-night."

"They know! Who knows, then?"

Larger Image

"I CAME HERE TO WARN YOU."

"Levoire and the staff. It is rumoured that you are hiding in the ruins. I came here to warn you—you alone, mind, not the others."

He raised a finger as much as to say, "This is the compact between us." The Prussians round about were playing cards and dominoes, and quarrelling over their games. Ludenmayer, fallen serious in a moment, seemed to be turning over Sadi's words in his mind. Presently he said:—

"Levoire was a friend of yours, I think?"

"I had the honour to be instructor to his wife."

"Then she was your informant?"

He had put the idea into Sadi's head, and the fiddler seized upon it with avidity.

"We need not go into that. If you doubt her information, prove it for yourself. Your friends here are scarcely capable."

"That is true, the cattle. They think that their work is over. I must certainly go, Sadi—and take you with me."

"Not so, Ludenmayer; I must have nothing to do with it. Besides, I am very comfortable here."

"For the time being, yes. But if anything should happen to me, they would assuredly hang you, friend Sadi."

"I will take my chances, Ludenmayer. Remember, it is you alone that I wish to serve. They will at least respect your orders." [47]

"Give them your word to be silent, and they will let you go away at once. There is nothing easier, Sadi."

"For a Prussian, perhaps—for me, no. We have been comrades—let that suffice, Ludenmayer. A wise man would go at once."

The eyes of the two met, and the Prussian seemed to read something of this odd fellow's purpose in his dilated pupils and the stern, set expression of his mouth. It came to Ludenmayer that he and the gregarious dozen of spies with him were already in a trap from which haste alone would save them. This simple old fiddler knew much more than he would tell. Ludenmayer, trained to selfishness by his occupation, cared nothing for that which happened to the others if he could save his own skin. He was grateful to Sadi, and he wrung his hand.

"Well," he said, in a louder voice, for all to hear, "I must certainly be off, but I shall not be away long. Do not spare the bottle, Sadi. And mind you treat him well," he added, turning to the company, "for he is my guest."

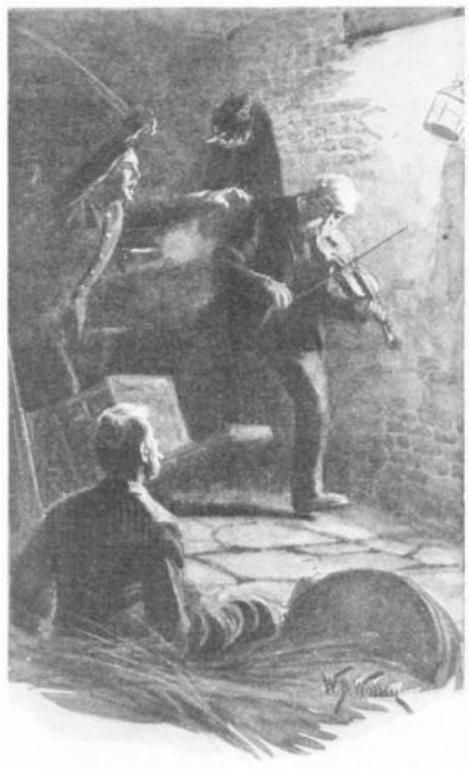
The men stood to the salute mechanically, and the sentry in the passage whispering that the road was clear, Ludenmayer left the cellar with a last word in Sadi's ear.

"Take care of yourself," he said; "they are in an ugly mood."

Sadi nodded his head confidently, but his heart beat quicker when the door was shut, and he looked a little eagerly into the faces of the crew as though he would learn their purpose now that the captain was gone. It could not be very long, he argued, before Ludenmayer discovered the trick which had been played upon him and returned to charge him with it. As to the Prussians about him, some were already steeped with wine, and they lay sprawling like animals in the straw; others, and the cook was among the number of these, eyed their captain's guest suspiciously and discussed him in low voices. Sadi knew that his life hung upon a thread; but when a great ruffian drew a revolver and loaded it deliberately the fiddler was not afraid. "They will not shoot me," he said to himself; "they would be afraid of the noise." What he feared was the rope and the hook in the beam above, but he did not confess it by his looks; and turning from them with a laugh he buried his head in the straw and pretended to sleep. Soon the others imitated him, and the heavy breathing of tired men echoed through the cellar.

Sadi lay for a long while without any other idea than that of his own danger and the fate which awaited him if Ludenmayer did not come back. He had caught up the precious fiddle which the captain returned to him, and he hugged it to him as the one possession left to him in the world. Silent as the place was, the broken roof admitted sounds of the later night, the blare of bugles, and the booming of the shells. Sadi wondered what those distant troops would say if a man should go to them and cry, "The cellars by the old church of St. Gervais are full of Prussian spies; you will find them sleeping there." Could he but send that message, at least one of the wrongs of those bitter days would be avenged. And yet how impotent he was! The desert waste of land above would be without one living soul at such an hour; and he knew that any attempt to quit the cellar would bring instant death upon him. Sadi, convinced of the hopelessness of his idea, lay very still and counted the dreary hours. For a time he slept; and when he awoke it was the sentry's voice which aroused him. The man had come down to warn his comrades. A regiment of the line marched out to the assistance of the gunners at Lunette 53—you could hear their heavy tramping as they crossed the old road, now lumbered over with stones and the rubble of the tumbled houses. There would be many, very many of them, the ear said. Sadi alone amongst those who listened to the footsteps did not tremble or turn pale. He was unloosing his fiddle in its case. None saw him or thought of him in that tragic moment. "For France!" he said, and he believed it was the last word he would ever utter.

The alarm cried softly in the cellar found stupid ears and men but half-awakened from a drunken sleep. Some of the Prussians sat up with hush words upon their lips; others simply lay and listened—a regiment was marching past certainly, but what of that? They had but to lie close and to douse the lights (which they were quick to do) and their safety was assured. This they believed when sudden music, loud and distinct, sent them leaping to their feet and crying for their swords. Someone played the "Wacht am Rhein" at their very elbows—a voice roared "Shoot the fiddler down"—another voice cried out for a light. It was the supreme moment in the life of Sadi the [48]
fiddler. Never had he played so wildly or with such delight of his notes. And the darkness, he said, might yet save him. Dodging here, ducking there, he plunged into the passage and went on headlong toward the light. But he never ceased to play the "Wacht am Rhein" when he could stand a moment to breathe, and the bullets singing by him, the sword-thrusts aimed at him, did but make him play the louder.



Larger Image

**"HE NEVER CEASED TO PLAY
THE 'WACHT AM RHEIN.'"**

Sadi gained the ruins above with a great gash upon his cheek and his precious fiddle cleaved in half by a cut from a Prussian sword. Up in the open his eyes beheld a glad sight. A regiment of infantry stood at the halt not twenty paces from him. Its officers were moving about as though in quest of some mystery, and when they perceived him they advanced a little curiously and bade the fiddler halt. He answered them in words which were almost incoherent. "The ruins are full of Prussians," he said, and pointed downwards to the cellars he had left. No other word was spoken or needed. Savagely, silently, as beasts of prey that have found quarry, the soldiers fixed their bayonets and began to go down. And Sadi stood entranced, listening to the cries of men in their death agony, to their prayers for mercy; and he said, "This wrong at least is avenged."

And so he turned from the scene, with his poor broken fiddle, and the long day of loneliness before him.

"I shall not play in Munich; I shall never see little Lucy again," he said. But he knew that he had done his duty, and his step was firmer when he set out again for the terrible streets of a city about to open its gates to the enemy.

Prince Henry's Beast Book.

[49]

THE many thousands who have laughed over the inimitable Artemus Ward's essays in natural history, such as "The elephant has four legs—one on each corner; he eats hay and cakes," might little suspect the analogy which exists between these humorous trifles and the serious works of the zoological pundits of the seventeenth century. If anything, far greater is the humour to be extracted from the older writers; especially when we recollect that their books and treatises on animal creation were regarded with infinite respect—veneration even—by young and old, wise and unwise, noble and plebeian, who diligently consulted them.

Unhappily, most of these productions are in Latin, and even Artemus Ward in Latin would probably lose the fine savour of merriment by which his good things are distinguished unless the translator relied upon puns, as they do in the Westminster plays. But the pictures in Aldrovandus, in Albertus Magnus, in Johannes Jonstonus, and in Conrad Gesner speak—shall we not rather say, shriek?—for themselves; and we were recently fortunate in coming across a large volume in which the best in all these books is gathered together, with English letterpress, for the benefit of a young English prince who lived and died early in the seventeenth century. It was in 1607 that Edward Topsell published his version of "Four-footed Beastes." Gesner's *chef d'œuvre* and those of the other writers named had been on the bookshelves for many years.

The volume in question belonged to the eldest son and heir of James I., and has his coat of arms on the cover. Next, it enjoys the distinction of having some of the plates coloured by the Royal hand, its owner being then in his thirteenth year. But, best of all, its pictures and letterpress describe for us beyond the possibility of error, and in the clearest and most perspicuous way, the wonderful quadrupeds which flourished on the face of the earth in Prince Henry's boyhood.

Beside this curious volume how tame are even the most interesting of modern natural history books! Let us begin with the king of beasts.

"Lyons bones have no marrow in them and are so hard that they will strike fire. Their neck is made of one stiffe bone, without any vertebras. They have five claws on the hinder feet and the balls of their eyes are black. Lyons eat but once in two days and drink in like manner. Formerly in England a Lyon could tell noble blood from base."

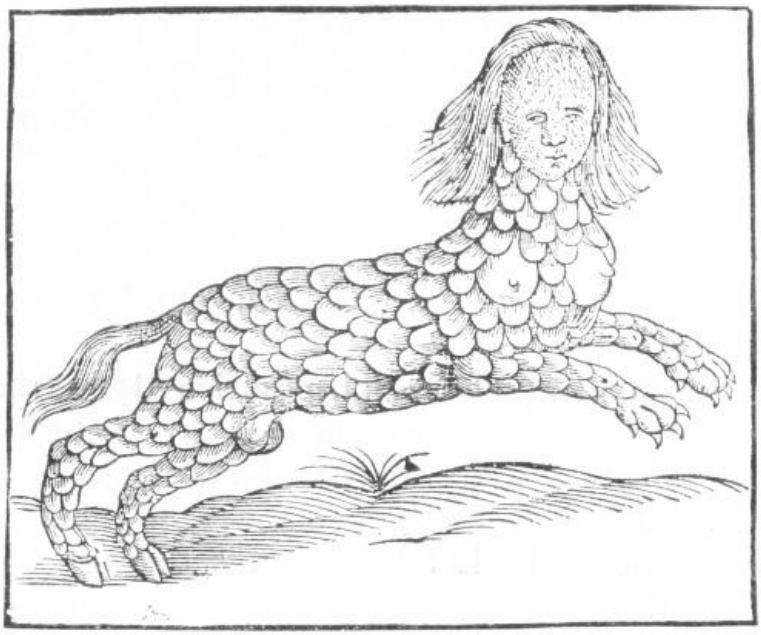
Can it be that this virtue was confined merely to the lions caged in the Heralds' College? Our Beast Booke goes on to inform us that in certain districts lions were killed, not with spears or cannon-balls, but "with the *powder of decayed fish*." From whence may we not have a faint glimmering of the reason why Jamrach's was originally situated so much nearer to Billingsgate Market than to Piccadilly?

"THERE IS A VARIETY OF LYON WITH HUMAN FACES."

"There is a variety of Lyon with human faces. As for the rest, the taile of a Lyon is very long, which they shake oftentimes, and by beating their sides therewith they provoke themselves to fight. The nether part of this taile is full of hairs and gristles, and some are of opinion that there is therein a little sting wherewithall the Lyon pricketh itselfe."

"The Lamia is a wild Beast, having several parts outwardly resembling an Oxe and inwardly a mule. The Lamia has a woman's face and very beautifull, also very large and comely shapes such as cannot be imitated by the art of any painter, having a very excellent colour in their fore-parts without wings, and no other voice but hissing like Dragons; but they are the swiftest of foot of all earthly beasts, so as none can escape them by running."

[50]



"THE LAMIA HAS A WOMAN'S FACE AND VERY BEAUTIFULL."

The chief prey of the Lamia was, it appears, members of the human species, preferably males. By its passing beauty (or, to judge by the pictorial illustration, one would say rather by its amazing novelty) it would entice men, and when they had "come neare, devoure and kill them." In fact, these lamias were so inordinately fond of their favourite refreshment that in one district "a certain crooked place in Libia neare the Sea-shore full of sand was like to a sandy Sea and all the neighbor places thereunto are deserts." A painful and humiliating lack of men has often been noticed at our modern seaside resorts.

"The hinder parts of this beast," concludes our author, "are like unto a goate, his fore-legs like a Beares and his body scaled all over like a Dragon."

Next is a contemporary picture of a Tiger.

And now we come to the Wolf. His custom in those halcyon days of natural history was, as now, to go in troops. But we read: "Their necks are pressed together, so that they cannot stir it, to look about, but they must move their whole bodies. They fall upon their prey, devouring hair, bones and all. When they are to fight in great herds they fill their bellies with earth." But this is as nothing. "When they are to pass over Rivers, they joyn tails; loaded with that weight they are not easily thrown down and the floods can hardly carry them away, being joined together. The breath of a Wolf is so fiery, that it will melt and consume the hardest bone in his stomack."

A TIGER.

We have all of us heard of the Harpy. Below is a likeness of one that speaks for itself.

Lizards are always interesting. "There was a lizzard 8 cubits long brought to Rome from Ætheopia by the command of a Cardinal of Lisbon and the mouth of it was so wide that a child might be put into it.... Put alive into a new earthen vessel and boyle'd with 3 Sextaryes of Wine and one Cyathus, it is excellent food for one sick of the Pthisick, if he drink of it in the morning fasting."

A HARPY.

We must not suppose that this operation would kill the lizard; the difficulty would be how to procure a vessel to stew so large a lizard. Lizard-pots are made much smaller nowadays. We dare say that the worthy Mrs. Beeton, in her most ingenious moments, never dreamt of one above four, or at most six, cubits deep.

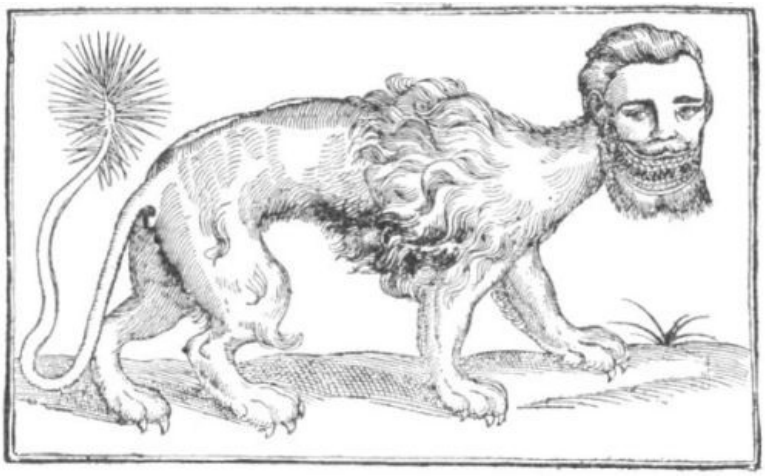
Writers of our own time who have never gone in for a course of logic rarely condescend to complete perspicuity. They take things too often for granted. This is not old Topsell's way. "The Arabian sheep have a very broad tail," he says, "and the fatter it is the thicker it will be." We [51]
learn, too, what we should never have suspected had the author not plainly stated it, that some tails "have been seen above 150lbs. in weight." Albertus Magnus saw "a Ram that had 4 great Horns growing on his head and two long ones on his legges, that were like to Goat's Horns."

Here are some other gems from our Beast Booke:—

"Subus is an amphibion, with two Horns: he follows shoals of fish swimming in the Sea, Lobsters, Pagri, and Oculatae, are fishes that love him; but he cares for none of their love, but makes them all his prey.

THE SPHINX OR SPHINGA.

"The Sphinx or Sphinga is of the kinde of Apes, having his body rough like Apes, having the upper part like a woman and their visage much like them. The voice very like a man's, but not articular, sounding as if one did speak hastily or with sorrow. Their haire browne or swarthy colour. They are bred in India and Ethyopia. The true Sphinx is of a fierce though a tameable nature and if a man do first of all perceive or discerne of these natural *Sphinges*, before the beast discerne or perceive the man, he shall be safe; but if the beast first descrie the man, then is it mortal to the man.



THE MANTICHORA.

"The Mantichora is bred among the Indians, having a treble row of teeth beneathe and above, whose greatnesse, roughnesse and feete are like a Lyons, his face and ears like unto a mans, his eyes grey and collour red, his taile like the taile of a scorpion of the earth, armed with a sting, casting forth sharp pointed quills, his voice like the voice of a small trumpet or pipe, being in course as swift as a Hart."

Then follows further description of the Mantichora. This singular combination of lion, man, scorpion, and porcupine was implicitly believed in by all the natural history writers up to Goldsmith's day, and we are not sure that that pleasing but gullible scribe did not, privately at least, accord its existence full credence.

Leigh Hunt, in his Autobiography, describes the extraordinary effect which a sight of this beast had upon him when he encountered it in an old folio during his childhood. The Mantichora, he says, "unspeakably shocked me. It had the head of a man, grinning with rows of teeth, and the body of a wild beast, brandishing a tail armed with stings. It was sometimes called by the ancients Martichora. But I did not know that. I took the word to be a horrible compound of man and tiger. The beast figures in Pliny and the old travellers. Appolonius takes a fearful joy in describing him. 'Mantichora,' says old Morell—'bestia horrenda'—'a brute fit to give one the horrors.' The possibility of such creatures being pursued never occurred to me. Alexander, I thought, might have been encountered while crossing the Granicus, and elephants might be driven into the sea, but how could anyone face a beast with a man's head?" Leigh Hunt goes on to describe how the Mantichora impressed his whole childhood. Doubtless the sensations of the eighteenth-century child were the same felt by the early seventeenth century Prince Henry. The Mantichora was the *bête noire* of the Royal nursery, we may depend upon it.

Scarcely less dreadful was the Collogruis, whose picture is given on the next page.

How many of us have heard of the Colus?

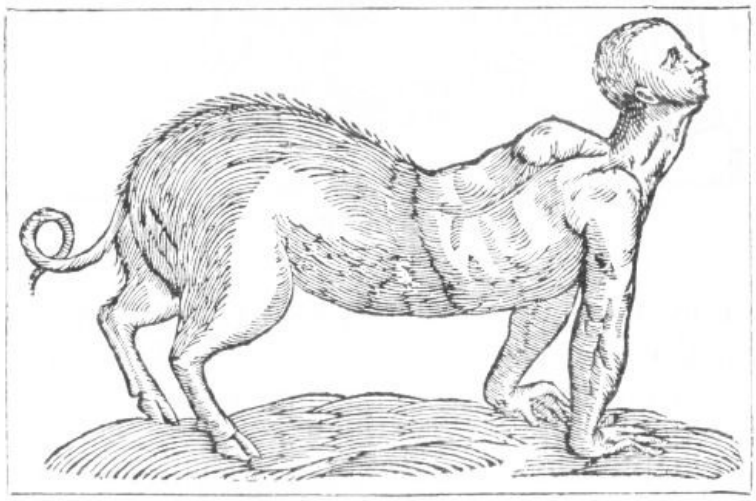
"There is," we read, "among the Scithians and Sarmatians a foure-footed wild beast called Colus, being in quantitie and stature betwixt a Ramnie and a Hart and dusky white coloured, but the young ones yellow." The real peculiarity of the Colus, which makes every true lover of quadrupeds regret its extinction, is described as follows: "Her manner is to drinke by the holes in her nostrils, whereby she snuffeth up aboundance of water and carrieth it in her head, so that she will live in dry pastures remote from all moisture and great season, quenching her thirst by that cisterne in her head." Imagination conjures up a huge drove of Colii, blissfully encamped in the midst of the Sahara, astonishing the passing Bedouins by their sagacity and the amazing cisterns in their craniums. There was no use trying to capture them, so fleet and nimble were they, unless, indeed, the hunter had taken the precaution to arm himself with a flute or a timbrel. In that case he had only to strike up a few airs and it was all up with the poor Colus. He would fall down with weakness, and a simple blow with a staff sufficed to dispatch him. He made excellent eating; flavoured, we suppose, by the contents of the cranial cistern afore described. [52]

THE COLLOGRUIS.

"The Camelopard or Giraffe is a beaste full of spots. He hath two little hornes growing on his head the colour of iron, his eies rolling and growing, his mouth but small like a hart's; his tongue is neare three foot long. The pace of this beast differeth from all other in the world, for he doth not move his right and left foote one after another, but both together, and so likewise the other, whereby his whole body is removed at every step or straine."

We must perforce skip the descriptions of the three kinds of Apes—Ape Satyre, the Ape Norwegian, and the Ape Pan. Then there are such creatures as the Axis, the Alborach, the Cacus, the Allocamell, and the Tragelaphus.

And how shall we tell of the Dictyes, the Crucigeran, the Gulon, and the Gorgon? Then there are dissertations on those fearful quadrupeds the Orynx and the Tarbarine.



THE POEPHAGUS.

But the Poephagus ought to detain the modern student a moment, as it must often have engrossed Prince Henry by the hour.

"This great beaste whose everie hair is two cubitts in length & yet finer than a man's, is one of the fearfullest creatures in the World: for if he perceive him to be but looked at by anybody he taketh to his heels as fast as he can goe."

The cause of his fright is his tail, which is much sought after by the natives to bind up their hair. When the hunted Poephagus can "no longer avoyde the hunter then doth he turne himselfe, hiding his taile, & looketh upon the face of the hunter with some confidence, gathering his wits together, as if to face out that he had no tayle, & that the residue of his body were not worth looking after."

Sly Poephagus! But his stratagem is in vain. For "they take off the skinne and the taile," perhaps not even killing him, and so leaving the luckless Poephagus to go roaming about the country skinless and tailless—a piteous sight. But stay. "Volateranus relateth this otherwise, that the beast biteth off his own taile and so delivereth himself from the hunter, knowing that he is not desired for any other cause." Can we not conjure up the scene for ourselves?

"Hunter: So sorry to trouble you, but your taile or your life!

"Poephagus: No trouble at all, I assure you. Allow me (*bites off his taile*). Pray accept it with my compliments (*hunter bows and retires*)."

"The Neades were certain beastes whose voice was so terrible that they shook the earth therewith," but the Strepficeros, though endowed with a more resonant title, was a very simple, inoffensive quadruped after all. [53]

A CYNOCEPHALE.

"The Cepus was a four-footed beast having a face like a Lyon & some part of the body like a panther, being as big as a wild goat or Roe-buck, or as one of the dogs of *Erithrea* & a long taile, the which such of them as having tasted flesh will eat from their own bodies."

"The Calitrich had a long beard and a large taile." You perceive the early naturalists set great store by an animal's caudal appendage. It gave them scope for their descriptive powers.

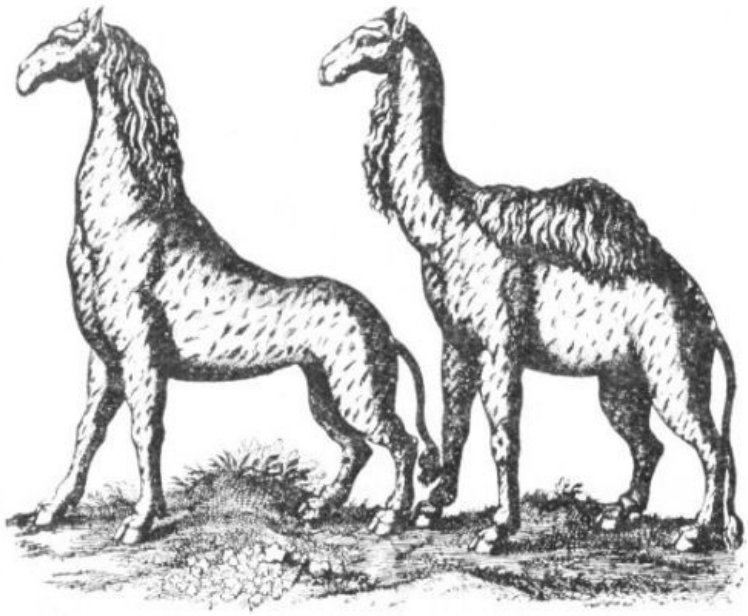
And now let us learn something about the Cynocephale. "The Cynocephales are a kind of Apes, whose heads are like Dogges & their other part like a mans. Some there are which are able to write & naturally to discerne letters which kind the Priests bring into their Temples, & at their first entrance, the Priest bringeth him a writing Table, a pencil & Inke that so by seeing him write he may make by all whether he be of the right kind & the beast quickly sheweth his skill. The Nomades, people of Ethiopia & the nations of Mentimori live upon the milk of Cynocephals, keeping great heards of them, & killing all the males."

"The Elk is a four-footed beast commonly found in Scandinavia. His upper lip hangs out so long that he cannot eat but going backwards. He is subject to the falling sicknesse, the remedy he hath is to lift up the right claw of the hinder foot & put it to his left ear. It holds the same virtue if you cut it off."

Of the ram we are told that "for six winter months he sleeps on his right side; but after the vernal equinoctiall he rests on his right. Ælianus hath discovered this, but the butchers deny it."

"The Camel hath a manifold belly, either because he hath a great body: or, because he eats Thorny & Woody substances, God hath provided for the concoction. Puddle water is sweet to him, nor will he drink river water, till he hath troubled it with his foot. He lives a hundred years, unlesse the Ayre agree not with him. When they are on a journey they do not whip them forward: but they sing to them, whereby they run so fast that men can hardly follow them."

Modern zoologists must regret the extinction of the sixteenth-century She-goat, which, according to Prince Henry's natural history, "see as well by night as day, wherefore if those that are blind in the night eat a *Goats* liver they are granted sight. They breathe out of their eares and nostrils."



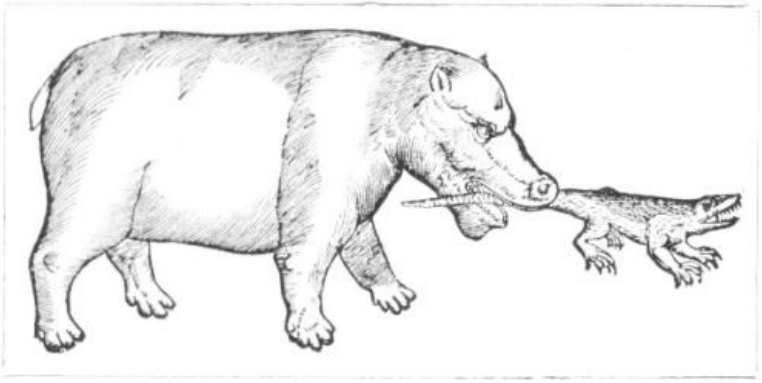
CAMELS.

Farther along, the national animal of the greatest of British dominions beyond the seas is thus described:—

"The *Beaver* is a most strong creature to bite, he will never let go his teeth that meet, before he makes the bones crack. His hinder feet are like a Gooses and his fore-feet like an Apes. His fat tail is covered with a scaly skin, & he uses for a rudder when he pursues fish. He comes forth of his holes in the night: & biting off boughs of Trees about the Rivers, he makes his houses with an upper loft. When they are cut asunder they are very delightsome to see; for one lies on his back & hath the boughs between his legges & others draw him by the tail to their cottage. [54]

"A Baboon is a Creature with a head like a dog, but in shape like a man; he will fish cunningly, for he will dive all day, & bring forth abundance of fish."

Here is a picture of a Hippopotamus or Sea-Horse devouring a crocodile tail first.



A HIPPOPOTAMUS DEVOURING A CROCODILE.

"The Elephant is a stranger with us, but that the Indians & other places have them in common. The King of the Palibroti had 90,000 of them. Many strange things are spoken of them. It is certain that of old time they carried Castles of armed men into the Field. In his heart, says Aldrovandus, he hath a wonderful big bone. Aristotle maintains that he hath three Stomacks. It is most certain (continues the careful chronicler) that in the Kingdom of Malabar they talk together, & speak with man's voice. There was, saith Ocafta, in Cochin an Elephant, who carried things to the Haven & laboured in the sea-faring matters: when he was weary the Governor of the place did force him to draw a galley from the Haven which he had begun to draw, into the sea: the Elephant refused it the Governor gave him good words, & at the last entreated him to do it for the King of Portugal, thereupon (it is hardly credible) the elephant was moored, & repeated these two words clearly, *Hoo, Hoo*, which in the language of Malabar is, *I will, I will*, & he presently drew the ship into the Sea.... They learn things so eagerly that Pliny says that an Elephant that was something dull, & was often beat for not learning well, was found acting his part by moon-light, & some say that *Elephants* will learn to write & read. One of them learned to describe the Greek letters, & did write in the same tongue these words, *I myself writ this*."

"But," concludes the zoologist, conscious of having clinched the matter by this last proof, "*I will say no more*."

"The Ichneumon is a creature in Egypt with a long tail like a Serpents. He is an enemy to the Crocodile; for when he observes him sleeping he rolles himself in clay, & goes into his mouth, & so into his belly & eats his liver, & then leaps forth again."

Loaded with all his zoological learning we can understand how Prince Henry became a very bright little boy, far in advance of his years. We can also dimly perceive why he died so young.

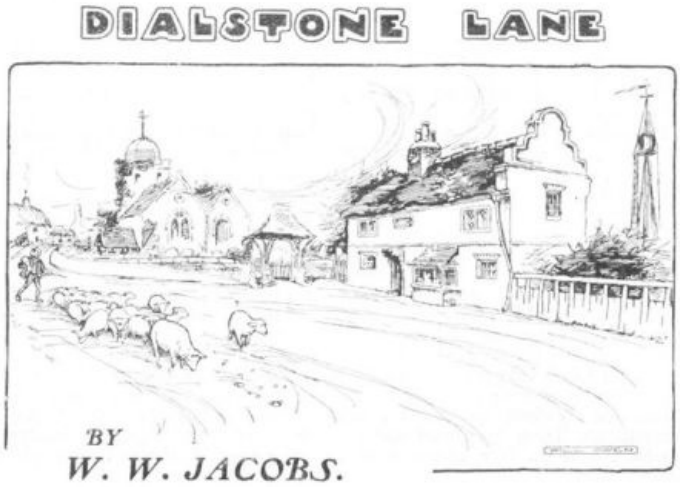
THE ICHNEUMON.

It is not given to every youth—nor to every prince—to devour such marvels and live in peace and content at home or at Court, surrounded by the conventions of everyday English life. But had he survived this accumulation of wisdom, the realm would surely have boasted under King Henry IX. a "Zoo" compared with which our present establishment, excellent as it is, would have been paltry indeed. But it is too late to repine. The mantichora, the lamia, the gryphon, and the poephagus are presumably extinct, while as for our lions, bears, giraffes, and the rest of the "foure-footed beastes," these appear to have miserably abandoned all those curious traits which rendered them glorious in little Prince Henry's days, and which, we trust, will long reflect lustre on their past.

DIALSTONE LANE

[55]

BY W. W. JACOBS.



Larger Image

CHAPTER I.

MR. Edward Tredgold sat in the private office of Tredgold and Son, land and estate agents, gazing through the prim wire blinds at the peaceful High Street of Binchester. Tredgold senior, who believed in work for the young, had left early. Tredgold junior, glad at an opportunity of sharing his father's views, had passed most of the work on to a clerk who had arrived in the world exactly three weeks after himself.

"Binchester gets duller and duller," said Mr. Tredgold to himself, wearily. "Two skittish octogenarians, one gloomy baby, one gloomier nursemaid, and three dogs in the last five minutes. If it wasn't for the dogs——Halloa!"

He put down his pen and, rising, looked over the top of the blind at a girl who was glancing from side to side of the road as though in search of an address.

"A visitor," continued Mr. Tredgold, critically. "Girls like that only visit Binchester, and then take the first train back, never to return."

The girl turned at that moment and, encountering the forehead and eyes, gazed at them until they sank slowly behind the protection of the blind.

"She's coming here," said Mr. Tredgold, watching through the wire. "Wants to see our time-table, I expect."

He sat down at the table again, and taking up his pen took some papers from a pigeon-hole and eyed them with severe thoughtfulness.

"A lady to see you, sir," said a clerk, opening the door.

Mr. Tredgold rose and placed a chair.

"I have called for the key of the cottage in Dialstone Lane," said the girl, still standing. "My uncle, Captain Bowers, has not arrived yet, and I am told that you are the landlord."

Mr. Tredgold bowed. "The next train is due at six," he observed, with a glance at the time-table hanging on the wall; "I expect he'll come by that. He was here on Monday seeing the last of the furniture in. Are you Miss Drewitt?"

"Yes," said the girl. "If you'll kindly give me the key, I can go in and wait for him."

Mr. Tredgold took it from a drawer. "If you will allow me, I will go down with you," he said, slowly; "the lock is rather awkward for anybody who doesn't understand it."

[56]

The girl murmured something about not troubling him.

"It's no trouble," said Mr. Tredgold, taking up his hat. "It is our duty to do all we can for the comfort of our tenants. That lock—"

He held the door open and followed her into the street, pointing out various objects of interest as they went along.

"I'm afraid you'll find Binchester very quiet," he remarked.

"I like quiet," said his companion.

Mr. Tredgold glanced at her shrewdly, and, pausing only at the Jubilee horse-trough to point out beauties which might easily escape any but a trained observation, walked on in silence until they reached their destination.

Except in the matter of window-blinds, Dialstone Lane had not changed for generations, and Mr. Tredgold noted with pleasure the interest of his companion as she gazed at the crumbling roofs, the red-brick doorsteps, and the tiny lattice windows of the cottages. At the last house, a cottage larger than the rest, one side of which bordered the old churchyard, Mr. Tredgold paused and, inserting his key in the lock, turned it with thoughtless ease.

"The lock seems all right; I need not have bothered you," said Miss Drewitt, regarding him gravely.

"Ah, it seems easy," said Mr. Tredgold, shaking his head, "but it wants knack."

The girl closed the door smartly, and, turning the key, opened it again without any difficulty. To satisfy herself—on more points than one—she repeated the performance.

"You've *got* the knack," said Mr. Tredgold, meeting her gaze with great calmness. "It's extraordinary what a lot of character there is in locks; they let some people open them without any trouble, while others may fumble at them till they're tired."

The girl pushed the door open and stood just inside the room.

"Thank you," she said, and gave him a little bow of dismissal.

A vein of obstinacy in Mr. Tredgold's disposition, which its owner mistook for firmness, asserted itself. It was plain that the girl had estimated his services at their true value and was quite willing to apprise him of the fact. He tried the lock again, and with more bitterness than the occasion seemed to warrant said that somebody had been oiling it.

"I promised Captain Bowers to come in this afternoon and see that a few odd things had been done," he added. "May I come in now?"

The girl withdrew into the room, and, seating herself in a large arm-chair by the fireplace, watched his inspection of door-knobs and window-fastenings with an air of grave amusement, which he found somewhat trying.

"Captain Bowers had the walls panelled and these lockers made to make the room look as much like a ship's cabin as possible," he said, pausing in his labours. "He was quite pleased to find the staircase opening out of the room—he calls it the companion-ladder. And he calls the kitchen the pantry, which led to a lot of confusion with the workmen. Did he tell you of the crow's-nest in the garden?"

"No," said the girl.

"It's a fine piece of work," said Mr. Tredgold.

He opened the door leading into the kitchen and stepped out into the garden. Miss Drewitt, after a moment's hesitation, followed, and after one delighted glance at the trim old garden gazed curiously at a mast with a barrel fixed near the top, which stood at the end.

"There's a fine view from up there," said Mr. Tredgold. "With the captain's glass one can see the sea distinctly. I spent nearly all last Friday afternoon up there, keeping an eye on things. Do you like the garden? Do you think these old creepers ought to be torn down from the house?"

"Certainly not," said Miss Drewitt, with emphasis.

"Just what I said," remarked Mr. Tredgold. "Captain Bowers wanted to have them pulled down, but I dissuaded him. I advised him to consult you first."

"I don't suppose he really intended to," said the girl.

"He did," said the other, grimly; "said they were untidy. How do you like the way the house is furnished?"

The girl gazed at him for a few moments before replying. "I like it very much," she said, coldly.

"That's right," said Mr. Tredgold, with an air of relief. "You see, I advised the captain what to buy. I went with him to Tollminster and helped him choose. Your room gave me the most anxiety, I think."

"*My* room?" said the girl, starting.

"It's a dream in the best shades of pink and green," said Mr. Tredgold, modestly. "Pink on the walls, and carpets and hangings green; three or four bits of old furniture—the captain objected, but I stood firm; and for pictures I had two or three little things out of an art journal framed." [57]

"Is furnishing part of your business?" inquired the girl, eyeing him in bewilderment.

"Business?" said the other. "Oh, no. I did it for amusement. I chose and the captain paid. It was a delightful experience. The sordid question of price was waived; for once expense was nothing to me. I wish you'd just step up to your room and see how you like it. It's the one over the kitchen."

"PRUDENCE."

Miss Drewitt hesitated, and then curiosity, combined with a cheerful idea of probably being able to disapprove of the lauded decorations, took her indoors and upstairs. In a few minutes she came down again.

"I suppose it's all right," she said, ungraciously, "but I don't understand why you should have selected it."

"I had to," said Mr. Tredgold, confidentially. "I happened to go to Tollminster the same day as the captain and went into a shop with him. If you could only see the things he wanted to buy, you would understand."

The girl was silent.

"The paper the captain selected for your room," continued Mr. Tredgold, severely, "was decorated with branches of an unknown flowering shrub, on the top twig of which a humming-bird sat eating a dragon-fly. A rough calculation showed me that every time you opened your eyes in the morning you would see fifty-seven humming-birds—all made in the same pattern—eating fifty-seven ditto dragon-flies. The captain said it was cheerful."

"I have no doubt that my uncle's selection would have satisfied me," said Miss Drewitt, coldly.

"The curtains he fancied were red, with small yellow tigers crouching all over them," pursued Mr. Tredgold. "The captain seemed fond of animals."

"I think that you were rather—venturesome," said the girl. "Suppose that I had not liked the things you selected?"

Mr. Tredgold deliberated. "I felt sure that you would like them," he said, at last. "It was a hard struggle not to keep some of the things for myself. I've had my eye on those two Chippendale chairs for years. They belonged to an old woman in Mint Street, but she always refused to part with them. I shouldn't have got them, only one of them let her down the other day."

"Let her down?" repeated Miss Drewitt, sharply. "Do you mean one of the chairs in my bedroom?"

Mr. Tredgold nodded. "Gave her rather a nasty fall," he said. "I struck while the iron was hot, and went and made her an offer while she was still laid up from the effects of it. It's the one standing against the wall; the other's all right, with proper care."

Miss Drewitt, after a somewhat long interval, thanked him.

"You must have been very useful to my uncle," she said, slowly. "I feel sure that he would never have bought chairs like those of his own accord."

"He has been at sea all his life," said Mr. Tredgold, in extenuation. "You haven't seen him for a long time, have you?"

"Ten years," was the reply.

"He is delightful company," said Mr. Tredgold. "His life has been one long series of adventures in every quarter of the globe. His stock of yarns is like the widow's cruse. And here he comes," he added, as a dilapidated fly drew up at the house and an elderly man, with a red, weather-beaten face, partly hidden in a cloud of grey beard, stepped out and stood in the doorway, regarding the

girl with something almost akin to embarrassment.

"It's not—not Prudence?" he said, at length, holding out his hand and staring at her. [58]

"Yes, uncle," said the girl.

They shook hands, and Captain Bowers, reaching up for a cage containing a parrot, which had been noisily entreating the cabman for a kiss all the way from the station, handed that flustered person his fare and entered the house again.

"Glad to see you, my lad," he said, shaking hands with Mr. Tredgold and glancing covertly at his niece. "I hope you haven't been waiting long," he added, turning to the latter.

"No," said Miss Drewitt, regarding him with a puzzled air.

"I missed the train," said the captain. "We must try and manage better next time. I—I hope you'll be comfortable."

"Thank you," said the girl.

"You—you are very like your poor mother," said the captain.

"I hope so," said Prudence.

She stole up to the captain and, after a moment's hesitation, kissed his cheek. The next moment she was caught up and crushed in the arms of a powerful and affectionate bear.

"Blest if I hardly knew how to take you at first," said the captain, his red face shining with gratification. "Little girls are one thing, but when they grow up into"—he held her away and looked at her proudly—"into handsome and dignified-looking young women, a man doesn't quite know where he is."

He took her in his arms again and, kissing her forehead, winked delightedly in the direction of Mr. Tredgold, who was affecting to look out of the window.

"My man'll be in soon," he said, releasing the girl, "and then we'll see about some tea. He met me at the station and I sent him straight off for things to eat."

"Your man?" said Miss Drewitt.

"Yes; I thought a man would be easier to manage than a girl," said the captain, knowingly. "You can be freer with 'em in the matter of language, and then there's no followers or anything of that kind. I got him to sign articles ship-shape and proper. Mr. Tredgold recommended him."

"No, no," said that gentleman, hastily.

"I asked you before he signed on with me," said the captain, pointing a stumpy forefinger at him. "I made a point of it, and you told me that you had never heard anything against him."

"I don't call that a recommendation," said Mr. Tredgold.

"It's good enough in these days," retorted the captain, gloomily. "A man that has got a character like that is hard to find."

"He might be artful and keep his faults to himself," suggested Tredgold.

"So long as he does that, it's all right," said Captain Bowers. "I can't find fault if there's no faults to find fault with. The best steward I ever had, I found out afterwards, had escaped from gaol. He never wanted to go ashore, and when the ship was in port almost lived in his pantry."

"I never heard of Tasker having been in gaol," said Mr. Tredgold. "Anyhow, I'm certain that he never broke out of one; he's far too stupid."

As he paid this tribute the young man referred to entered laden with parcels, and, gazing awkwardly at the company, passed through the room on tip-toe and began to busy himself in the pantry. Mr. Tredgold, refusing the captain's invitation to stay for a cup of tea, took his departure.

"Very nice youngster that," said the captain, looking after him. "A little bit light-hearted in his ways, perhaps, but none the worse for that."

He sat down and looked round at his possessions. "The first real home I've had for nearly fifty years," he said, with great content. "I hope you'll be as happy here as I intend to be. It sha'n't be my fault if you're not."

Mr. Tredgold walked home deep in thought, and by the time he had arrived there had come to the conclusion that if Miss Drewitt favoured her mother, that lady must have been singularly unlike Captain Bowers in features.

CHAPTER II.

In less than a week Captain Bowers had settled down comfortably in his new command. A set of rules and regulations by which Mr. Joseph Tasker was to order his life was framed and hung in the pantry. He studied it with care, and, anxious that there should be no possible chance of a misunderstanding, questioned the spelling in three instances. The captain's explanation that he had spelt those words in the American style was an untruthful reflection upon a great and friendly nation.

Dialstone Lane was at first disposed to look askance at Mr. Tasker. Old-fashioned matrons

clustered round to watch him cleaning the doorstep, and, surprised at its whiteness, withdrew discomfited. Rumour had it that he liked work, and scandal said that he had wept because he was not allowed to do the washing. [59]

Larger Image

"OLD-FASHIONED MATRONS CLUSTERED ROUND TO WATCH HIM CLEANING THE DOORSTEP."

The captain attributed this satisfactory condition of affairs to the rules and regulations, though a slight indiscretion on the part of Mr. Tasker, necessitating the unframing of the document to add to the latter, caused him a little annoyance.

The first intimation he had of it was a loud knocking at the front door as he sat dozing one afternoon in his easy-chair. In response to his startled cry of "Come in!" the door opened and a small man, in a state of considerable agitation, burst into the room and confronted him.

"My name is Chalk," he said, breathlessly.

"A friend of Mr. Tredgold's?" said the captain. "I've heard of you, sir."

The visitor paid no heed.

"My wife wishes to know whether she has got to dress in the dark every afternoon for the rest of her life," he said, in fierce but trembling tones.

"Got to dress in the dark?" repeated the astonished captain.

"With the blind down," explained the other.

Captain Bowers looked him up and down. He saw a man of about fifty nervously fingering the little bits of fluffy red whisker which grew at the sides of his face, and trying to still the agitation of his tremulous mouth.

"How would you like it yourself?" demanded the visitor, whose manner was gradually becoming milder and milder. "How would *you* like a telescope a yard long pointing——"

He broke off abruptly as the captain, with a smothered oath, dashed out of his chair into the garden and stood shaking his fist at the crow's-nest at the bottom.

"Joseph!" he bawled.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Tasker, removing the telescope described by Mr. Chalk from his eye, and leaning over.

"What are you doing with that spy-glass?" demanded his master, beckoning to the visitor, who had drawn near. "How dare you stare in at people's windows?"

"I wasn't, sir," replied Mr. Tasker, in an injured voice. "I wouldn't think o' such a thing—I couldn't, not if I tried."

"You'd got it pointed straight at my bedroom window," cried Mr. Chalk, as he accompanied the captain down the garden. "And it ain't the first time." [60]

"I wasn't, sir," said the steward, addressing his master. "I was watching the martins under the eaves."

"You'd got it pointed at my window," persisted the visitor.

"That's where the nests are," said Mr. Tasker, "but I wasn't looking in at the window. Besides, I noticed you always pulled the blind down when you saw me looking, so I thought it didn't matter."

"We can't do anything without being followed about by that telescope," said Mr. Chalk, turning to

the captain. "My wife had our house built where it is on purpose, so that we shouldn't be overlooked. We didn't bargain for a thing like that sprouting up in a back-garden."

"I'm very sorry," said the captain. "I wish you'd told me of it before. If I catch you up there again," he cried, shaking his fist at Mr. Tasker, "you'll remember it. Come down!"

Mr. Tasker, placing the glass under his arm, came slowly and reluctantly down the ratlines.

"I wasn't looking in at the window, Mr. Chalk," he said, earnestly. "I was watching the birds. O' course, I couldn't help seeing in a bit, but I always shifted the spy-glass at once if there was anything that I thought I oughtn't——"

"That'll do," broke in the captain, hastily. "Go in and get the tea ready. If I so much as see you looking at that glass again we part, my lad, mind that."

"I don't suppose he meant any harm," said the mollified Mr. Chalk, after the crestfallen Joseph had gone into the house. "I hope I haven't been and said too much, but my wife insisted on me coming round and speaking about it."

"You did quite right," said the captain, "and I thank you for coming. I told him he might go up there occasionally, but I particularly warned him against giving any annoyance to the neighbours."

"I suppose," said Mr. Chalk, gazing at the erection with interest—"I suppose there's a good view from up there? It's like having a ship in the garden, and it seems to remind you of the North Pole, and whales, and Northern Lights."

Five minutes later Mr. Tasker, peering through the pantry window, was surprised to see Mr. Chalk ascending with infinite caution to the crow's-nest. His high hat was jammed firmly over his brows and the telescope was gripped tightly under his right arm. The journey was evidently regarded as one of extreme peril by the climber; but he held on gallantly and, arrived at the top, turned a tremulous telescope on to the horizon.

Mr. Tasker took a deep breath and resumed his labours. He set the table, and when the water boiled made the tea, and went down the garden to announce the fact. Mr. Chalk was still up aloft, and even at that height the pallor of his face was clearly discernible. It was evident to the couple below that the terrors of the descent were too much for him, but that he was too proud to say so.

"Nice view up there," called the captain.

"B—b—beautiful," cried Mr. Chalk, with an attempt at enthusiasm.

The captain paced up and down impatiently; his tea was getting cold, but the forlorn figure aloft made no sign. The captain waited a little longer, and then, laying hold of the shrouds, slowly mounted until his head was above the platform.

"Shall I take the glass for you?" he inquired.

Mr. Chalk, clutching the edge of the cask, leaned over and handed it down.

"My—my foot's gone to sleep," he stammered.

"Ho! Well, you must be careful how you get down," said the captain, climbing on to the platform. "Now, gently."

He put the telescope back into the cask, and, beckoning Mr. Tasker to ascend, took Mr. Chalk in a firm grasp and lowered him until he was able to reach Mr. Tasker's face with his foot. After that the descent was easy, and Mr. Chalk, reaching ground once more, spent two or three minutes in slapping and rubbing, and other remedies prescribed for sleepy feet.

"There's few gentlemen that would have come down at all with their foot asleep," remarked Mr. Tasker, pocketing a shilling, when the captain's back was turned.

Mr. Chalk, still pale and shaking somewhat, smiled feebly and followed the captain into the house. The latter offered a cup of tea, which the visitor, after a faint protest, accepted, and taking a seat at the table gazed in undisguised admiration at the nautical appearance of the room.

"I could fancy myself aboard ship," he declared.

"Are you fond of the sea?" inquired the captain.

"I love it," said Mr. Chalk, fervently. "It was always my idea from a boy to go to sea, but somehow I didn't. I went into my father's business instead, but I never liked it. Some people are fond of a stay-at-home life, but I always had a hankering after adventures." [61]

Larger Image

"HE TOOK MR. CHALK IN A FIRM GRASP AND LOWERED HIM."

The captain shook his head. "Ha!" he said, impressively.

"You've had a few in your time," said Mr. Chalk, looking at him, grudgingly; "Edward Tredgold was telling me so."

"Man and boy, I was at sea forty-nine years," remarked the captain. "Naturally things happened in that time; it would have been odd if they hadn't. It's all in a lifetime."

"Some lifetimes," said Mr. Chalk, gloomily. "I'm fifty-one next year, and the only thing I ever had happen to me was seeing a man stop a runaway horse and cart."

He shook his head solemnly over his monotonous career and, gazing at a war-club from Samoa which hung over the fireplace, put a few leading questions to the captain concerning the manner in which it came into his possession. When Prudence came in half an hour later he was still sitting there, listening with rapt attention to his host's tales of distant seas.

It was the first of many visits. Sometimes he brought Mr. Tredgold and sometimes Mr. Tredgold brought him. The terrors of the crow's-nest vanished before his persevering attacks, and perched there with the captain's glass he swept the landscape with the air of an explorer surveying a strange and hostile country.

It was a fitting prelude to the captain's tales afterwards, and Mr. Chalk, with the stem of his long pipe withdrawn from his open mouth, would sit enthralled as his host narrated picturesque incidents of hairbreadth escapes, or, drawing his chair to the table, made rough maps for his listener's clearer understanding. Sometimes the captain took him to palm-studded islands in the Southern Seas; sometimes to the ancient worlds of China and Japan. He became an expert in nautical terms. He walked in knots, and even ordered a new carpet in fathoms—after the shop-keeper had demonstrated, by means of his little boy's arithmetic book, the difference between that measurement and a furlong.

"I'll have a voyage before I'm much older," he remarked one afternoon, as he sat in the captain's sitting-room. "Since I retired from business time hangs very heavy sometimes. I've got a fancy for a small yacht, but I suppose I couldn't go a long voyage in a small one?"

"Smaller the better," said Edward Tredgold, who was sitting by the window watching Miss Drewitt sewing.

Mr. Chalk took his pipe from his mouth and eyed him inquiringly.

"Less to lose," explained Mr. Tredgold, with a scarcely perceptible glance at the captain. "Look at the dangers you'd be dragging your craft into, Chalk; there would be no satisfying you with a quiet cruise in the Mediterranean."

"I shouldn't run into unnecessary danger," said Mr. Chalk, seriously. "I'm a married man, and there's my wife to think of. What would become of her if anything happened to me?"

"Why, you've got plenty of money to leave, haven't you?" inquired Mr. Tredgold.

Larger Image

"SOMETIMES THE CAPTAIN TOOK HIM TO PALM-STUDDED ISLANDS IN THE SOUTHERN SEAS."

"I was thinking of her losing *me*," replied Mr. Chalk, with a touch of acerbity.

"Oh, I didn't think of that," said the other. "Yes, to be sure."

"Captain Bowers was telling me the other day of a woman who wore widow's weeds for thirty-five years," said Mr. Chalk, impressively. "And all the time her husband was married again and got a big family in Australia. There's nothing in the world so faithful as a woman's heart."

"Well, if you're lost on a cruise, I shall know where to look for you," said Mr. Tredgold. "But I don't think the captain ought to put such ideas into your head."

Mr. Chalk looked bewildered. Then he scratched his left whisker with the stem of his churchwarden pipe and looked severely over at Mr. Tredgold.

"I don't think you ought to talk that way before ladies," he said, primly. "Of course, I know you're only in joke, but there's some people can't see jokes as quick as others and they might get a wrong idea of you."

"What part did you think of going to for your cruise?" interposed Captain Bowers.

"There's nothing settled yet," said Mr. Chalk; "it's just an idea, that's all. I was talking to your father the other day," he added, turning to Mr. Tredgold; "just sounding him, so to speak."

"You take him," said that dutiful son, briskly. "It would do him a world of good; me, too."

"He said he couldn't afford either the time or the money," said Mr. Chalk. "The thing to do would be to combine business with pleasure—to take a yacht and find a sunken galleon loaded with gold pieces. I've heard of such things being done."

"I've heard of it," said the captain, nodding.

"Bottom of the ocean must be paved with them in places," said Mr. Tredgold, rising, and following Miss Drewitt, who had gone into the garden to plant seeds.

Mr. Chalk refilled his pipe and, accepting a match from the captain, smoked slowly. His gaze was fixed on the window, but instead of Dialstone Lane he saw tumbling blue seas and islets far away.

"That's something you've never come across, I suppose, Captain Bowers?" he remarked at last.

"No," said the other.

Mr. Chalk, with a vain attempt to conceal his disappointment, smoked on for some time in silence. The blue seas disappeared, and he saw instead the brass knocker of the house opposite.

"Nor any other kind of craft with treasure aboard, I suppose?" he suggested, at last.

The captain put his hands on his knees and stared at the floor. "No," he said, slowly, "I can't call to mind any craft; but it's odd that you should have got on this subject with me." [63]

Mr. Chalk laid his pipe carefully on the table. "Why?" he inquired.

"Well," said the captain, with a short laugh, "it *is* odd, that's all."

Mr. Chalk fidgeted with the stem of his pipe. "You know of sunken treasure somewhere?" he said, eagerly.

The captain smiled and shook his head; the other watched him narrowly.

"You know of some treasure?" he said, with conviction.

"Not what you could call sunken," said the captain, driven to bay.

Mr. Chalk's pale-blue eyes opened to their fullest extent. "Ingots?" he queried.

The other shook his head. "It's a secret," he remarked; "we won't talk about it."

"Yes, of course, naturally, I don't expect you to tell me where it is," said Mr. Chalk, "but I thought it might be interesting to hear about, that's all."

"It's buried," said the captain, after a long pause. "I don't know that there's any harm in telling you that; buried in a small island in the South Pacific."

"Have you seen it?" inquired Mr. Chalk.

"I buried it," rejoined the other.

Mr. Chalk sank back in his chair and regarded him with awestruck attention; Captain Bowers, slowly ramming home a charge of tobacco with his thumb, smiled quietly.

"Buried it," he repeated, musingly, "with the blade of an oar for a spade. It was a long job, but it's six foot down and the dead man it belonged to atop of it."

The pipe fell from the listener's fingers and smashed unheeded on the floor.

"You ought to make a book of it," he said at last.

The captain shook his head. "I haven't got the gift of story-telling," he said, simply. "Besides, you can understand I don't want it noised about. People might bother me."

He leaned back in his chair and bunched his beard in his hand; the other, watching him closely, saw that his thoughts were busy with some scene in his stirring past.

"Not a friend of yours, I hope?" said Mr. Chalk, at last.

"Who?" inquired the captain, starting from his reverie.

"The dead man atop of the treasure," replied the other.

"No," said the captain, briefly.

"Is it worth much?" asked Mr. Chalk.

"Roughly speaking, about half a million," responded the captain, calmly.

Mr. Chalk rose and walked up and down the room. His eyes were bright and his face pinker than usual.

"Why don't you get it?" he demanded, at last, pausing in front of his host.

"Why, it ain't mine," said the captain, staring. "D'ye think I'm a thief?"

Mr. Chalk stared in his turn. "But who does it belong to, then?" he inquired.

"I don't know," replied the captain. "All I know is, it isn't mine, and that's enough for me. Whether it was rightly come by I don't know. There it is, and there it'll stay till the crack of doom."

"Don't you know any of his relations or friends?" persisted the other.

"I know nothing of him except his name," said the captain, "and I doubt if even that was his right one. Don Silvio he called himself—a Spaniard. It's over ten years ago since it happened. My ship had been bought by a firm in Sydney, and while I was waiting out there I went for a little run on a schooner among the islands. This Don Silvio was aboard of her as a passenger. She went to pieces in a gale, and we were the only two saved. The others were washed overboard, but we got ashore in the boat, and I thought from the trouble he was taking over his bag that the danger had turned his brain."

"Ah!" said the keenly-interested Mr. Chalk.

"He was a sick man aboard ship," continued the captain, "and I soon saw that he hadn't saved his life for long. He saw it, too, and before he died he made me promise that the bag should be buried with him and never disturbed. After I'd promised, he opened the bag and showed me what was in it. It was full of precious stones—diamonds, rubies, and the like; some of them as large as birds' eggs. I can see him now, propped up against the boat and playing with them in the sunlight. They blazed like stars. Half a million he put them at, or more."

"What good could they be to him when he was dead?" inquired the listener.

Captain Bowers shook his head. "That was his business, not mine," he replied. "It was nothing to do with me. When he died I dug a grave for him, as I told you, with a bit of a broken oar, and laid him and the bag together. A month afterwards I was taken off by a passing schooner and landed safe at Sydney." [64]

Mr. Chalk stooped, and mechanically picking up the pieces of his pipe placed them on the table.

Larger Image

"'HOW COULD YOU HAVE FOUND THEM AGAIN?' INQUIRED MR. CHALK, WITH THE AIR OF ONE PROPOUNDING A POSER."

"Suppose that you had heard afterwards that the things had been stolen?" he remarked.

"If I had, then I should have given information, I think," said the other. "It all depends."

"Ah! but how could you have found them again?" inquired Mr. Chalk, with the air of one propounding a poser.

"With my map," said the captain slowly. "Before I left I made a map of the island and got its position from the schooner that picked me up; but I never heard a word from that day to this."

"Could you find them now?" said Mr. Chalk.

"Why not?" said the captain, with a short laugh. "The island hasn't run away."

He rose as he spoke and, tossing the fragments of his visitor's pipe into the fireplace, invited him to take a turn in the garden. Mr. Chalk, after a feeble attempt to discuss the matter further, reluctantly obeyed.

(*To be continued.*)

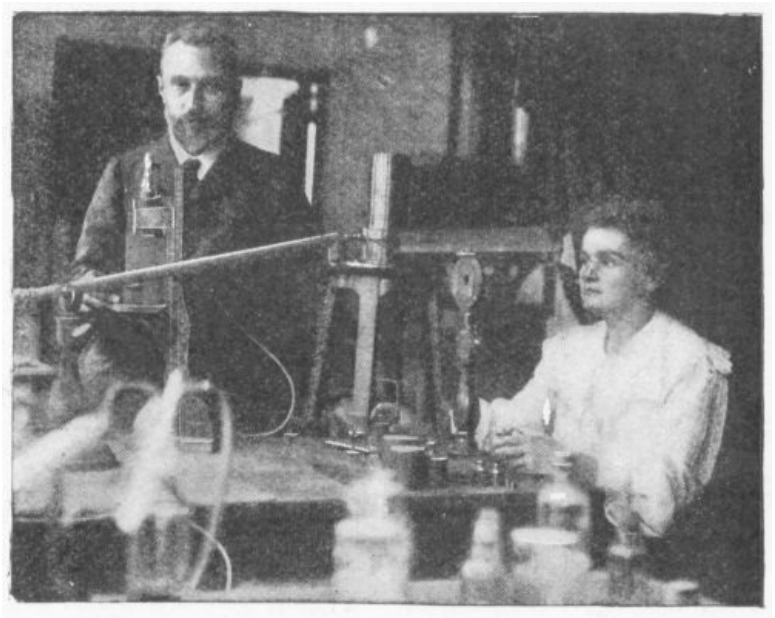
Illustrated Interviews.

LXXX.—M. CURIE, THE DISCOVERER OF RADIUM.

By Cleveland Moffett.

Very well do I remember my first impression of M. Curie. It was in the Rue Cuvier, at the Sorbonne Laboratories in Paris, where he was lecturing that day in the big amphitheatre, while I waited in an adjoining room among the air-pumps and electrical apparatus. Suddenly a door opened and there came a burst of applause, a long clapping of hands, and at the same moment a tall, pale man, slightly bent, walked slowly across the room.

On this occasion I simply made an appointment to see M. Curie the next morning at the École de Physique; but I profited by the opportunity to ask his assistant, M. Danne, some preliminary questions about radium. Was it true, *could* it be true, that this strange substance gives forth heat and light ceaselessly and is really an inexhaustible source of energy? Of course, I had read all this, but I wanted to hear it from the mouth of one who knew.



Larger Image

M. AND MME. CURIE USING THEIR APPARATUS FOR MEASURING THE INTENSITY OF RADIUM.

From a Photo.

"It is quite true," said M. Danne, "that pure radium gives out light and heat without any waste or diminution that can be detected by our most delicate instruments. That is all we can say."

"Is the light that it gives a bright light?"

"Reasonably bright. M. Curie will show you."

"Can he explain it? Can anyone explain it?"

"There are various theories, but they really explain very little."

M. Danne went on to indicate other properties of radium that are scarcely less startling than these. Besides heat and light this strange metal gives out constantly three kinds of invisible rays that move with the velocity of light, or thereabouts, and, that have separate and well-marked attributes. These rays may be helpful or harmful, they may destroy life or stimulate it. They are capable not only of shortening life or prolonging it, but of modifying existing forms of life—that is, of actually creating new species. Finally, by destroying bacteria, they may be used to cure disease, notably the dread lupus, recently conquered by Finsen's lamps, and now apparently conquered again by a simpler means.

I listened in amazement; it was not one discovery, but a dozen, that we were contemplating.

"And—all this is M. Curie's discovery?"

"Radium is his discovery; that is, his and Mme. Curie's. You cannot give one more credit than the other. They did it together."

He told me a little about Mme. Curie, who, it appears, was a Polish student in the Latin Quarter, very poor, but possessed of rare talents. They say that her marriage with M. Curie was just such a union, as *must* have produced some fine result. Without his scientific learning and vivid imagination it is doubtful if radium would ever have been dreamed of, and without her determination and patience against detail it is likely the dream would never have been realized.

The next day I found M. Curie in one of the rambling sheds of the École de Physique bending over a small porcelain dish, where a colourless liquid was simmering, perhaps half a teacupful, and he was watching it with concern, always fearful of some accident. He had lost nearly a decigramme (1·5 grains troy) of radium, he said, only a few weeks before in a curious way. He had placed some radium salts in a small tube, and this inside another tube, in which he created a vacuum. Then he began to heat both tubes over an electric furnace, when, suddenly, at about 2,000 degrees F., there came an explosion which shattered the tubes and scattered their precious contents. There was absolutely no explanation of this explosion; it was one of the tricks that [66] radium is apt to play on you. Here his face lightened with quite a boyish smile.

M. Curie proceeded to explain what he was doing with the little dish; he was refining some radium dissolved in it—that is, freeing it from contaminating barium by repeated crystallization, this being the last and most delicate part of the process of obtaining the pure metal.

"We have our radium works outside Paris," he said, "where the crude ore goes through its early stages of separation and where the radium is brought to an intensity of 2,000, as we express it. After that the process requires such care and involves so much risk of waste that we keep the precious stuff in our own hands and treat it ourselves, my wife and I, as I am doing now, to bring it to the higher intensities, 50,000, 200,000, 500,000, and, finally, 1,500,000. What you see here is about 100,000. It will take many more crystallizations to bring it to the maximum."

"That is, to the state of pure radium?"

"To the state of pure chloride of radium. You know the metal exists only as a chloride or bromide. It has never yet been isolated, although it easily might be."

"Why has it never been isolated?"

"Because it would not be stable; it would immediately be oxidized by the air and destroyed, as happens with sodium, whereas it remains permanent as a bromide or chloride and suffers no change."

"Does radium change in appearance as it increases in intensity?" I asked.

"No; it keeps the form of small white crystals, which may be crushed into a white powder, and which look like ordinary salt. See, here are some."

He took from the table drawer a small glass tube, not much larger than a thick match. It was sealed at both ends and partly covered with a fold of lead. Inside the tube I could see a white powder.

"Why is the tube wrapped with lead?" I inquired.

"For the protection of those who handle it. Lead stops the harmful rays, that would otherwise make trouble."

"Trouble?"

"Yes; you see the radium in this tube is very active; it has an intensity of 1,500,000, and if I were to lay it against your hand or any part of your body, so"—he touched my hand with the bare tube —"and if I were to leave it there for a few minutes, you would certainly hear from it later."

"But I feel nothing."

"Of course not; neither did I feel anything when I touched some radium here," and pulling up his sleeve he showed me a forearm scarred and reddened from fresh-healed sores. "But you see what it did, and it was much less intense than this specimen."

He then mentioned an experience of his friend, Professor Becquerel, discoverer of the "Becquerel rays" of uranium, and in a way the parent-discoverer of radium, since the latter discovery grew out of the former. It seems that Professor Becquerel, in journeying to London, carried in his waistcoat pocket a small tube of radium to be used in a lecture there. Nothing happened at the time, but about a fortnight later the professor observed that the skin under his pocket was beginning to redden and fall away, and finally a deep and painful sore formed there and remained for weeks before healing. A peculiar feature of these radium sores is that they do not appear for some considerable time after exposure to the rays.

"Then radium is an element of destruction?" I remarked.

"Undoubtedly it has a power of destruction, but that power may be tempered or controlled, for instance, by this covering of lead. M. Danysz, at the Pasteur Institute, will give you the pathological facts better than I can."

This brought us back to physical facts, and I asked M. Curie if the radium before us was at that moment giving out heat and light, for I could perceive neither.

"Of course it is," he replied. "I will take you into a dark room presently and let you see the light for yourself. As for the heat, a thermometer would show that this tube of radium is 2·7 degrees F. warmer than the surrounding air."

"Is it always that much warmer?"

"Always—so far as we know. I may put it more simply by saying that a given quantity of radium will melt its own weight of ice every hour."

"For ever?"

He smiled. "So far as we know—for ever. Or, again, that a given quantity of radium throws out as

much heat in eighty hours as an equal weight of coal would throw out if burned to complete combustion in one hour."

"Suppose you had a considerable quantity of radium," I suggested, "say twenty pounds, or a hundred pounds?"

"The law would be the same, whatever the quantity. If we had fifty kilos (110 pounds) of radium"—he gave a little wondering cluck at the thought—"I say *if* we had fifty kilos of radium it would give out as much heat *continuously* as a stove would give out that burned ten kilos (twenty-two pounds) of coal every twenty-four hours, and was filled up fresh every day." [67]

"And the radium would *never* cease to give out this heat and would *never* be consumed?"

"Never is a hard word, but one of our professors has calculated that a given quantity of radium, after throwing out heat as I have stated for a thousand million years, would have lost only one-millionth part of its bulk. Others think the loss might be greater, say an ounce to a ton in ten thousand years, but in any case it is so infinitesimally small that we have no means of measuring it, and for practical purposes it does not exist."

Larger Image

M. AND MME. CURIE FINISHING THE PREPARATION OF SOME RADIUM.

After this M. Curie took me into a darkened room, where I *saw* quite plainly the light from the radium tube, a clear glow sufficient to read by if the tube were held near a printed page. And, of course, this was a very small quantity of radium, about six centigrammes (nine-tenths of a grain troy).

"We estimate," said he, "that a decigramme of radium will illuminate a square décimètre (fifteen square inches) of surface sufficient for reading."

"And a kilogramme (2·2 pounds) of radium?"

"A kilogramme of radium would illuminate a room thirty feet square with a mild radiance; and the light would be much brighter if screens of sulphide of zinc were placed near the radium, for these are thrown by the metal into a brilliant phosphorescence."

"Then radium may be the light of the future?"

M. Curie shook his head. "I am afraid that we should pay rather dearly for such a light. There is first the money cost to be considered, and then the likelihood that the people illuminated by radium would be also stricken with paralysis, blindness, and various nervous disorders. Possibly protective screens might be devised against these dangers, but it is too soon to think of that. For a long time to come the radium light will be only a laboratory wonder." [68]

After we had been in the darkness for some time M. Curie wrapped the radium tube in thick paper and put it in my hand.

"Now," said he, "shut your eyes and press this against your right eyelid."

I did as he bade me, and straightway had the sensation of a strange diffused light outside my eye. M. Curie assured me, however, that the light was not outside but *inside* the eye, the radium rays having the property of making the liquids of the eyeball self-luminous, a sort of internal phosphorescence being produced. He warned me that it would be dangerous to leave the radium against the eyelid very long, as a serious disturbance to the eyesight, or even blindness, might result.

Another experiment consisted in placing the radium against the bone at the side of the forehead, and even in this position, with the eyes closed, a light was perceptible, although fainter. Here the radium rays had acted upon the eyeball through the bones of the head.

"It is possible," said M. Curie, "that this property of radium may be utilized in certain diseases of

the eye. Dr. Emile Javal, one of our distinguished physicians, who is blind himself, has given this matter particular attention, and he thinks that radium may offer a precious means of diagnosis in cases of cataract, by showing whether the retina is or is not intact, and whether an operation will succeed. If a person blind from cataract can see the radium light as you have just seen it, then the eyesight of that person may be restored by removing the cataract. Otherwise it cannot be restored."

As we returned to the laboratory I remarked that the quantity of radium in the various tubes I had seen was very small.

"Of course it is small," he sighed; "there is very little radium in the world. I mean very little that has been taken from the earth and purified."

"How much is there?"

He thought a moment. "We have about one gramme (one-third of an ounce) in France, Germany may have one gramme, America has less than one gramme, and the rest of the world may perhaps have half a gramme. Four grammes in all would be an outside estimate; you could heap it all in a tablespoon."

I suggested to M. Curie the possibility that some philanthropist might be inspired on reading his words to help the new cause. And I remarked that great things could doubtless be accomplished with some substantial quantity of radium, say a pound or two.

He gave me an amused look and asked if I had any idea what a pound or two of radium, say a kilogramme (two and one-fifth pounds), would cost.

"Why, no," said I, "no exact idea; but——"

"A kilogramme of radium would cost"—he figured rapidly on a sheet of paper—"with the very cheapest methods that we have of purifying the crude material it would cost about ten million francs (£400,000). Under existing conditions radium is worth about three thousand times its weight in pure gold."

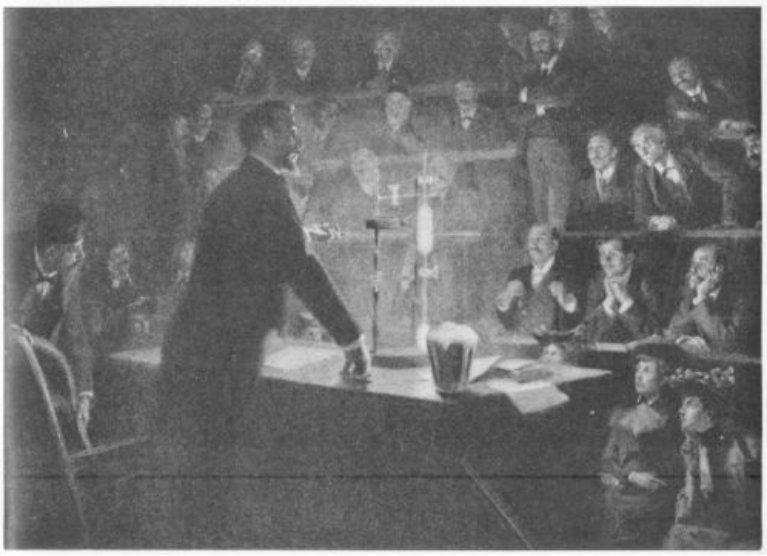
"And yet there may be tons of it in the earth?"

M. Curie was not so sure of this. "It is doubtful," said he, "if there is very much radium in the earth, and what there is is so thinly scattered in the surrounding ore—mere traces of radium for tons of worthless rock—that the cost of extracting it is almost prohibitive. You will realize this when you visit our works at Ivry."

These works I visited the next day, and found myself outside the walls of Paris, near the old Ivry Cemetery, where some unpretentious sheds serve for this important business of radium extraction. One of the head men met me and explained, step by step, how they obtain this strange and elusive metal. First he showed me a lumpy reddish powder, sacks of it, brought from Bohemia by the ton, and constituting the raw material from which the radium is extracted. This powder is the refuse from uranium mines at Jachimsthal; that is, what remains of the original uranite ore, *pitchblende*, after the uranium has been removed. For years this refuse was regarded as worthless, and was left to accumulate in heaps, tons of it, quite at the disposal of whoever chose to cart it away. Now that it is known to contain the rarest, and most precious substance in the world, it goes without saying that the owners have begun to put a price on it.

My informant referred with proper pride to the difficulties that had confronted them when they started these radium works in 1901. It was a new problem in practical chemistry to bring together infinitesimal traces of a metal lost in tons of *débris*. It was like searching for specks of dust hidden in a sand heap, or for drops of perfume scattered in a river. Still, they went at it with [69] good heart, for the end justified the effort. If it took a ton of uranite dust to yield as much radium as would half fill a doll's thimble, then the thing to do was to have many tons of this dust sent on from Bohemia, and patiently to accumulate, after months of handling, various pinches of radium, a few centigrammes, then a few decigrammes, and finally some day—who could tell?—they might get as much as a gramme. This was a distant prospect, to be sure, yet with infinite pains and all the resources of chemistry it might be attained. Well, now they had attained it, and at this time, he said, some eight tons of uranite detritus had passed through the caldrons and great glass jars and muddy barrels of the Ivry establishment, had been boiled and filtered and decanted and crystallized, with much fuming of acids and the steady glow of furnaces; and out of it all, for the twenty-four months' effort, there had come just about a gramme of practically pure chloride of radium—enough white powder to fill a salt-spoon.

When next I saw M. Curie he had just returned from London, where he had lectured before the Royal Institution. His hands were much peeled, and very sore from too much contact with radium, and for several days he had been unable to dress himself; but he took it good-naturedly, and proceeded to describe some of the experiments he had made before British scientists.



Larger Image

M. CURIE EXPLAINING THE WONDERS OF RADIUM AT THE SORBONNE. THIS EXPERIMENT WITH THE RADIUM LIGHT IS DESCRIBED IN THE ARTICLE.

In order to demonstrate that radium throws off heat continually he took two glass vessels, one containing a thermometer and a tube of radium, the other containing a thermometer and no radium. Both vessels were closed with cotton, and it was presently seen that the thermometer in the vessel containing the radium registered constantly 5·4 degrees F. higher than the thermometer which was not so influenced.

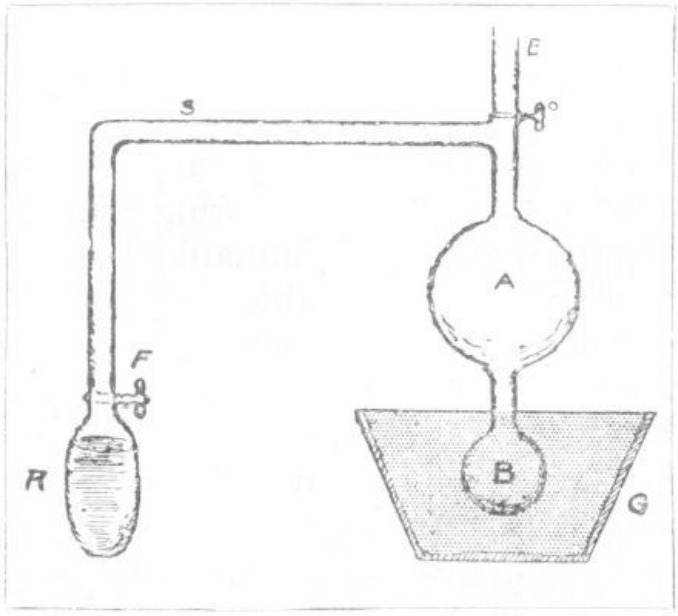
The most striking experiment presented by M. Curie in his London lecture was one devised by him to prove the existence of radium emanations, a kind of gaseous product (quite different from the rays) which this extraordinary metal seems to throw off constantly as it throws off heat and light. These emanations may be regarded as an invisible vapour of radium, like water vapour, only infinitely more subtle, which settles upon all objects that it approaches and confers upon them, for a time at least, the mysterious properties of radium itself. Thus the yellow powder [70] sulphide of zinc bursts into a brilliant glow under the stimulus of radium emanations, and to make it clear that this effect is due to the emanations and not to the rays M. Curie constructed an apparatus in which a glass tube, R, containing a solution of radium is connected with two glass bulbs, A and B, containing sulphide of zinc.

The experiment is begun by exhausting the air from the two bulbs A and B, by means of air-pump connections through the tube E. The air is not exhausted, however, from the tube R, over which the stop-cock F is closed, and within which the emanations have been allowed to accumulate. The room is now darkened, and it is seen that so long as the stop-cock F remains closed there is no glow in the bulbs A and B, but as soon as the stop-cock F is opened both bulbs shine brilliantly, so that the light is plainly visible at a distance of several hundred yards. Now, obviously, if this effect were due to the radium rays, it would be produced whether the stop-cock F were open or closed, since the radium rays pass freely through glass and need not follow the tube S in order to reach the bulbs A and B. It is therefore clear that the sudden light in the bulbs is due to the passage of *something* out of the tube R, and through the tube S, that *something* being kept back by the glass of the bulb R until the stop-cock F is opened. So we conclude that the emanations of radium *cannot* pass through glass, and are a manifestation quite distinct from the rays of radium, which *can* pass through but do not influence the sulphide of zinc.

This point having been established, M. Curie proceeded to the most sensational part of his demonstration, by closing the stop-cock F and then placing the lower bulb B, still radiant, in a vessel G containing liquid air, the result being that the light in the bulb B gradually grew stronger while the light in the bulb A diminished, until, presently, *all* the light seemed concentrated in B and gone from A, the conclusion being that the intense cold of liquid air had produced some change in the emanations, had possibly reduced them from a gas to a liquid, thus withdrawing them from A to B and checking the one glow while increasing the other.

In talking with Sir William Crookes, M. Curie was interested to learn that the English scientist had just devised a curious little instrument which he has named the spinthariscope, and which allows one to actually *see* the emanations from radium and to realize as never before the extraordinary atomic disintegration that is going on ceaselessly in this strange metal. The spinthariscope is a small microscope that allows one to look at a tiny fragment of radium, about one-twentieth of a milligramme, supported on a little wire over a screen spread with sulphide of zinc.

The experiment must be made in a darkened room after the eye has gradually acquired its greatest sensitiveness to light. To the eye thus sensitive and looking intently through the lenses the screen appears like a heaven of flashing meteors, among which stars shine forth suddenly and die away. Near the central radium



speck the fire shower is most brilliant, while towards the rim of the circle it grows fainter. And this goes on continuously as the metal throws off its emanations; these myriad bursting blazing stars *are* the emanations—at least, we may assume it—and become visible as the scattered radium dust or radium vapour impinges speck by speck upon the screen, which, for each tiny fragment, flashes back a responsive phosphorescence. M. Curie spoke of this vision, that was really contained within the area of a two-cent piece, as one of the most beautiful and impressive he had ever witnessed; it was as if he had been allowed to assist at the birth of a universe or at the death of a molecule.

Dwelling upon the extreme attenuation of these radium emanations, M. Curie mentioned a recent experiment, in which he had used a platinum box pierced by two holes so extremely small that the box would retain a vacuum, yet not small enough to resist the passage of radium emanations.

In view of the extreme rarity and costliness of radium, it is evident that its emanations may be put to many important uses in and out of the laboratory, since they bestow upon indifferent [71] objects—a plate, a piece of iron, an old shoe, anything—the very properties of radium itself. Thus a scientist or a doctor unable to procure the metal radium may easily experiment with a bit of wood or glass rendered radio-active—that is, charged by radium emanations, and capable of replacing the original metal as long as the charge keeps its potency. This period has been determined by the Curies after observations extending over weeks and months, and applied to all sorts of substances, copper, aluminium, lead, rubber, wax, celluloid, paraffin, no fewer than fifty in all, the resulting conclusions being formulated in a precise law as follows:—

> (1) All substances may be rendered radio-active through the influence of radium emanations.
>
> (2) Substances thus influenced retain their induced radio-activity very much longer when guarded in a small enclosure through which the emanations cannot pass (say a sealed glass tube) than when not so guarded. In the former case their radio-activity diminishes one-half every four days. In the latter case it diminishes one-half every twenty-eight minutes.

I must pass rapidly over various other wonders of radium that M. Curie laid before me. New matter is accumulating every week as the outcome of new investigations. Even in the chemistry of radium, which is practically an unexplored field, owing to the scarcity and costliness of the metal, there are various facts to be noted, as these: that radium changes the colour of phosphorus from yellow to red; that radium rays increase the production of ozone in certain cases; that a small quantity of radium dissolved in water throws off hydrogen constantly by causing a disintegration of the water, the oxygen released being absorbed in some unknown molecular combination. Also that a solution of radium gives a violet or brownish tint to a glass vessel containing it, this tint being permanent, unless the glass be heated red hot. Here, by the way, is an application of importance in the arts, for radium may thus be used to modify the colours of glass and crystals, possibly of gems. It is furthermore established that radium offers a ready means of distinguishing real from imitation diamonds, since it causes the real stones to burst into a brilliant phosphorescence when brought near them in a darkened room, while it has scarcely any such effect upon false stones. M. Curie made this experiment recently at a reception in Lille, to the great delight of the guests.

Coming now to what may be the most important properties of radium—that is, those which influence animal life—we may follow M. Curie's advice and visit the Pasteur Institute, where for some months now a remarkable series of radium tests has been in progress.

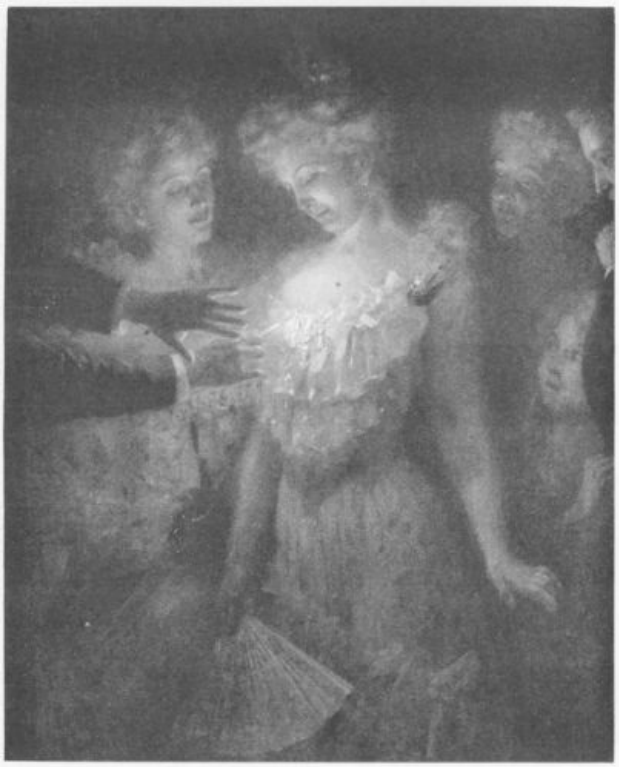
M. Danysz is convinced that all animals, probably all forms of life, would succumb to the destructive force of radium if employed in sufficient quantities.

"I have no doubt," said he, "that a kilogramme of radium would be sufficient to destroy the population of Paris, granting that they came within its influence. Men and women would be killed just as easily as mice. They would feel nothing during their exposure to the radium, nor realize that they were in any danger. And weeks would pass after their exposure before anything would happen. Then gradually the skin would begin to peel off and their bodies would become one great sore. Then they would become blind. Then they would die from paralysis and congestion of the spinal cord."

Despite this rather gloomy prospect, certain experiments at the Pasteur Institute may encourage us to believe that, for all its menace of destruction, radium is destined to bring substantial

benefits to suffering humankind. The substance of these favourable experiments is that, while animal life may undoubtedly suffer great harm from radium when used in excess or wrongly used (the same is true of strychnine), it may also derive immense good from radium when used within proper bounds, these to be set when we have gained a fuller knowledge of the subject. Meantime it is worthy of note that some of M. Danysz's animals, when exposed to the radium for a short time, or to radium of lower intensity, or to radium at a greater distance, have not perished, but have seemed to thrive under the treatment.

But the most startling experiment performed thus far at the Pasteur Institute is one undertaken by M. Danysz, February 3rd, 1903, when he placed three or four dozen little worms that live in flour, the larvæ *Ephestia kuehniella*, in a glass flask, where they were exposed for a few hours to the rays of radium. He placed a like number of larvæ in a control flask where there was no radium, and he left enough flour in each flask for the larvæ to live upon. After several weeks it was found that most of the larvæ in the radium flask had been killed, but that a few of them had escaped the destructive action of the rays by crawling away to distant corners of the flask, where they were still living. But *they were living as larvæ, not as moths*, whereas in the natural course [72] they should have become moths long before, as was seen by the control flask, where the larvæ had all changed into moths, and these had hatched their eggs into other larvæ, and these had produced other moths. All of which made it clear that the radium rays had arrested the development of these little worms.



Larger Image

M. CURIE TESTING DIAMONDS AT A RECEPTION AT LILLE.

More weeks passed and still three or four of the larvæ lived, and four full months after the original exposure I saw a larva alive and wriggling while its contemporary larvæ in the other jar had long since passed away as aged moths, leaving generations of moths' eggs and larvæ to witness this miracle, for here was a larva, venerable among his kind, a patriarch *Ephestia kuehniella*, that had actually lived through *three times the span of life accorded to his fellows*, and that still showed no sign of changing into a moth. It was very much as if a young man of twenty-one should keep the appearance of twenty-one for two hundred and fifty years!

Not less remarkable than these are some recent experiments made by M. Bohn at the biological laboratories of the Sorbonne, his conclusions being that radium may so far modify various lower forms of life as to actually produce "monsters," abnormal deviations from the original type of the species. Thus tadpole monsters have been formed from tadpoles exposed four days after birth to radium rays. Some of these monsters lived for twenty-three days, and would doubtless have lived longer had they been exposed to the rays for a shorter time. No changes occur in the tadpoles treated except at the transition points of growth, as on the eighth day, when the breathing tentacles are covered by gills in the normal tadpole, but are not so covered in the monsters formed after radium treatment. These monsters take on a new form, with an increasing atrophy of the tail and a curious wrinkling of the tissues at the back of the head; in fact, they may be said to develop a new breathing apparatus, quite different from that of ordinary tadpoles.

M. Bohn has obtained similar results with eggs of the toad and eggs of the sea-urchin, monsters [73] resulting in both cases and continuing to live for a number of days or weeks after exposure to the radium. Furthermore, he has been able to accomplish with radium what Professor Loeb did with saline solutions—that is, to cause the growth of unfecundated eggs of the sea-urchin, and to advance these through several stages of their development. In other words, he has used radium *to create life* where there would have been no life but for this strange stimulation.

M. Bohn assured me of his conviction that we may in the future be able to produce new species of insects, moths, butterflies, perhaps birds and fishes, by simply treating the eggs with radium rays, the result being that interesting changes will be effected in the colouring and adornment. He also believes that, with greater quantities of radium at our disposal and a fuller understanding of its properties, it may be possible to produce new species among larger creatures, mice, rabbits, guinea-pigs, etc. It is merely a question of degree, for if new types can be produced in

one species why may they not be produced in another?

It remains to mention certain important services that radium may render in the cure of bodily ills, notably of lupus and other skin diseases. Here is a great new field full of promise, yet one that must be considered with guarded affirmation, lest false hopes be aroused. It is too soon as yet to say more than this, that distinguished doctors speak with confidence of excellent results that may be looked for from the radium treatment. Dr. Danlos, for instance, has used the radium rays on lupus patients at the St. Louis Hospital in Paris for over a year, and in several cases has accomplished apparent cures. The radium used is enclosed between two small discs of copper and aluminium, the whole being about the size of a silver dollar. The aluminium disc, which is very thin, is pressed against the affected part and left there for fifteen minutes; that is all there is in the treatment, except cleansing, bandaging, etc. Day after day, for weeks or months, this contact with the disc is continued, and after a period of irritation the sores heal, leaving healthy white scars. Some patients thus treated have gone for months without a relapse, but it is too soon to declare the cures absolute. They *look like* absolute cures, that is all Dr. Danlos will say, and if time proves that they *are* absolute cures, then radium will do for lupus patients all that Finsen's lamps do, and will do it more quickly, more simply, and with no cumbersome and costly apparatus. It may be objected that radium also is costly, but the answer is that radium will probably become cheaper as the supply increases and as the processes of extracting it are perfected. Furthermore, the effects of radium may be obtained, as already stated, by the use of indifferent bodies rendered radio-active, so that lupus patients may be treated with a piece of wood or a piece of glass possessed for the moment of the virtues of radium. And certain kinds of cancer may be similarly treated; indeed, a London physician has already reported a case of cancer cured by radium.

These are possibilities, *not* certainties, and there are others. It appears that radium has a bactericidal action in certain cases, and it would therefore seem reasonable that air rendered radio-active may benefit sufferers from lung troubles if breathed into the lungs, or that water rendered radio-active may benefit sufferers from stomach troubles if taken into the stomach. It goes without saying that in all these cases the use of radium must be attended with extreme precautions, so that harmful effects may be avoided.

Just as I was leaving Paris I learned of an interesting and significant new fact about radium, one that greatly impressed M. Curie—namely, that the air from deep borings in the earth is found to be radio-active, and that the waters from mineral springs are radio-active. This would seem to indicate the presence of radium in the earth in considerable quantities, and that would mean more abundant and cheaper radium in the not distant future. One of the things to be hoped for now is the discovery of a single simple reaction by which radium may be easily separated from the dross that contains it, and any day the chemists may put their hands on such a reaction.

And then—well, it is best to avoid sweeping statements, but there is certainly reason to believe that we are entering upon a domain of new, strange knowledge and drawing near to some of Nature's most hallowed secrets.

Trousers in Sculpture.

[74]

By Ronald Graham.

"Who will deliver us from the modern trouser?" once publicly asked a Royal Academician. It has been a question repeatedly propounded since the beginning of the last century, when this much-mooted garment came into fashionable vogue.

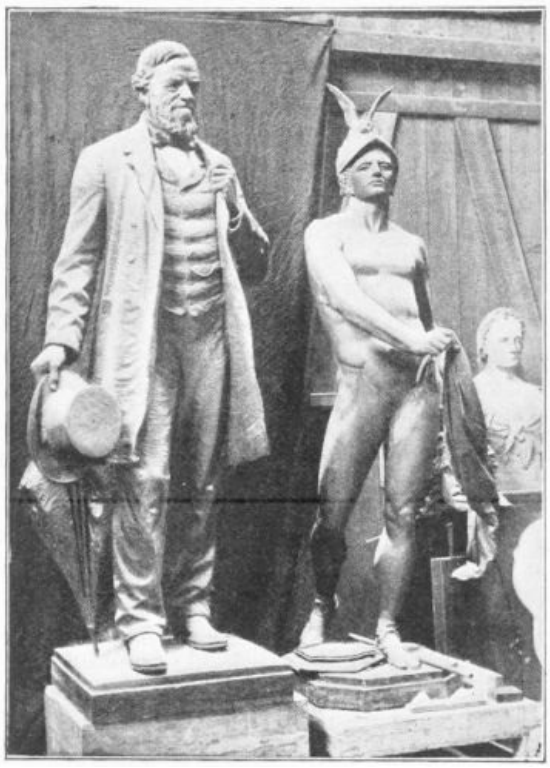
Trousers have at length passed permanently into Art. They have been depicted in glowing pigments and embodied in enduring bronze and marble. They have become classical. They have exacted the patience of the greatest painters and most talented sculptors for a full century in portraying them, as well as taxed the ingenuity of the noblest tailors in constructing them.

The time has arrived, we opine, for trousers to be considered as public and not merely as private embellishments. We shall leave other hands to write the history of the two long cylindrical bags which are at once the pride of the swell mobsman and, as we shall show, the dire despair of the sculptor, who can no longer emulate the example of Phidias, and represent his patrons in the superlatively light clothing of the annexed illustration—a corner in a well-known sculptor's studio.

Assuming that the modern trouser is a necessity—and we believe it is regarded as such, at least primarily—the point arises, how is the modern trouser to be made picturesque in Art?

The tailor's notion of the ideal in trousers and that entertained by the sculptor are separated by a wide gulf, which very few of the latter fraternity show any disposition to bridge.

It will never be known how many exponents of the sartorial art, who have in their time fitted masterpieces to the limbs of Lord Derby, Lord Palmerston, Lord Beaconsfield, Sir Robert Peel, and other statesmen, have sighed to see their art transmitted at the sculptor's hands to posterity mutilated by folds, deformed by creases, gifted with impossible falls over the boot, and endowed with plies at the knee which not ten years of incessant wear could be supposed to produce.



Larger Image

ANCIENT VERSUS MODERN. THE LATE GEORGE PALMER AND PERSEUS.

From a*] [*Photo.

"Trousers," remarked Mr. Thomas Brock, R.A., "cannot be made artistic—at any rate in statuary. The painter is better equipped to grapple with the task than the sculptor. He has light, colour, and shade at his command, and may so subordinate these elements as to render the objectionable features of our modern costume less obtrusive. At no time have we been so little attractive from a picturesque standpoint as to-day. It is, therefore, eminently the desire of the sculptor to employ modern street costume as little as possible. It was formerly the custom in a full-length statue to drape the figure in a Roman toga or long cloak, which lent an heroic effect to the most prosaic theme. Costume of the last century was decidedly picturesque—as you may observe in this model [75] of the Robert Raikes statue erected on the Thames Embankment—where knee-breeches, stockings, and shoe-buckles replace trousers." An example of Mr. Brock's treatment of the modern trouser may be seen in his Colin Campbell herewith reproduced.

SIR COLIN CAMPBELL, BY T. BROCK, R.A.

From a Photo.

To illustrate the attitude taken by the sculptor generally it may be observed that as yet, notwithstanding the many recent additions of full-length statues in the northern nave, only a single pair of sculptured trousers have found their way into Westminster Abbey. But, as will be seen from a perusal of the views held by Hamo Thornycroft, R.A., this condition of affairs will not be enduring.

"It is quite impossible," said Mr. Thornycroft, "to go back to the old style, as did the sculptors of less than a century ago, and clothe our heroes in antique draperies. One must follow the costume of the period. I have a hope that what appears conventional now will possess an interest and even a picturesqueness to our posterity. I have modelled Lord Granville in evening dress, which displays the trousers conspicuously, and my recent statue of Steurt Bayley is likewise apparelled in modern costume. Nevertheless, I do not believe any sculptor should slavishly adhere to the canons of form laid down by the tailor. The tailor is, of course, merely carrying out the whims of his fashionable patron, who is not always the most intellectual being extant. Although I am told that some statesmen like Mr. Chamberlain are scrupulous as to the perfect fit of their trousers, yet I should no more dream, if called upon to-morrow to make a statue of one of these eminent gentlemen, of modelling an upright pair of creaseless cylinders than I should paint in the shade of the cloth. No, I could never bring myself to model a pair of trousers such as are daily seen in Piccadilly. I have an ideal and I propose to carry it out. The folds, the creases, and the plies instil life into the work. An artist has a duty to perform in ennobling his work—even though that duty be no more than constructing trousers of marble. It does not lie in perpetuating the fleeting follies of fashion."

JOHN BRIGHT, BY HAMO THORNYCROFT, R.A.

From a Photo.

Mr. Thornycroft has succeeded very well with the trousers of his John Bright statue. As trousers, and as characteristic trousers, we defy the most captious hypercritic to urge anything against them. They are precisely the sort of leg-covering the late eminent statesman ought to have worn, nor do we doubt that, had he been actuated by that due regard for sartorial proprieties which the artist seeks at the hands, or rather at the legs, of eminent persons, he would have worn them. But an intimate friend of Mr. Bright's, who has, at our request, minutely surveyed the bronze statue at Rochdale, readily pronounces his opinion that the trousers are not by any means his fellow-townsman's. "The material is too thin," he writes. "John Bright's trousers were of extra heavy West of England cloth. They bagged a lot at the knees, but fitted rather tightly at the [76] calves. The boots are certainly not his," he adds; and then, as if to justify this oracular style of speech, "I know because there was no carpet on the floor of the room where Mr. Bright and myself habitually met; so I studied his lower extremities while he spoke to me instead."

Larger Image

THE GAMBETTA STATUE, PARIS.

From a Photo.

In the course of a conversation with the French sculptor, M. Jean Carries, that artist once defined to the writer the whole position of the French school of to-day.

"Its aim is life—animation—drama. To leave anything dormant is to leave the stone as you found it, and to acknowledge the futility of your genius. All the characteristics of life might be imparted to even a modern street costume.

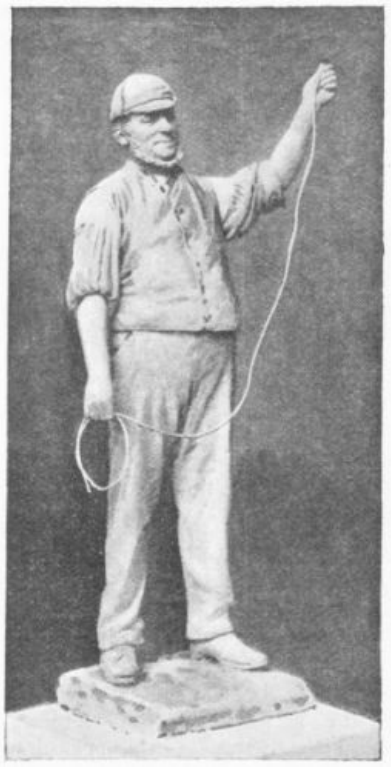
"Only a tailor or a person deficient in culture would criticise the trousers of the Gambetta statue. Such a person would say, 'But I have never seen them in the Boulevards or in the Palais Bourbon.' Of course he has not; and what then? Did Raphael ever see an angel, or Michael Angelo a faun? No. A pair of widely-cut trousers with a single crease or fold might answer very well for a tailor's dummy; but it would not do at all for a chiselled human figure, which must express potential life."

SIR JOHN MACDONALD, BY G. E. WADE.

From a Photo.

"Idealism? Sense of the picturesque? Fiddlesticks!" declared Mr. George Wade, an exceptionally talented English sculptor, pausing in his work of modelling a full-length statue of a recently-deceased statesman. "Unless art in portraiture possess a rigid fidelity it is not, in my humble judgment, worth the cost of the stone or bronze necessary to evolve it. Idealism!—that is the cry of the sculptor who is deficient—who is dependent rather upon the resources of a departed school than of himself. Why should a sculptor seek to be otherwise than faithful, even to the buttons on the waistcoat of his subject? To cite an instance, some time ago Sir Charles Tupper, viewing my first model for the MacDonald statue, observed: 'I see you have buttoned only a single button of Sir John's coat. I never remember seeing my friend's coat not entirely buttoned. It was one of his characteristics.' When my visitor left I destroyed the old and commenced a new model.

"If it is characteristic of the subject in hand to wear disreputable trousers—very good. I should so model them. If, on the contrary, they were worn faultlessly smooth, it would contribute nothing to my conception of the wearer's identity to invest them with bulges and creases which, if not absolutely and physically impossible, would only be so in Pongee silk and not in the heavy fabric usually employed in trousering. I am not aware that public personages clothe their limbs in [77]
Pongee silk. Were this the case it would be so much the better for us. In practice I do not believe in that picturesque ruggedness about the knees which seems so attractive to the average sculptor. I am told that Sir Edward Burne-Jones spent many hours in the course of a single day in the study and device of new complex folds and sinuosities in the most delicate textile stuffs, and that it seems not altogether irrational to believe is the employment of many English and French sculptors when they set about making a pair of trousers.



A STABLEMAN, BY G. E. WADE.
From a Photo.

"If you cannot be original," comments Mr. Wade, "be bizarre. Palm off meretricious effect for truth. Why not be content with the individuality which reveals itself in the limb's attitude as well as in its drapery? Mr. Smith did not stand as the Duke of Connaught does—Paderewski's posture is not that of Lord Roberts. No; you cannot create character by kneading your clay into all sorts of weird concavities and convexities. It is not true to life."

THE HON. DAVID CARMICHAEL, BY J. ADAMS-ACTON.
From a*] [*Photo.

We do not deny character to perfect garments. They may each and all breathe a distinct individuality, and so far the requirements of Art are met. Compare those already mentioned with the rest—compare Colin Campbell's or Mr. Clarkson's legs with Mr. Palmer's of biscuit fame—and the contrast tells it's own tale. But to enforce our point, in spite even of the eloquent utterances of Mr. Wade, we, who were privileged to have seen Sir John MacDonald in the flesh, assert positively that we never saw that flesh draped in such trousers. The fact is, certain men never wore such trousers. With one or two exceptions the trousers presented in the course of this article—examples collated with no little care—are artistic trousers, trousers of Art, and never

intended to be trousers of Reality, because the trousers of Reality either express too much or too little, or express something entirely in dissonance with the sculptor's idea of the character he is modelling. Nature, it has been observed, does not lend itself readily to the canons of Art. As it was long ago settled that carved statesmen must wear breeches of ultra length, when it appears that in life they are foolishly addicted to garments of unseemly brevity, it is only proper that this sad circumstance should be blotted out in the studio, and a veil, composed of a yard or two of extra trousering, be drawn over this painful deficiency in their several characters. Had they been stablemen they might have fared differently, although we can have little to object to in the nether garments of Mr. Adams-Acton's Hon. David Carmichael in the accompanying photograph.

[78]

LORD ROSEBERY'S TROUSERS, BY DAVID WEEKES.

From a Photo.

JOHN BURNS'S TROUSERS, BY DAVID WEEKES.

From a Photo.

On the other hand, there have been sculptors who strive hard for sartorial realism. The trousers no more than the limbs of all our great men are faultless. At a glance we may appreciate shades of difference in the interesting studies by Mr. David Weekes of the trousers of Lord Rosebery and

of Mr. John Burns. The former are the garments to the life, such as have long been familiar to the fortunate occupiers of the front rows at Liberal political meetings—redolent of the lonely furrow and on intimate terms with the historic spade—while as for the tumid and strenuous breeches of the member for Battersea, corduroy or otherwise, they are chiselled to the last crease of realism. But such is the perversity of Art that such interesting studies would in the finished statue be exchanged for far less convincing garments. The legs of the Palmerston and Peel statues in Parliament Square are clothed in what we might term a suave trouser—or, more properly speaking, pantaloons—of incredible length and irreproachable girth; whereas those whose eyes have rested upon these great statesmen's garments in the flesh will recall something eminently different. For example, if we do not too greatly err in our conception, Lord Palmerston, in his later years, was somewhat addicted to a style of trouser not often seen in sculpture. Happily, in the studio of Mr. Wade, we have been able to light upon an example of just the sort of trouser we mean, and in order more to accurately impress its proportions upon the reader we give an example of it. It is not the trouser of a statesman, however, but of a stableman, a personage in a lower station in life (page 77).

W. E. GLADSTONE, BY E. ONSLOW FORD, R.A.

From a Photo.

A reference might here be made to the trousers of Mr. Gladstone, executed in bronze by the late Onslow Ford, R.A. The artist in this piece displayed extraordinary qualities of merit, but as realists we must take issue with him on the question of the length of Gladstone's trousers. Albeit if Mr. Gladstone, in posing for this really admirable work, undertook, with an eye to the effects the consequence would have with posterity, to assume for the nonce an unusual and unprecedented pair of trousers, then, of course, Mr. Ford merits a complete exoneration. He, like posterity will be, was deceived. But we take it upon ourselves, while admiring their aggressiveness and individuality, to assert that such trousers would be much more befitting Mr. Balfour, whose "tailor's length," we are given to understand, is thirty-six inches, rather than the venerable Liberal statesman, whose nether adornments never exceeded twenty-eight.

[79]

W. S. COOKSON, BY T. BROCK, R.A.

From a Photo.

Indeed, we shall not be at a loss if we seek for examples of the trouser which is manufactured exclusively in the studio of the sculptor. Mr. Brock is certainly a great sinner in this regard (we have only to turn to his statues of the late Mr. Cookson and Collin Campbell), and Mr. Adams-Acton has shown in his statue of the late Professor Powell that he, too, does not always follow the fashion of the street. We think we can safely lay down the proposition once for all that no trousers can possess simultaneously both properties—length and bagginess. We have every confidence in the tailor as well as the greatest admiration for his art, and we do not wish to be considered as speaking lightly or at random when we say that long deliberation and consultation with the highest authorities have shown us that these two qualities are irreconcilable. We must, therefore, in all fairness condemn several pairs of chiselled trousers which seem to us to violate this law, as even the elegant continuations with which, thanks to Mr. Simonds, the late Hon. F. Tollemache stands for ever endowed, the inexpressibles of the late Mr. Palmer, and even Mr. Pinker's genteel specimens upon the legs of the late Professor Fawcett.

After all we have said, it is to Nottingham that we must attribute the unique distinction of possessing the worst pair of sculptured trousers in the kingdom. They adorn the legs of the late local worthy, Sir Robert Juckes-Clifton; and, as the reader will see from the accompanying photograph, embody not inadequately the talented sculptor's dream. That they embody anything but a dream it is out of our power to believe, as we are reliably informed that it is not in the nature of our most flexible English tweeds to assume such grotesque folds, unless there are goods in the Midlands, for which the lamented Sir Robert Juckes-Clifton expressed a weakness, which surpass ordinary material in this respect. After all, they are not so bad as Gambetta's trousers in the statue opposite the Louvre in Paris, already alluded to and reproduced on page 76. The sculptor's aim was apparently to breech his subject æsthetically, and he has spared no pains to bring about this result. As a matter of truth, M. Alphonse Daudet has borne printed witness to the fact that Gambetta's trousers were invariably too short—not too long—and revealed some inches of white sock. But could a sculptor be expected to take cognizance of this?

[80]

All our readers probably are familiar with the magic name of Poole—tailor by appointment to a score of Royalties. Poole is to men's

THE HON. FREDERICK TOLLEMACHE, BY GEORGE SIMONDS.

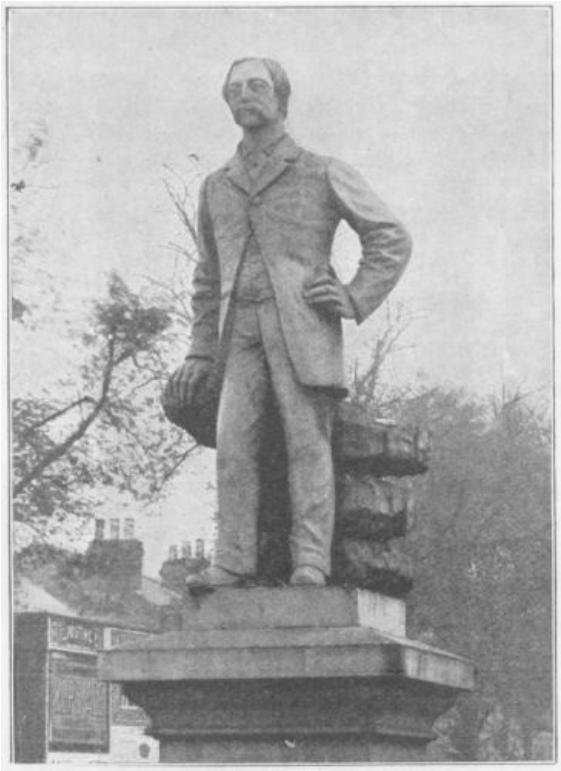
From a*] [*Photo.

attire what Worth is to women's. It would be strange if the artists of Savile Row did not have a good-natured grievance against their fellow-artists of the adjacent Burlington House.

"I shouldn't be surprised," stated the head of the firm, not without diffidence—for it is one of the traditional principles of Poole since Beau Brummel's time to evince a becoming reticence toward the public aspect of his craft, "if the uninitiated person who contemplates our public statues is forced to conclude that to wear shocking bad trousers is one of the first essentials to political distinction. Why, many of the statues which I have seen in London and the provinces are a standing reproach to us. I dare say, on the other hand, the sculptor who reconstructs our creations is convinced that he is improving upon us, but I think there can be but one mind between the sculptor and ourselves as to how a pair of trousers should hang in real life. And if real life, why not in sculpture?

JOHN POWELL, BY J. ADAMS-ACTON.

From a Photo.



Larger Image

SIR ROBERT JUCKES-CLIFTON—"THE WORST PAIR OF SCULPTURED TROUSERS IN THE KINGDOM."

From a [Photo.

"I may also observe that the classical fall of the sculptured trouser over the boot is absolutely the contrivance of the artist, and is impossible from the tailor's standpoint. Again, although many gentlemen in real life follow the fashion so far as to wear trousers which just touch the upper portion of the boot, the trouser of sculpture is always of superlative length, in spite of the multifarious folds and creases which one would think, according to common physical laws, would tend to diminish that length."

"An artist," writes Mr. E. F. Benson, in one of his novels, "Limitations," "must represent men and women as he sees them, and he doesn't see them nowadays either in the Greek style or the

Dresden style.... To look at a well-made man going out shooting gives one a sense of satisfaction. What I want to do is to make statues like them, which will give you the same satisfaction.... I want to make trousers beautiful, and women's evening dress beautiful, and shirt-sleeves beautiful. I don't mean that I shall ever make them beautiful in the same way as the robes of the goddesses in the Parthenon pediments are beautiful, but I shall make them admirable somehow."

And that is the great problem for the sculptors of the twentieth century.

[81]

The Coils of Fate.

By L. J. Beeston.

I.

"If you ever kill a man, my friends—ah! but you may—take care to dispossess the mind of haunting fancies. Murder is a wrong against society, certainly. So is borrowing a sovereign which you do not intend to return. Both may be forgotten."

Vassilitch spoke across the dinner-table. His unconventional philosophy was meant for every ear there, though he addressed himself to his host—George Etheridge, of Hollowfield Court.

Gabrielle Rupinsky, the speaker's countrywoman, who was seated at his right side, turned her head to flash into his face one look from her calm eyes.

A silence followed the remark; not an uncomfortable period, but rather one of that satisfaction which we feel when a good talker ventures out from the ruts of conversation and trite opinion. Then Tweed, a round-faced, optimistic schoolboy of a man, said, cheerfully:—

"How comforting! Let us go and exterminate our enemies before they get wind of so pleasing an assurance and exterminate us. Alas, though, we have not altogether done with Leviticus yet; still the hangman takes care of our consciences."

In the first place they had been speaking about echoes. Several of the company had heard wonderful echoes in different parts of the world. George Etheridge had told of an echo in Bavaria which had startled him—as it startles all to whom it speaks. He said: "You row out to the middle of the lake. There is an immense rugged cliff on one hand, and on the other a dense wood of pines. You fire a pistol. The sound rolls from between precipice and forest, tossed from one to the other, gathering in intensity and power, until it breaks like a clap of thunder overhead. The effect is certainly terrifying. Shall I tell you of what it made me think? Of one of those imprudent acts, one of those small sins that we commit in an unconsidered moment, which is the trifling cause of growing and overwhelming effects that end in cataclysm."

The conversation having been given this serious turn, first one and then another of Etheridge's guests recalled stories of sins that had worked in lives as worms through a ship's planks. Tweed mocked. He was rarely grave, but his easy heart was valued by all who knew him. He said, "You will all give yourselves a nightmare at bedtime. Come, let us have a murder yarn to wind up with."

And so Vassilitch, who was no stranger to the fatalism of the Slav, and who on that account had listened with considerable interest to the dialogue, had suddenly roused himself to utter his views expressed above.

"I will repeat my advice," said he. "If you ever kill a man do not think about it afterwards. Ah! the fantasies that we invent to torment ourselves with!"

Gabrielle was compelled to look at the speaker once more. As the guests of Etheridge they had seen much of one another during the past three days. She liked to have him by her side because he was her countryman; also, to her eyes, he appeared to be the strongest man in the company. And he? Whenever Mademoiselle Rupinsky came in late he was silent to taciturnity; and when she took her place he thawed.

"You are not—you cannot be—in earnest?" said Gabrielle.

"Never more so, mademoiselle."

"It is your profession that has killed your sentiment," explained Etheridge.

"As you will."

Clearly they were all waiting for him to continue. He perceived that he was the centre of observation, of interest—Ivan Féodor Vassilitch, sometime captain of a Cossack regiment that [82] had made a reputation for hardihood and valour unique even amongst those northern soldiers whose nerves have the iron coldness of their ice-plains. He raised his glass, emptied it, and went on:—

"I tell you, my friends, that if circumstance compels you to such an act as I have spoken of, then

any future terrors must be entirely the product of a superstitious imagination. No spirit will haunt you save that which you yourself conjure by bending the mind continually to that idea. No worm of remorse will tear your peace unless you believe liars who tell you it exists."

Larger Image

"'YOU ARE NOT—YOU CANNOT BE—IN EARNEST?' SAID GABRIELLE."

That was all. None cared to argue the point. He was so quietly certain of his philosophy; so terribly sure.

An hour later Vassilitch was addressed by Gabrielle. "I should like five minutes' talk with you," she said.

He expressed both readiness and pleasure, and he spoke the truth. They passed out into the garden, after he had insisted that she should cover her shoulders with a wrap, for the dews of late autumn were condensing and falling imperceptibly on the still trees and flowers.

"Will you sit down?"

"I should prefer to walk slowly." He saw her bosom rise and fall in agitation, and he wondered what was coming.

"Monsieur, I have a story to tell you. Of all the men I know, you can best appreciate it. It may be that you will care to help me—ah! do not be too ready; my request, if I prefer it, is altogether an unusual one, and such as only you might understand, and I. These Englishmen have cold hearts; passion with them is slow to catch fire and easy to be extinguished."

"You speak of love, mademoiselle?" said Vassilitch, uneasily.

"No."

"Then it must be revenge. I am all attention."

"You have heard of that society that call themselves 'The Scourge'? Of their political opinions I know nothing. Three years ago the police broke into a Moscow cellar and captured fifteen of this confraternity. Of the ultimate fate of those fifteen I also know nothing, but the end that came to one has been told me. He, at any rate, was a man, and a true Russian."

Gabrielle caught her breath with a gasp, paused a moment, then continued:—

"He was deprived of civil rights, his property confiscated, and he himself sent into exile. He escaped from a convict station in the Trans-Baikal. He gained the woods, but it was winter, and you know what that means."

"Ah!" muttered Vassilitch, twisting his black moustache and watching the pale face of his beautiful companion.

"I have not seen those dreary forests, but I have heard and read of them; how packs of hungry wolves seek food and cannot find it; and how the *varnaks*—those wretches who have committed real crimes—infest the lonely pathways at evening to rob and murder. They say that the police kill them as dogs."

"Pardon, mademoiselle; you must not credit these wild tales."

"But I do believe them. Listen. This poor exile, after he had wandered for days in that dead land, was discovered by a band of Cossacks riding along a forest path. He was seized. Their officer [83] cried out that he was a *varnak*, a *bradyaga*, and ordered that he should be shot. You start; perhaps this story has reached your ears?"

"No, no," said the other, quickly. "Pray go on."

"The exile protested that he was an escaped political prisoner. He was not believed. The officer again repeated his order. A soldier was about to obey, but the other threw the man from his horse. Instantly a dozen carbines were levelled, but the officer, convulsed with passion, cried out, 'You will tie this scoundrel to a tree, eight feet above the ground, and leave him to the wolves.' Ah! why do you recoil from me? Do you not believe this story? I tell you that it is absolutely true in every detail."

Gabrielle was trembling with emotion.

"It is quite cold out here; you will catch your death. Let us go indoors," said Vassilitch, harshly.

She continued unheedingly. "The command of that monster was obeyed by his men. The victim was lashed to the trunk of a pine tree, high above the ground. The Cossacks rode away, laughing, and left him there until the wolves should come to surround the tree, to bite it through with their sharp teeth, and then—and then——"

A gleam of lightning passed over the sky, and the rumble of thunder followed.

"Do you recollect the talk at the table?" said Gabrielle; "about echoes? This act is one of those that return to break in thunder upon the perpetrator."

The ex-captain of Cossacks shrugged his shoulders. "What is your request?" he demanded.

Gabrielle stopped in the garden path and faced him. A faint light from the windows of the mansion fell upon her form with its perfect lines, its loveliness. She was conscious of her beauty then, and she knew that he was conscious of it.

"Find the man who did this thing."

He was silent.

"You think me revengeful? I acknowledge it. Right or wrong, for three years I have prayed for this."

"Mademoiselle, I must ask you two questions: The name of your informant?"

"I am pledged not to give it. He was a trooper in the band who obeyed the orders of their officer."

"That is unfortunate, for I should much like to know his name. Let that pass. Question number two: What was this prisoner to you that his fate should awake these feelings of deep sorrow and revenge?"

For an instant Gabrielle hesitated, while his eyes appeared to be reading her inmost thoughts. Then she said, "He was a brother."

"Ah!"

Vassilitch was clearly relieved by the answer. He said, "This will, of course, necessitate a journey to Russia. Well, I will find this man."

"And you will challenge him?"

"I will challenge him."

"And you will kill him?"

"If by that time you still wish it—yes, I will kill him."

They looked into one another's eyes, adding no further word. A heavy clap of thunder broke and rolled overhead.

"You had better go in now," said Vassilitch.

He left her at the doors of the French windows, while he lighted a cigar and went again into the garden. Suddenly he turned. He perceived that she was yet standing, gazing after him. He could see her in the aureole of light, though she could not see him in the outer gloom.

"How beautiful she is!" muttered Vassilitch.

He flung down his cigar, put his foot upon it, and ground it into the earth.

II.

"Expensive? Rather. You cannot get diggings in Regent Street for a song." Tweed rose, threw up the window, sat down again, and added, "Especially over a jeweller's shop. They are so careful. There is nothing but a plank, my dear Boris, between us and thousands of pounds' worth of glittering things."

"It is very nice here," said Boris Stefanovitch, looking across to the Quadrant with wistful, melancholy eyes.

"'Twill serve. They are not bad for bachelors' quarters. My only fear is that one day I may get my head into the matrimonial noose. Do not laugh; it is too serious. There are many who feel in the same way. We are determined not to marry. We build a hedge, and dig a trench, and raise a tower; but—but——" Tweed shrugged his shoulders. "Halloa, it is beginning to snow," he added, abruptly. "Do you feel cold? I will close the window."

"Pray do not. I had an idea that it never snowed in England. This wind is most refreshing."

"I am glad you think so," said Tweed, pushing back his chair as a rush of raw air swept into the [84]
apartment. "No doubt a cutting blast like this is a summer breeze to you after your——" He pulled himself up suddenly. That was a subject that he never cared to be the first to open.

There was the rattle of descending iron shutters. They were closing the shop on the ground floor. The white flakes were driving by in dizzying confusion. Almost every cab had an occupant. A hushed roar told of the traffic at Piccadilly Circus.

Stefanovitch said, quietly, "Well, I shall return to Russia."

"You will do nothing of the sort," was the equally quiet reply.

"There is a difference in our cases. You wish to live without love; and I—to me love is life. This silence is not to be endured. Why no response to my letters? I shall wait one more month, and then I shall go to Moscow."

"You dare not! Haven't you seen enough of Russian prisons?"

"More than three years since I set eyes on her," muttered the other; and his face, which bore the marks of much suffering, became all at once haggard with perplexity.

"Three years is a long time and a hard test," argued Tweed.

The other caught his meaning. He smiled as he said, simply, "My friend, you do not know this woman."

"But I know the Trans-Baikal, and the frozen horror of your northern swamps. And I have seen a gang of exiles, in their long, earth-coloured coats, women and men, chained together, living statues of despair, tramping, tramping, and the soldiers with their bayonets fixed——"

"Don't!" said Stefanovitch. But the other went on unheedingly.

"And I have seen your northern forests in winter, shrouded in snow, with an Arctic wind rattling down the pine needles, bending the cedars, and the fir trees making a sound that gives you the shivers. And I have seen the wolves there. They appear to rise out of the ground. Once they chased me for three leagues. We were in a tarantass, and were nearly caught, by Jove! What brutes! Every tooth looked like a dagger. And frequently a poor wretch will escape from a convict station and try to hide himself in these forests——"

Larger Image

"HE PERCEIVED THAT SHE WAS YET STANDING, GAZING AFTER HIM."

"Will you stop?" cried Stefanovitch, covering his eyes.

"——will endeavour to conceal himself in one of these forests; but either he starves to death or the wolves get him, or perhaps a party of soldiers, say Cossacks, come upon him and take him for a *varnak*. And I have known one instance in which the man, having resisted authority, was lashed to a tree to wait for the wolves. He succeeded in releasing himself, it is true; and ultimately he escaped from the country, but——"

"Enough, enough!" implored Stefanovitch, as if appalled by some memory that had seared heart and brain.

"——but next time he will not meet with such fortune." Tweed rose and smashed down the window.

"Why do you recall these things to me?" said the other, huskily. [85]

"Why will you make a fool of yourself?" was the heated retort. "I tell you that you shall not go back to Moscow if I can prevent it. There's not a woman on this earth who is worth running so great a risk for. If she will not answer your letters, you must forget her, that is all."

"You suggest an impossibility."

"And you suggest a madness. What are you gazing at? Do you recognise anybody?"

The other was looking across the roadway to where a tall, broad figure, in a massive fur-trimmed

coat, was leisurely pacing the thronged pavement. Tweed repeated his question.

"I—I don't know," replied Stefanovitch, indecisively. "The face of that tall fellow—I thought it was familiar—the light is so bad—and a cab came between——"

"What, that fellow in the coat? How strange! I seem to know him, too. Even his back is familiar. Let me think. Where on earth did I meet—ah!—no, it's slipped me again. Yet I'm sure—almost sure—that I—got it, by thunder! The man's Vassilitch—Ivan Féodor Vassilitch, a countryman of yours; not a bad sort, but cold and hard—hard as sheet-iron. You have met him, perhaps?"

"The name is not familiar to me."

"I met him at Etheridge's place in Cumberland. It was four months back." Tweed spoke cheerily, feeling glad that the subject was changed. "There were some nice people down there," he continued. "I should like you to know Etheridge. Ah, yes—there was also a countrywoman of yours staying at the place. She and Vassilitch were rather thick, we thought. A singularly beautiful creature. Her name was Gabrielle Rupinsky. She——What on earth is the matter?"

"Gabrielle Rupinsky!" echoed Stefanovitch, springing so suddenly to his feet that his chair went flying.

"The same. Do——"

"The daughter of old Otto Rupinsky, General of Hussars?" The speaker was trembling with excitement.

"That is she," said the other, astonished.

Stefanovitch caught at his collar as if emotion were choking him. "Do you know what you are saying?" he cried. "Fool that I was not to have mentioned her name! This is the woman who is all—all the beauty of the world to me. Gabrielle in England! Now it is clear why my letters were not answered. Heaven bless you for this news. Her address—quick!"

Tweed, overjoyed and immensely relieved, was wringing the other's hands in his delight. "I'm afraid I can't give it you straight away," said he. "You see, she isn't in Cumberland now. But I will write at once to Etheridge, and you should have it within forty-eight hours. 'Pon my word, old fellow, this is great news. Are you going?"

"If you do not mind. A thousand thanks. I hope it is not a dream; it seems too good to be true," he added, with pathos. "What! I shall see Gabrielle within forty-eight hours? Shall hold her in my arms? Pardon me; these things may not appeal to you. But if you had waited and suffered——"

"I know, I know," said Tweed, sympathetically. They had descended the stairway and were at the open door. "Look here," he added, in parting, "we have supper together at my club to-morrow night; that engagement holds good, of course?"

"As you will; most certainly."

Stefanovitch pressed his friend's hand and was gone. At that moment Tweed perceived the tall form of Ivan Vassilitch repassing. He murmured, "I should like to renew my acquaintance with this man; he fascinated me, rather. I'll go out and meet him." And he bounded upstairs for his coat and hat.

III.

An electric bell hummed through the cottage.

Gabrielle put down her book in surprise. She had scarcely expected a visitor at that late hour. Yet it was not really late, but in this sleepy Hertfordshire village nine o'clock was considered an unusual time for anyone to be out.

She drew back the blind. A black night pressed against the window. The country-side, unillumined by moon or stars, was just a wall of darkness, as if reclaimed by "chaos and old night."

A servant entered with a card. Gabrielle glanced at the slip of pasteboard, and the observant maid noticed that a sudden rush of colour swept into her mistress's face.

"I will see him," said Gabrielle.

There entered Ivan Féodor Vassilitch. The lines of his face relaxed at sight of her, and a smile almost of sweetness raised his black moustache. "Why do you not light your English country roads?" he demanded, laughing. "I had only the light of your window to guide me for a mile."

"Pardon; they are not my roads," she answered, in the same bright spirit of banter. "I am not yet naturalized. Where have you been?" [86]

Larger Image

"THERE ENTERED IVAN FÉODOR VASSILITCH."

"To Russia." He spoke the truth.

"Ah!" Instantly she became serious. "And you returned——?"

"Yesterday."

"Will you sit down, monsieur?" She spoke with a palpable effort. Some emotion had robbed her of breath.

"Shall we go straight to our subject?" asked Vassilitch, perfectly controlled, as he always was.

"For what else are you here?"

"My first thought was that I should see you; my second was that I had a more definite errand."

He bore her sudden coldness so steadily that she was compelled to relent. "Well," she said, "I am very pleased to see you, monsieur."

"You are exceedingly kind. On the day following the evening on which I received your instructions I set about the business, and I was not long in finding the man who worked you and yours so great a wrong."

"Not long? Impossible that he was in England?"

"On the contrary, mademoiselle, he was in this country. Do not ask me how I discovered him. As an ex-officer of Cossacks you will understand that my inquiries were respected. The task was not difficult; in fact, it was ridiculously easy."

"Why do you laugh like that? You found this monster; what then?"

"He went to Russia. I went also."

"And you challenged him there?" cried Gabrielle, and the womanly softness fled from her eyes.

"I did not."

"Monsieur! monsieur!"

"Listen. He returned to England; and I, too, followed."

"What! You permitted him to escape? You lost this chance?"

"Mademoiselle, there is one thing which both of us overlooked—or, rather, of which we were in ignorance."

"That you were afraid?" said Gabrielle, rising to her feet, with a world of scorn and anger in her beautiful face.

Vassilitch regarded her with steadiness; he took the word as he would have taken a pistol ball, and again she relented. "Forgive me," she said. "I was hasty; I wronged you."

"Mademoiselle, the Queen can do no wrong." He took the hand she gave him, made as if he would have raised it to his lips, then released it with infinite gentleness. "The one important point that we overlooked," he continued, "is that this man—I wonder if you can guess?"

"No, no. Go on."

"——is that this man loves you, mademoiselle."

"Loves—me?" [87]

"So I discovered. You are his guiding star. To you his life points; round you it revolves. Parted from you by an infinite distance, he is yet bound to you by the strongest of laws, and can no more escape your sway than the earth the pole-star to which it looks, about which it rolls. And knowing this, I could not kill him—just yet."

"Why, what folly is this that you are talking?" exclaimed Gabrielle, a trifle awed in spite of herself. "You are not serious, monsieur? You cannot be."

Vassilitch did not answer.

"His name? Tell me his name," was the impatient command.

"I will tell you, but not now."

"You are very mysterious," said Gabrielle, watching him closely. "You must be aware that you are keeping me in suspense."

Vassilitch rose. "It is merely a fancy of mine," said he. "I ask you to believe that I have spoken the simple truth. I am still prepared to carry out your instructions; but I should like you to consider the assurance that I have given you. In a short time I hope to see you again. Perhaps—anyhow, you know that I am your servant; you have but to command me. I will wish you good-night, mademoiselle."

Gabrielle extended her hand. She was troubled by the bitterness of his smile. Certainly this man was mysterious to-night. "Where are you staying?" she asked, suddenly, willing to prolong the conversation.

"At the L—— Hotel."

"You will dine with me one night? This place is quiet, but it has its charm."

"Nothing would delight me more."

"To-morrow?"

"You are very good, but I have an engagement. Do you recollect the Englishman—I have his card here—George Tweed? That is it. He was in Cumberland when——"

"I remember him perfectly."

"Well, we met this evening in London. He extracted from me a promise to take supper with him to-morrow night. He wants me to meet a great friend of his, and a countryman of ours, whose conversation he vowed would interest me."

"Indeed? Did he mention the name?"

"Yes. It was—it was—no, it has slipped my memory. It scarcely matters."

A servant came at a touch of the bell. The visitor descended the stairs and left the cottage. Impelled by a sudden impulse Gabrielle ran to the window and pulled up the blind. He would see her standing there. What of that? The crunch of his heavy footfall sounded upon the gravel, and his voice came clearly—"Good-night!" She replied and felt glad.

Gabrielle drew down the blind again and retreated into the well-lighted room. She paused by the table and put to herself, aloud, a direct question: "Why did I tell him that—that he was my brother?" And she replied, in as direct a fashion: "I imagined that he—cared for me a little. If he had known the truth should I have been able so to command him? I cannot think so."

The recollection of the time when she had met Ivan Vassilitch brought to her certain details of the occasion; and suddenly she remembered that conversation in which famous echoes that appear to gather sound and reverberate had been likened to actions that will not leave a life. She had compared that cruel wrong which had destroyed her peace with one of these deeds that come back to break in thunder. She recalled the reminiscence with a sense of uneasiness.

IV.

There were half-a-dozen men in the coffee-room at the club.

"What I like about this place," said Tweed, across the table, to Stefanovitch, "is that they feed you well. The big restaurants have spoilt most clubs in that respect. If ever——" he stopped, and took his arms off the table as a uniformed waiter approached with a bottle of champagne. The man held the dusty neck with a serviette, drew the cork, and filled two glasses. Stefanovitch, lost in thought, did not observe the act. When he looked down he flushed slightly as he said, "Thank you, I do not care to drink before eating."

The other was visibly annoyed as he glanced at the clock. "Our man is behind time," said he. "A bad thing in a soldier. By the way, I wonder if you do know him? I should say that he is a man of iron—one of those fellows whom you couldn't drive nails into, to quote a picturesque expression, and the last man on earth of whom I should care to make an enemy."

"You said that, when you were all together in Cumberland," answered the other, speaking with apparent effort, "this Ivan Vassilitch, whom I am to meet to-night, appeared rather fond of Gabrielle. Of course——"

Tweed laughed outright. "Don't worry," said he. "Mademoiselle Rupinsky was to him as to most of us—a beautiful statue. Her cold reserve is now fully explained; she believes that you are either [88] dead or yet an exile. You will make her a happy woman to-morrow, Boris. Ah! an idea. Vassilitch may be wiser than I. He may have her address, in which case you will not have to wait for this letter from Etheridge. And that is a point which will soon be settled, for here comes our man."

The tall figure of Ivan Vassilitch appeared at the door of the spacious coffee-room. His hat and

coat had been taken from him. He at once perceived Tweed, and dismissed with a nod the servant who had conducted him thither. Tweed gripped his hand with almost boyish fervour.

"So pleased to see you," said he. "Come along, I will introduce you to a fellow-countryman who ——Halloa! you know one anoth——" He broke off on the unfinished word.

Stefanovitch had risen to his feet. He faced Vassilitch. Into his eyes a wild expression leaped, a look of haunting fear, of cowering terror. Tweed, with astonishment, observed that piteous gaze, and thought instinctively of a half-tamed animal that turns upon its master. Stefanovitch recoiled a step, one hand grasping a chair-back, the other clutching the table-cloth, and with all the strength of his spirit he strove to beat down the straight look of this man who, by an hour of horror, had well-nigh broken that spirit.

Vassilitch was the first to break the silence. He said, unflinchingly, "Monsieur Stefanovitch appears to recognise me. He has a good memory for faces. Yes; we have met before."

At the words, or the callous tone in which they were spoken, a sudden frenzy of passion convulsed Stefanovitch. Uttering a stifled cry of "Scoundrel!" he snatched up his untasted glass of wine and flung the contents in the face of Vassilitch.

Larger Image

"HE SNATCHED UP HIS UNTASTED GLASS OF WINE AND FLUNG THE CONTENTS IN THE FACE OF VASSILITCH."

"Are you mad?" exclaimed Tweed, grasping the outstretched arm.

A waiter who had observed the action took a step forward, then hesitated, ready for developments.

The ex-officer of Cossacks wiped the liquid from his face and coat. He was very pale. He turned to Tweed.

"I compliment you on the manners of your friends," said he; "they are delightful. I have the honour to wish you good evening." He bowed slightly, twice—the second time to Stefanovitch, who had sunk into a chair; then he quitted the room.

V.

The fatalistic idea that he was being carried onward in spite of himself would occur insistently; he felt that he was no longer master of circumstance.

It was hardly to be wondered at, since it was largely a matter of nerves. Vassilitch had returned [89]
to his hotel after the scene at the club, and spent half the night writing a letter to Gabrielle; slept badly, breakfasted on four cups of black coffee, spent the best part of the day in pacing the narrow dimensions of his sitting-room, and was now—as the afternoon waned—as undecided as ever.

He told himself that the only clear part of the business was that he could not do without her—no, nor would he; that he was guiltless of the crime that had awakened her abhorrence and fierce desire for justice. For her brother had escaped death, it appeared, and had come back. But that brother would denounce him, would have to be reckoned with. It was certainly awkward. The difference in their names did not puzzle him. Doubtless the name of Stefanovitch had been assumed from political reasons of prudence.

But, then, he told himself, brother and sister must have met in England, perhaps weeks, even months past. In that case Gabrielle must have learned the truth, and so might very well be playing with him. This thought was terrible. Yet when he called to mind the obvious surprise and discomfiture of Stefanovitch he felt relieved. Then another suspicion arose: what if that meeting

had been a prearranged thing? It was a little unusual that the Englishman, George Tweed, should accost him—a mere acquaintance—in Regent Street, and invite him to supper. Yes, it really did appear as if he were the dupe of Gabrielle and Stefanovitch, that they were indeed amusing themselves at his expense. If not, how strange that she should have said to him, of all men on earth, "Kill the man who killed my brother."

This frightful suspicion was not to be endured. He combated it, since it was for his life. He strove to remember one soft look that she might have given him. He had imagined at times that she trusted a little in him.

A firm resolve to act came at last to him. He tore into small pieces the letter that he had written. He would see Gabrielle—would end this torment.

He examined a time-table and started to leave the hotel. Half-way down the stairs he paused, returned quickly, and slipped into his pocket a Derringer pistol, which he took, without exactly knowing why, from a drawer. A minute later he was bowling towards King's Cross Station.

On the platform he saw Stefanovitch, and guessed rightly that the latter was bound for the same destination as himself. If Vassilitch had been sure of this he would have abandoned his intention; as it was he resolved to go on without losing sight of the other.

The train sped from the Metropolis, rushing with piercing cries through the winter-laden country. The short day was passing from fields and sky; already the tops of the leafless trees mingled with the grey of evening.

When Ivan Vassilitch alighted at his station he perceived that Stefanovitch was before him, that he was just quitting the platform, moving with sharp strides, as if he were in a hurry. Vassilitch had half a mind to turn back, but, not caring to wait for perhaps a long time till an up train came in, he almost mechanically followed the other at a safe distance.

Stefanovitch stopped once or twice, and appeared to make inquiries as to his way. This mystified Vassilitch. Was it possible, he asked himself, that Gabrielle had not met her brother; that the latter had but just set foot in England? The consideration was comforting.

Stefanovitch walked on with great strides, not looking behind, or scarcely to right and left. Gabrielle's cottage was isolated from other habitations. It was built on an eminence that was sheltered on three sides by poplar trees, while the gravelled drive that led to the front of the house was bordered by elms, whose branches met overhead and formed an avenue.

Stefanovitch was approaching the head of this avenue when he perceived, coming toward him, the figure of a woman. His heart almost stopped beating, then continued with great thumps of excitement. The waning, pallid twilight obscured the form, but something in the poise of that figure, in the walk, brought back to him a flood of dear remembrance. With fingers that shook he lifted the latch of the gate and continued down the avenue, that was covered with dead leaves of autumn. And then he saw that it was indeed she.

He cried out in stifled tones:—

"Gabrielle! Gabrielle!"

She stopped; the quick panting of her breath reached his ears.

"It is I—Boris! I have come back to you, Gabrielle—come back, after all these years! My heart! Why do you look at me like that? No word of welcome, Gabrielle? Ah! you thought that I was dead? My selfishness has made me too abrupt." Stefanovitch had caught the white hands and was drawing her towards him.

"Yes, I—I—thought that you were—dead," answered Gabrielle. The sound of his voice, its infinite [90]
tenderness, the joy that glowed in his eyes, moved her so that she broke out into sobs—sobs that startled him.

"My love! my dear love! I have frightened you. Oh, you must not cry like that. Look at me, Gabrielle! How I have lived for you! Not one hour in which I have not thought of you. And this, God's mercy, is greater than His trial." Stefanovitch raised the drooping head and covered her face with his passionate kisses. "My love! My love!" he said.

And Gabrielle at that moment seemed to wake from a dream. Here was the heart that she could rest upon. What other thoughts were those which she had permitted to linger for awhile? They were fading already, were passing with her tears.

Larger Image

"SHE PUT HER ARMS ABOUT HIS NECK."

She put her arms about his neck; and so they were silent for a time, standing motionless beneath the trees. Stefanovitch said at last:—

"Who told you that I was dead, little one? Who caused you such pain?"

"It is so terrible a story. I heard that you escaped—"

"And so I did."

"That in the forest you were caught by a regiment of Cossacks, and that—"

Stefanovitch interrupted her. "What!" he cried out, "you heard of that? Yes, it was true; but, Gabrielle, at a moment like this, when my cup is overflowing, I can forgive even Ivan Vassilitch—"

Gabrielle sprang from him as if he had struck her. In an instant she saw the whole truth. The cry she would have uttered died on her parted lips. She remained mute, bewildered, paralyzed with astonishment.

"Ah, you know the man," said Stefanovitch. "I had forgotten that. Well, let him pass, Gabrielle. Come, you are shivering. It is so cold out here. May I come indoors for an hour?"

The ex-captain of Cossacks closed the gate as he left the avenue. He had heard every word. And he had let them go. Why, he might have pistolled Stefanovitch as he stood there!

He remained in the snow-covered road, staring at the darkened fields, pallid with grief and rage.

Suddenly he snatched the Derringer from his pocket. The barrel into which he looked was but a tiny orifice, yet wide and deep as the pit of death. He lifted his arm. A pressure of the finger, that was all that was needed—

"Bah! for a woman? She is not worth it!"

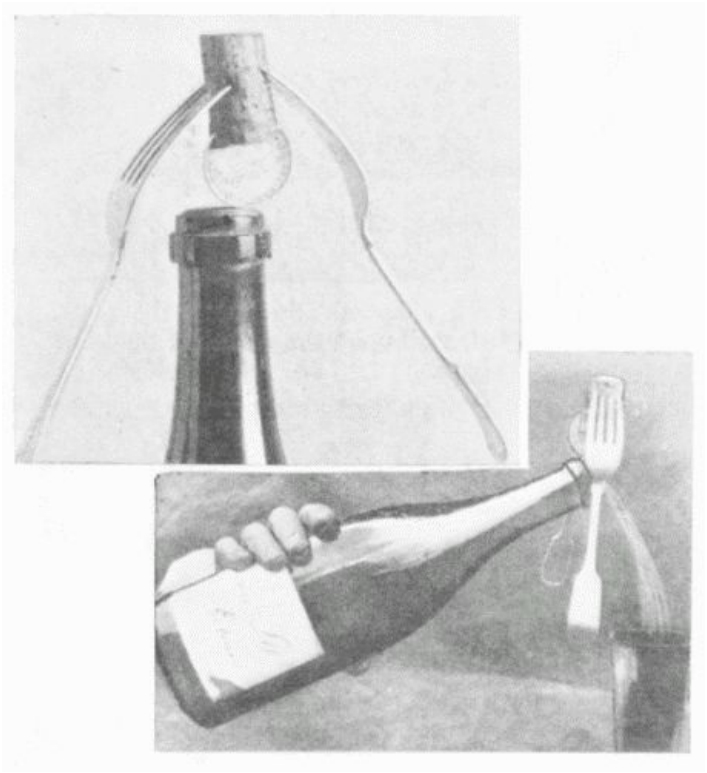
Vassilitch fired into the air. The report echoed and re-echoed—a note of thunder in the quiet night!

Eccentricities of Equilibrium.

By Louis Nikola. With Illustrations by the Author.

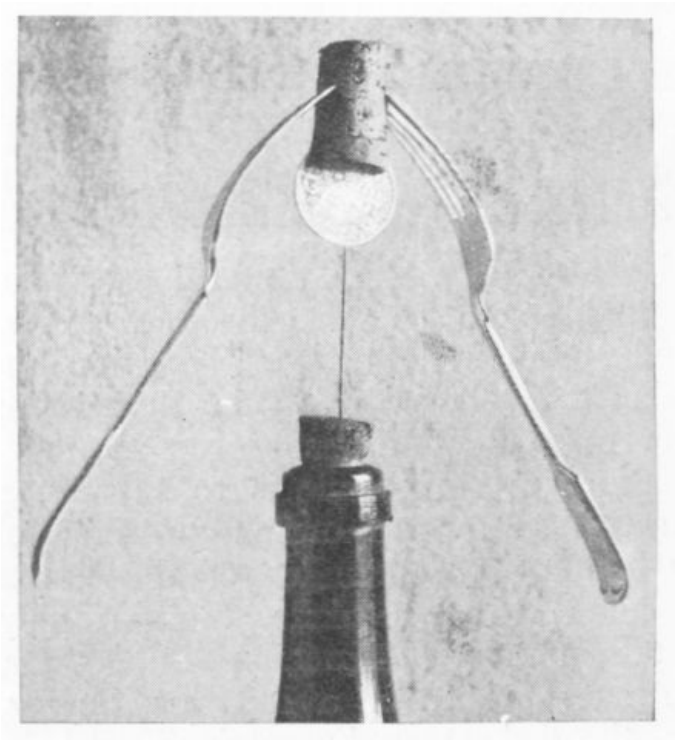
As a preliminary to the practical reproduction of the experiments herein described, it is necessary to invade the kitchen and to carry off the following articles, viz.: four forks, a plate, a tea-cup, a bottle, some corks, the cook's basting-ladle and strainer, and a few other odd things which will be found enumerated from time to time in connection with the experiments in which they become necessary.

1.—TO BALANCE A COIN ON THE EDGE OF A BOTTLE.



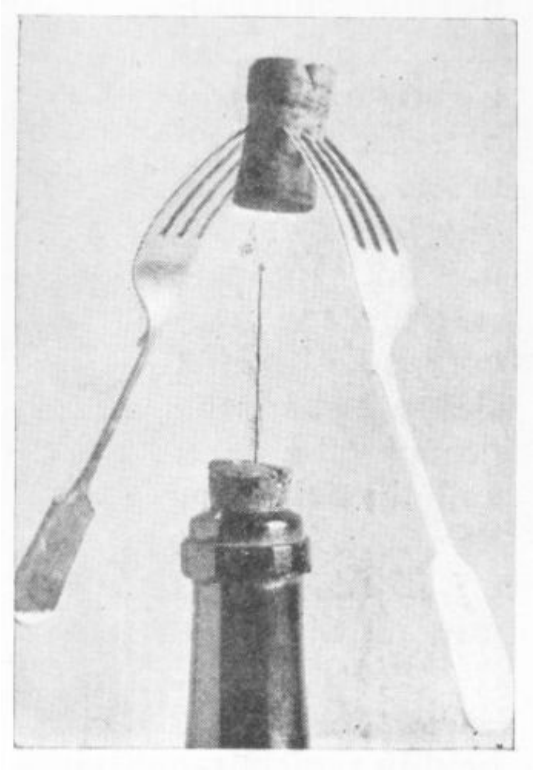
The first experiment is a very simple one. Partly fill the bottle with water; then take one of the corks, make a slit in one end in the direction of its length, into which insert a coin. Next stick two forks into the cork, on opposite sides and near the other end, at angles of about 30deg. With the forks so placed, as balance-weights, it is an easy matter to balance the coin upon one edge of the mouth of the bottle, as in Fig. 1. With a steady hand it is also possible to execute the effective termination shown in the lower portion of the same illustration—*i.e.*, to slope the bottle gradually so as to pour out a glass of the contents, retaining the while the coin in equilibrium upon the neck of the bottle.

2.—A COIN BALANCED ON A NEEDLE.



By a slight variation of the previous arrangements the coin may be balanced edgeways upon a needle-point and made to rapidly revolve thereupon. Fig. 2 shows the experiment in operation.

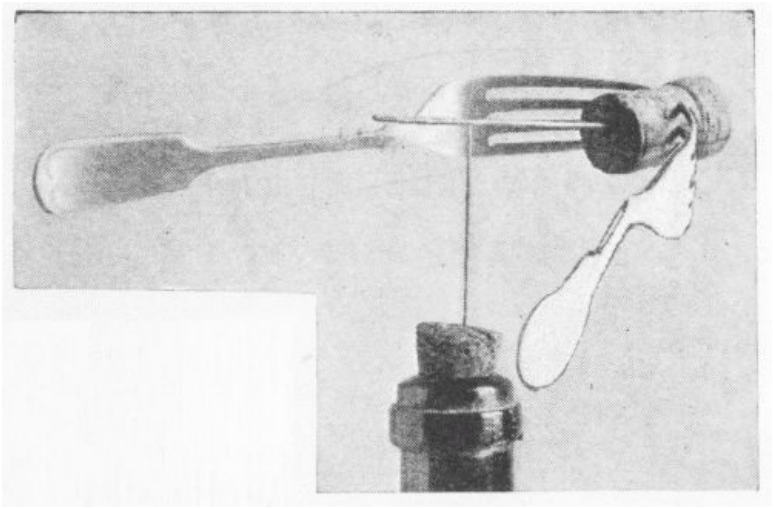
3.—THE BALANCED PIN.



To balance a pin upon a needle would seem rather a formidable undertaking; but by an application of the same principle no considerable difficulty is encountered. Stick the pin into another cork in position corresponding to that of the coin in the first experiment, into which also fix two forks as in the previous examples. With a little care it is then quite practicable to rest the head of the pin upon the point of the needle, where it will remain balanced as in Fig. 3.

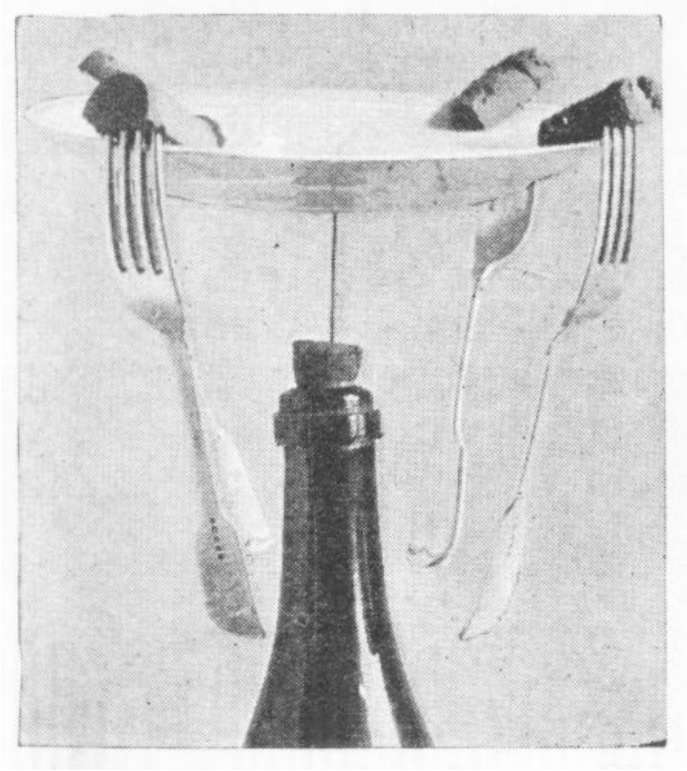
[92]

4.—A PIN OR NEEDLE BALANCED HORIZONTALLY.



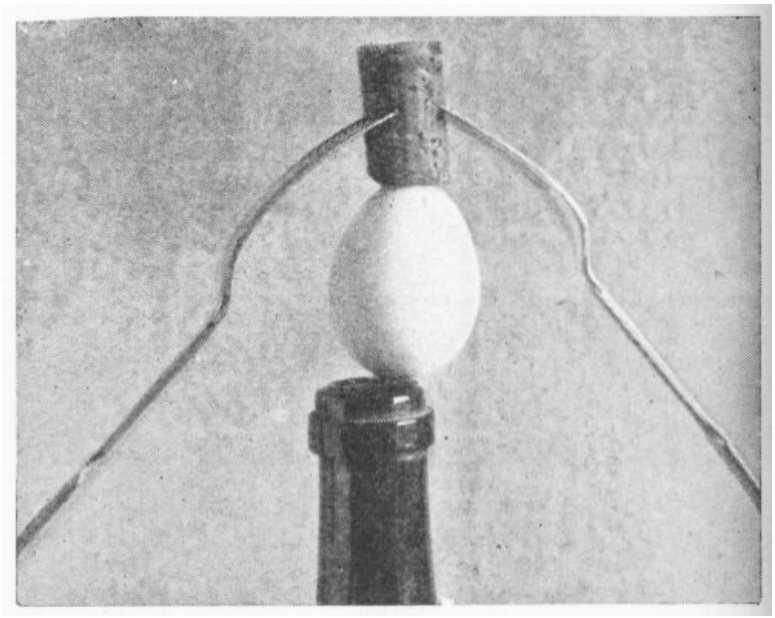
By another variation of the conditions it is possible to balance the pin upon the needle-point in a horizontal position and to make it revolve thereon in that situation. The only alteration necessary to the preparations already made is to substitute for the two forks two ordinary pocket-knives. By bending the handles of the knives at an angle to the blade, the pin may be sustained in a horizontal position. Or, by the substitution of a long needle for the pin, the forks may be retained as balance-weights, as in the previous example and as shown in the present illustration. The pin may be rested upon the needle-point as in the figure, and by a gentle touch of the finger may be set revolving. In time, by reason of the relative differences in hardness of the two metals, the commencement of a tiny hole will be drilled by the sharp steel point of the needle in the softer brass of the pin, and if the motion be continued for a sufficient length of time a hole will ultimately be an accomplished fact.

5.—THE SPINNING PLATE.



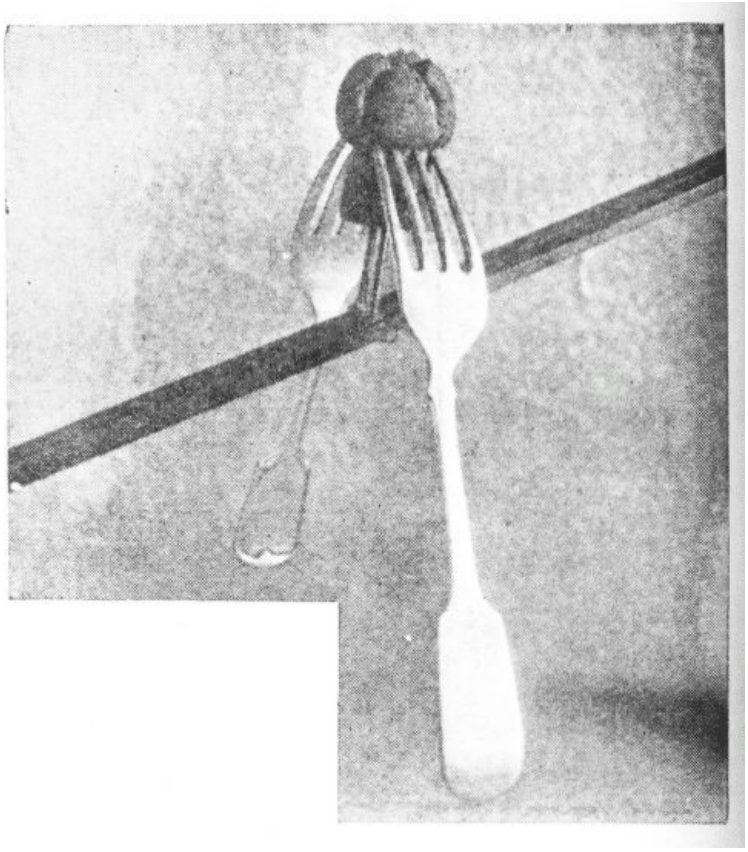
A further application of similar principles, and a plate may be balanced and spun upon the needle-point. The corked bottle with the needle in position remains as before. Two other corks are taken and split into two by a vertical cut. Into one end of each half-cork, upon the flat side, are stuck the prongs of a fork, and thus the four forks are hung at equal distances around the edge of the plate. Then, with a little care, the plate will be held in perfect equilibrium, as in Fig. 5.

6.—THE BALANCED EGG.



Next cut a slight concavity in one end of one of the corks, so as to adapt it as exactly as possible to one end of an egg. Then insert two forks, as before, into the sides of the cork, letting the hollowed-out end be the lower. Then rest the cork with the forks as counter-weights upon the end of the egg to which the concavity has been adapted. So aided, the egg may be balanced upon the mouth of the bottle, as in Fig. 6.

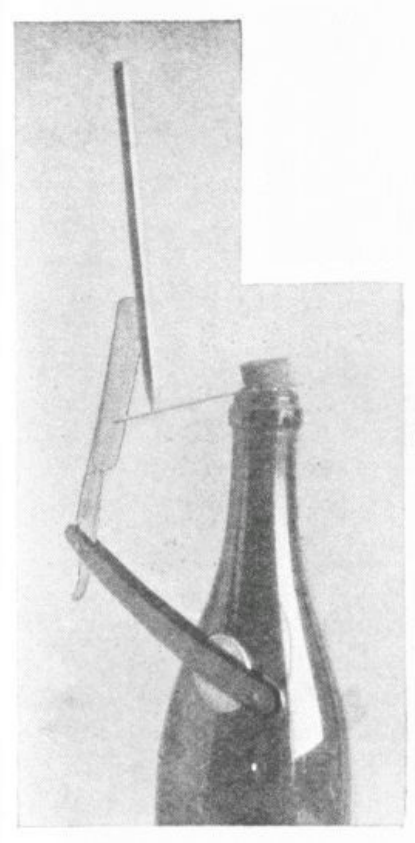
7.—THE WALKING CORK.



In this case a cork with two balance-weights attached, in the shape of forks as previously employed, is provided in addition with a pair of legs, formed by the insertion of a couple of stout pins or small round-headed nails into the bottom of the cork, as in Fig. 7. The figure is placed upon an inclined narrow slip of wood at the highest point of the incline and set gently oscillating, so that the weight is thrown alternately on one side and then on the other, which will cause the figure to make the descent of the incline in a series of jerks.

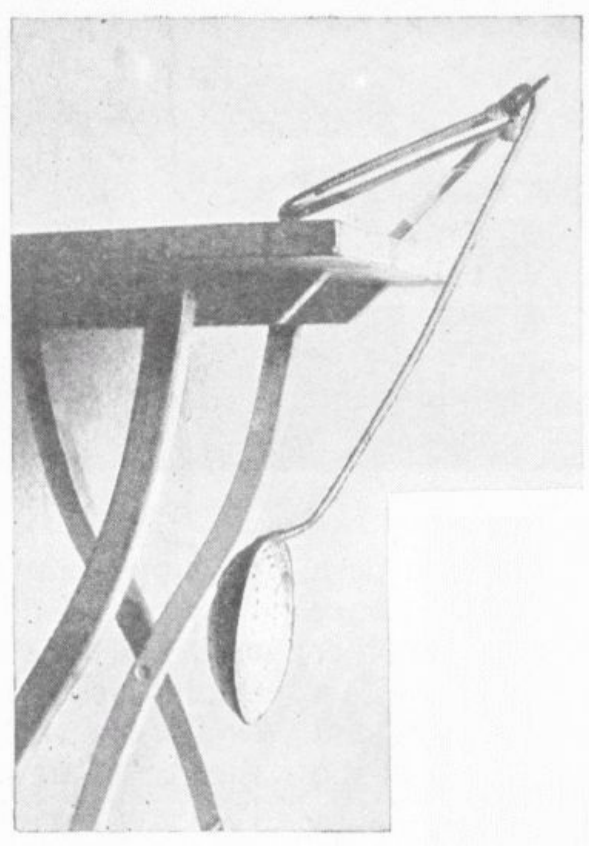
[93]

8.—THE BALANCED PENCIL.



As shown in the illustration, this experiment is performed with a lead pencil and a razor. The razor is partly opened and the end of the blade fixed into the wood of the pencil about an inch or two above the point, in the position and at about the angles shown in the illustration, Fig. 8, when the pencil may be readily balanced upon its point on the extremity of a stout needle thrust horizontally into the bottle cork, as shown.

9.—THE BALANCED LADLE.



A development of the last experiment may be made with a basting ladle and a razor or folding pocket-knife. Open the knife to an angle of a little over 45deg., and engage the hook of the ladle with the outside angle at the junction of handle and blade, as in Fig. 9, which permits of the whole being placed in self-supporting position upon the edge of the table, as shown. The junction of knife and ladle may be made firm, if necessary, by a slice of cork wedged in beneath the hook of the ladle handle.

10.—THE BALANCED PAIL OF WATER.

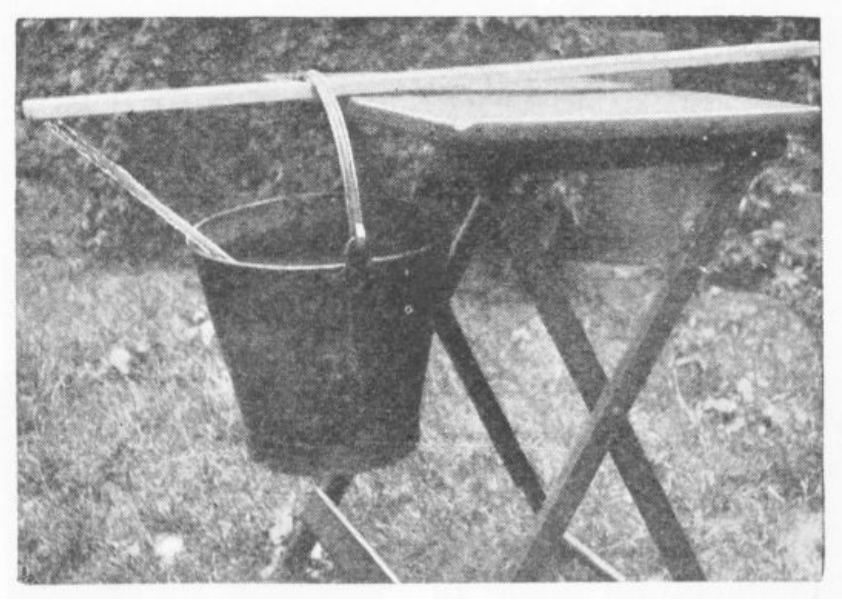
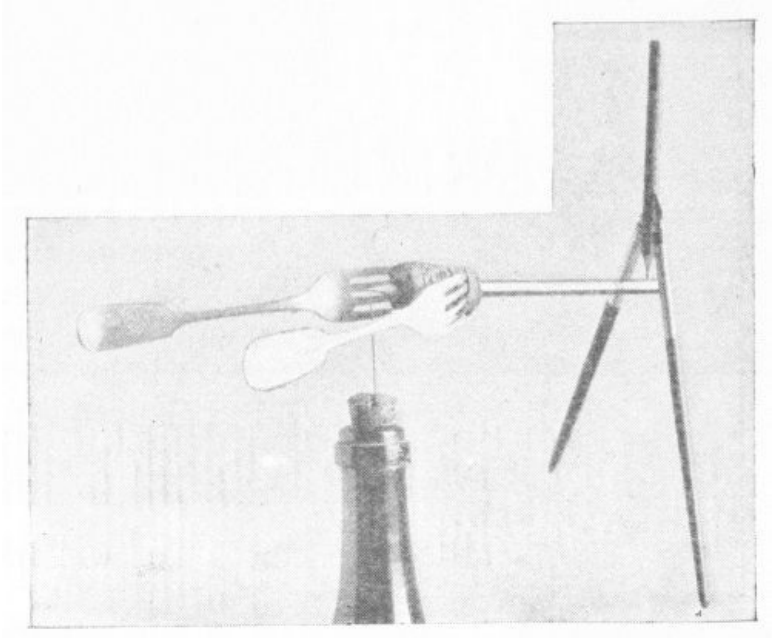


Fig. 10 looks a little startling! There is, however, no risk if the experiment is properly conducted. The requirements are: a kitchen table, a pail of water, a stout, flat stick three or four feet long on which to hang the pail, and another and slighter piece of stick. The larger stick is first laid upon the table with about one-third of its length projecting over the edge. The pail—empty—is next hung upon the projecting end of the stick. The smaller stick is then placed with one end against the inside angle of the bottom of the pail at the point nearest the table, and the other end cut away at such a length as will permit it to wedge tightly against the under side of the main stick, at which point a notch may be cut in the latter to prevent slipping. The whole bears a structural resemblance to the balanced ladle of Fig. 9. The pail may then be partly filled with water, when it should remain balanced as in Fig. 10.

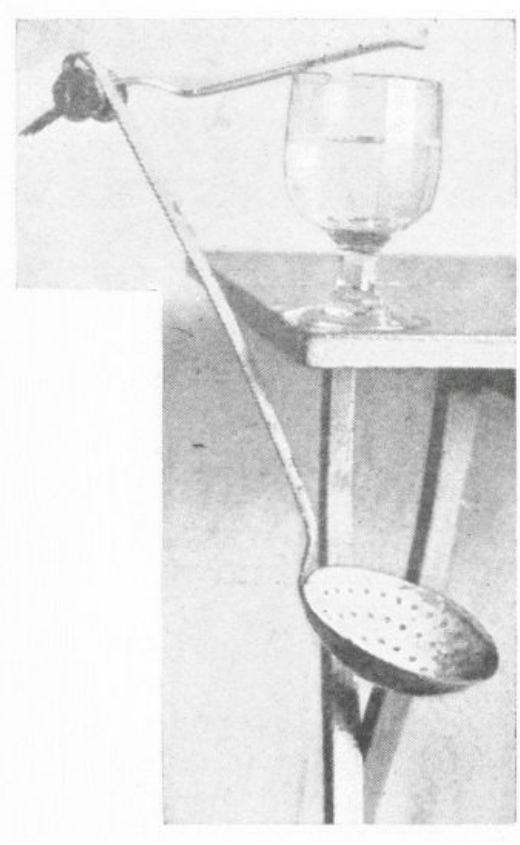
11.—THE BALANCED PENCILS.



This is an elaboration of the experiment described in paragraph 4. A pencil is first thrust through the centre of a cork and two forks into the sides of the cork. This will permit of the pencil being balanced horizontally, as in Fig. 11. A second pencil is balanced by the insertion of two pen-holders in positions relatively similar to those which the forks bear to the balanced object in Experiments 1, 2, and 3, and so arranged it may be balanced upon the unsupported end of the first pencil. The whole structure may be made to revolve upon the needle.

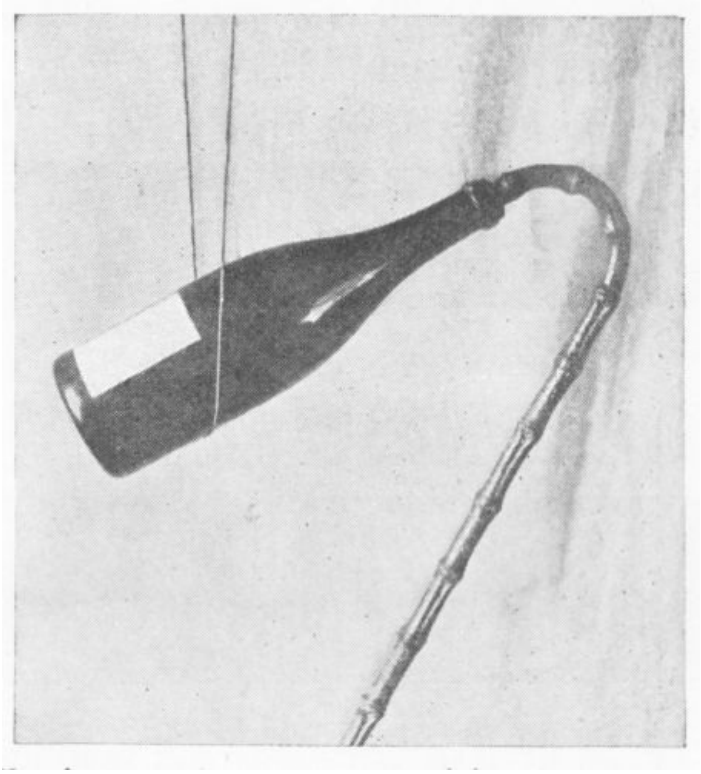
[94]

12.—THE LADLE AND WINE-GLASS.



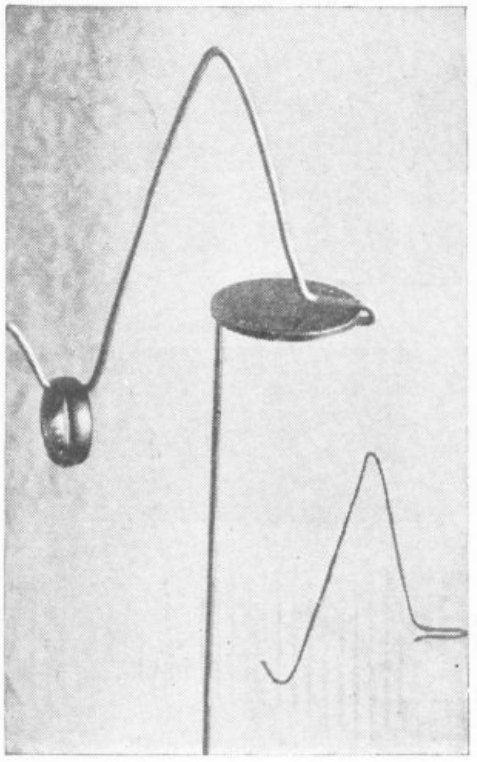
Making use again of the basting-ladle, a cork is first fixed into the hook of the handle, and into this is thrust the point of a knife or the prongs of a fork, the latter being at an angle of about 45deg. or so to the former. A glass is filled with water, and by placing the fork or knife-handle upon the edge of the glass the ladle will balance as in Fig. 12.

13.—THE BALANCED BOTTLE.



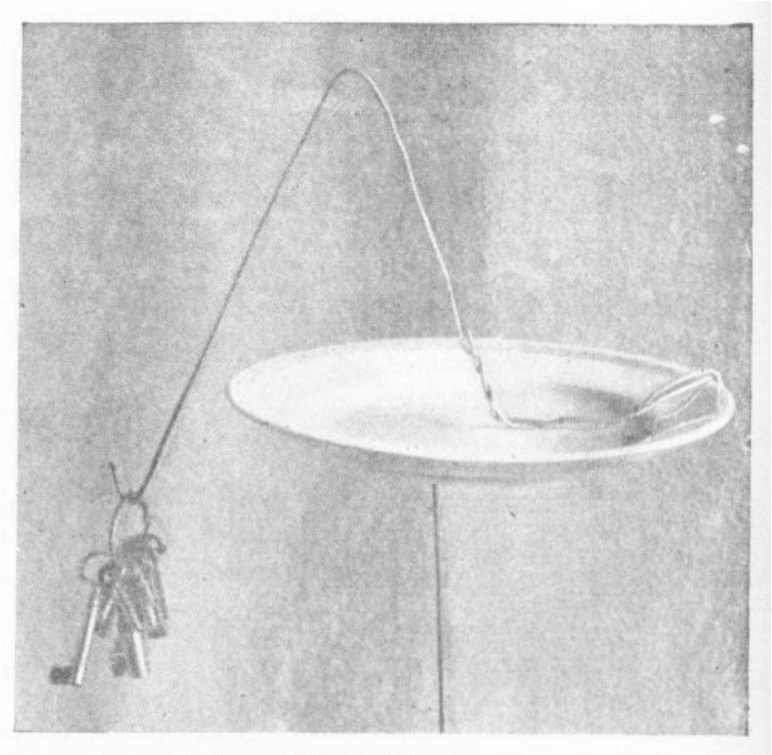
By still another application of the basting-ladle, or a walking-stick or umbrella, a bottle may be balanced upon a slack cord. All that is necessary is to insert the hook of the ladle-handle or the handle of the stick into the neck of the bottle and support upon the cord, as shown.

14.—THE REVOLVING COIN.



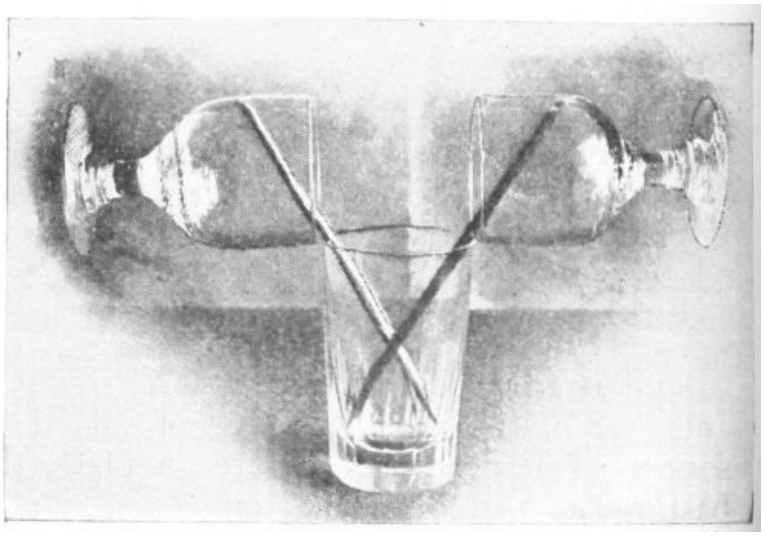
Bend up a piece of stiff wire, such as a hairpin, into the shape shown in the lower right-hand corner of Fig. 14, with a hook at one end and a clip at the other, the latter adjusted to grip a coin tightly. By hanging a fairly heavy finger-ring upon the hook as a counter-weight, the whole may be balanced with the penny upon the point of a needle, and made to revolve on it.

15.—THE REVOLVING PLATE.



A similar experiment may be performed on a larger scale by bending up a longer and proportionately stouter piece of wire, and substituting for the coin a small plate and for the ring a bunch of keys—Fig. 15—or a larger plate and a tea-cup. In the latter case the weight of the tea-cup may be built up to counter-balance the plate by dropping a number of coins one by one into the cup until the required weight is obtained.

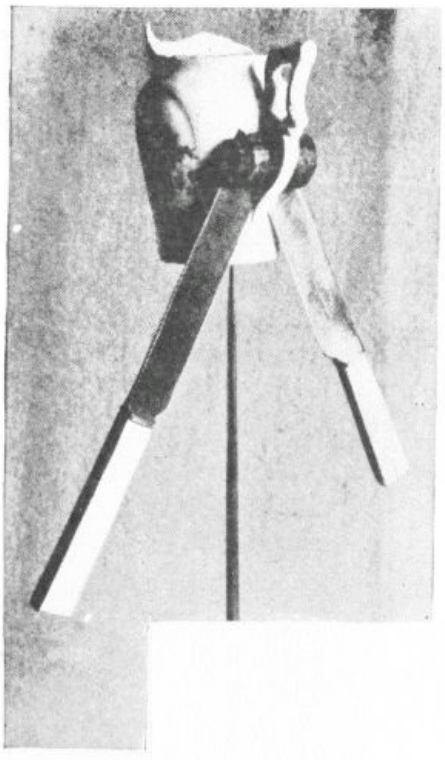
16.—THE BALANCED WINE-GLASSES.

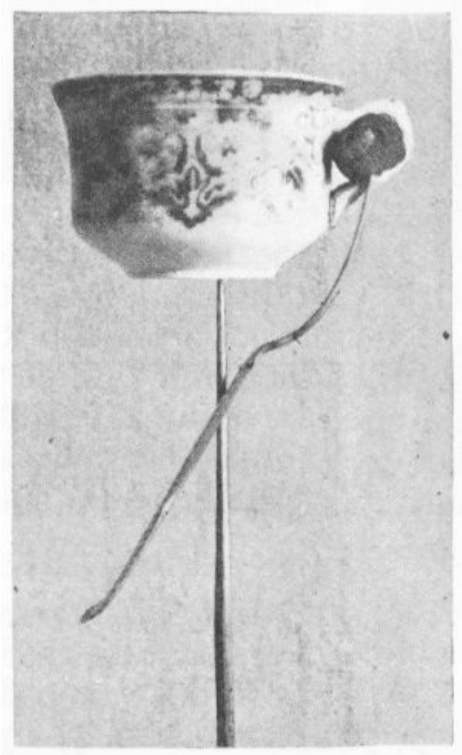


This experiment is not a case of pure balancing, but depends principally upon the nice adjustment of the two pieces of stick by means of which the position of the two glasses is maintained. A couple of slender pen-holders may be used, and must be trimmed down at the ends until the right length is obtained. The position of the sticks and the manner in which the glasses are supported can best be gathered by a study of the illustration below.

[95]

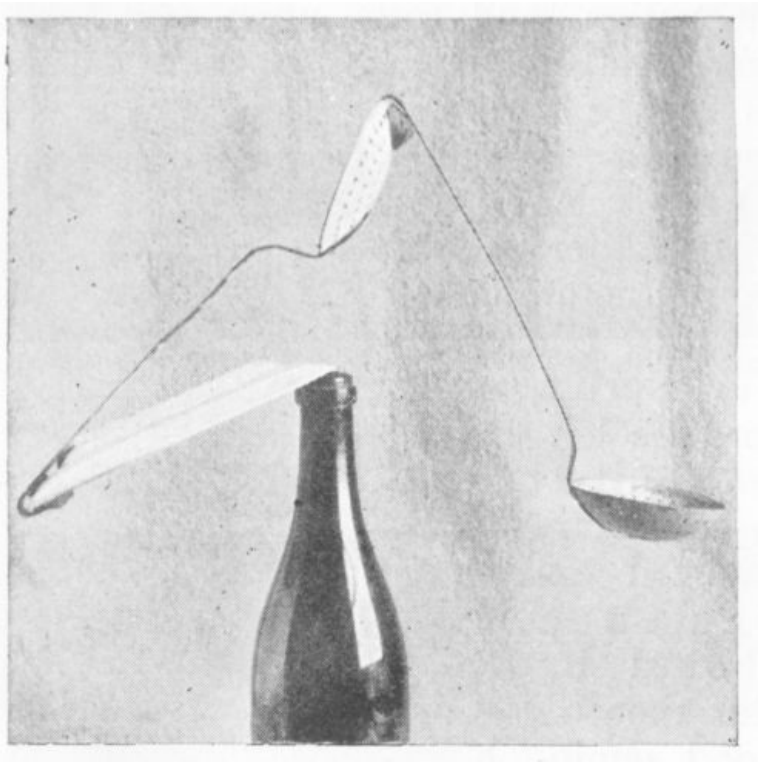
17.—BALANCING CUPS.





Simple methods of balancing a milk-jug and tea-cup respectively are shown in Figs. 17, A and B. In the first illustration the cork is placed inside the handle of the vessel, in which position it should fit with moderate firmness, so as not to slip, and then two knives are thrust in, one from each side of the handle, between the cork and the cup itself, when the cup may be balanced upon any fixed point. In the second a cork is fixed into the handle, as before, and into the cork the prongs of a fork are fastened, holding the fork in such a position as to bring the centre of gravity below the point of suspension. The cup may then be balanced as before.

18.—THE BALANCED PLATE.

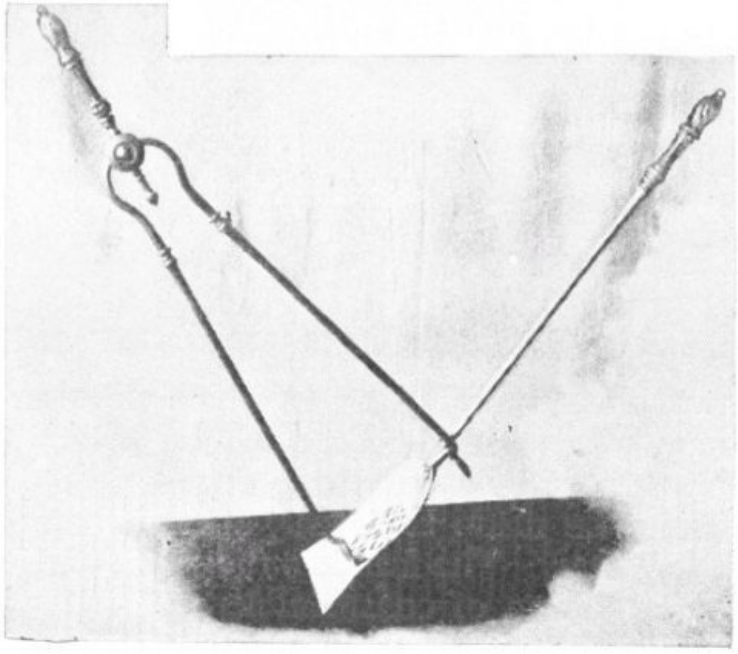


This is a rather more elaborate experiment and one of the most effective of the whole series. The requirements are: a plate, the basting-ladle used in previous experiments, and, in addition, a "skimmer." The handle of the ladle is hooked over the edge of the plate and made secure by a wedge cut from a bottle cork. The opposite edge of the plate is then rested upon the edge of a bottle in the position shown in Fig. 18, and the handle of the skimmer is finally hooked into the bowl of the ladle, making the structure shown.

19.—THE BALANCED TUMBLERS.

Here is a little after-dinner experiment requiring some delicacy of manipulation. The end in view is to balance three tumblers one upon the edge of the other as in Fig. 19. With two tumblers the experiment is comparatively easy: with the third it becomes a genuine test of skill.

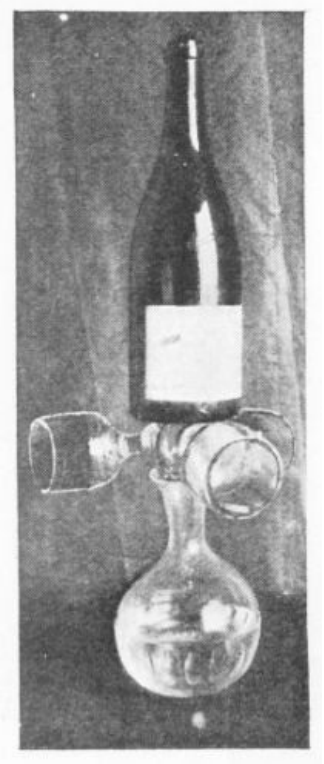
20.—THE BALANCED SHOVEL AND TONGS.



A delicate test of balancing may be attempted with the shovel and tongs. The position of the two implements is shown in the illustration Fig. 20. The extremity of one arm of the tongs is rested against the inside of the shovel, and the other extremity is placed in the angle formed by the junction of the shovel with the handle. By delicate poising the two may be induced to remain in equilibrium in the position illustrated. A formation which permits of the tongs being engaged with the shovel after the manner shown is an important factor.

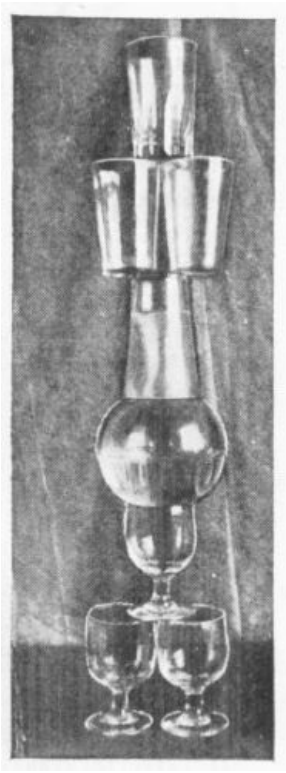
[96]

21.—A TOWER OF GLASS.



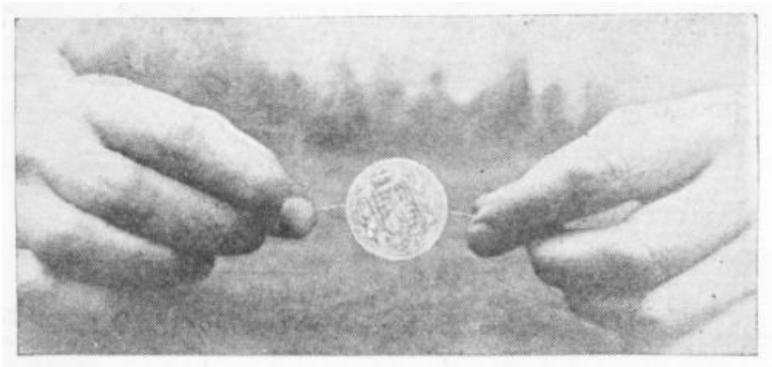
An effective combination is shown in Fig. 21. A carafe, partly filled with water to give stability, forms the basis of the structure. Upon this a trio of wine-glasses, lying horizontally, are arranged, and so held while the bottle, half filled with water, is placed in position above them. A little careful adjustment will secure an accurate reproduction of the experiment as illustrated.

22.—ANOTHER ARRANGEMENT.



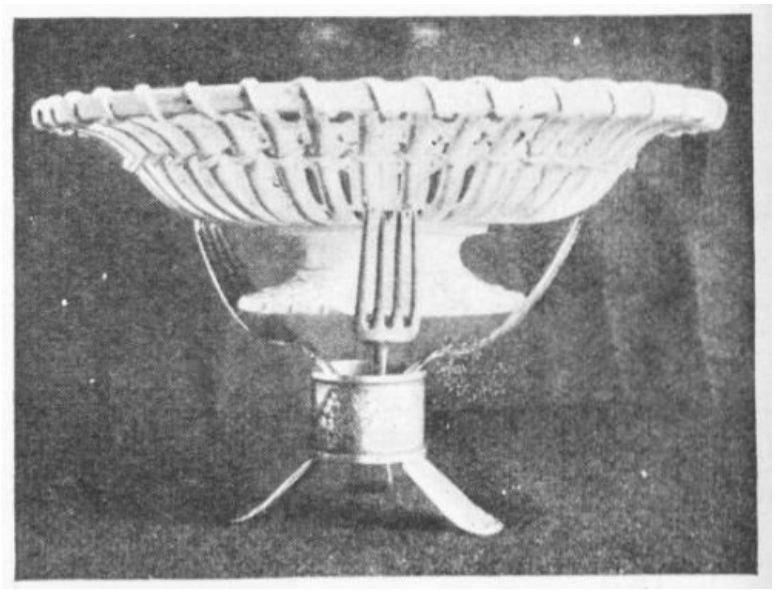
A similar structure, formed with seven glasses and a carafe, is shown in Fig. 22, which is self-explanatory.

23.—THE REVOLVING COIN.



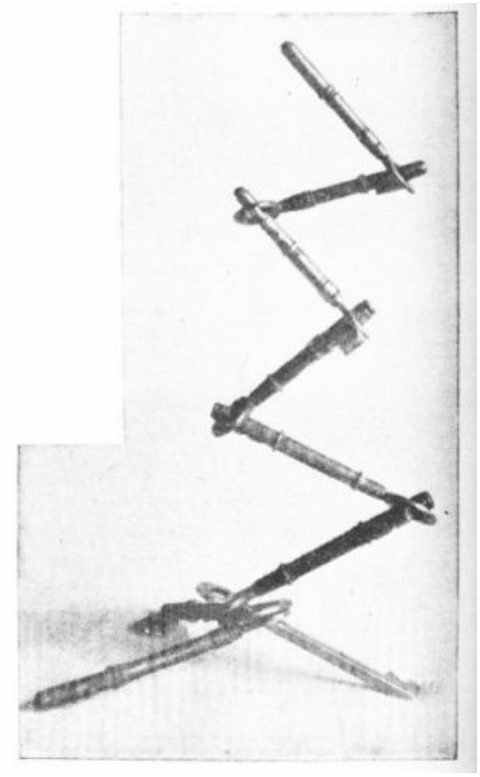
A simple experiment for impromptu performance at the table can be made with a couple of pins and a coin. The accomplishment consists of picking up the coin by two opposite edges between the points of the two pins, as in Fig. 23, in which position it may, with steady hands, safely be held. By blowing smartly upon one edge of the coin it may be made to rapidly revolve between two points. The feat has the appearance of an exhibition of considerable skill, but, as a trial will show, it is in no way difficult of execution. The selection of a milled-edged coin will facilitate the matter.

24.—AN EXTEMPORIZED TRIPOD.



With three forks, a serviette ring, and a plate, one may improvise a stand for a soup tureen or water carafe. The forks are merely passed through the ring and spread into the form of a tripod, the handles resting upon the table. A plate placed upon the prongs of the forks locks the whole and provides the necessary rest for the article to be supported. The fruit dish in the illustration happens to be of just the right size to rest in the support formed by the extremities of the forks, the plate being in this case unnecessary.

25.—KEYS TO EMINENCE.



In our last example we have a succession of keys built up by interlocking the wards and bows one within the other, upon the summit of which may, by special care, be balanced a bottle or similar object. Where the bottle is added to the pile, it takes the place of the uppermost key shown in our illustration, and rests upon one taking a more gentle incline, as in the case of the one immediately below. This rather ambitious structure forms a fitting climax to our series, and may be left to the ingenuity of the reader, whose accumulated experience should by this time be good equipment for the negotiation of the difficulties to be surmounted.

Miss Cairn's Cough-Drops.

By Winifred Graham.

I.

Little Hal Court knew nothing of towns; he had been brought up in the solitude and beauty of Northern Ireland. The country had given to this small boy something of its own peculiar charm, a wildness wedded mysteriously to peace. He could be so still and thoughtful, or so full of life and movement, he might have borrowed his child's personality from the waves of the great blue sea.

Nature made a bold nurse—a teacher who whispered to Hal of things intense, of stories wonderful, bringing him the funds of her vast wisdom, the fairy tales of a country-side teeming with romance.

"I live with my grandmother," he told his new governess, "because I have a different kind of mamma to other boys. She isn't the ordinary sort that stays at home; she—she's a celebrity!" He paused before alighting upon the correct word, bringing it out with so grave an air that Miss Ainsworth could hardly repress a smile.

Larger Image

"I HAVE A DIFFERENT KIND OF MAMMA TO OTHER BOYS."

"Yes," he continued, hugging his knee and gazing through the window at the turbid waves of the Lough, a lovely inland sea, sending its green waters brimming to the verge of Castle Stewart's old garden. "She sings, you know! She sings—well, just like an angel, people say; but the angels don't have to travel about and leave their little boys at home. Mother makes heaps of money when she sings a song. They send for her right across the world, and she travels like a Princess; the people crowd to see her get into the train. It's always that way if you can sing. Don't you wish you had a voice like an angel, Miss Ainsworth?"

"Yes, indeed."

A sudden, almost painful, longing rang in the reply, as the dazzling picture of a world-famed artiste was conjured up by the simple description of a child.

"I expect," added Miss Ainsworth, "you miss your mother?"

"Why, of course. I wear this picture of her round my neck, and I love her so much I don't mind when other boys call it girlish; one doesn't mind being girlish for her!"

A throb as of martyrdom crept into the child's voice—an almost passionate hunger for the mother-love denied him. [98]

"She said," he continued, "she would be back for the New Year. She can't get here in time for Christmas, because the boat from Australia won't bring her fast enough, but she promised to come for certain on New Year's Eve. I am to write to her in London. I always begin my letters now, 'Don't forget about the New Year,' because she has so much to remember. Then she answers back, 'Dear little boy, I'm safe for the New Year,' or something of that kind. The winter seems very long here, and one rather wants a mother. In the summer I don't mind her being away

so much."

His wistful eyes saw in fancy the smiling summer-time, which sped on lightning wings. For him the warm days spelt gladness, giving beautiful little bays for playgrounds and creeks with wooded shores, while winter presented unlighted rocks and shoals lashed by one of the strongest tides in the kingdom. He had grown to love and reverence the castles of old Kings which faced each other across the tide, and to know intimately those wonderful islands which dotted the sea. But to Miss Ainsworth, freshly arrived from a busy city, Castle Stewart in mid-winter held something of terror with its watery wastes, guarding the little village of Slaneyford.

She liked hearing her small charge talk of his mother: it brought a human note into all the dreariness and desolation of this storm-swept country. Since her arrival she had been forced to associate Slaneyford with a driving whirlwind of ceaseless rain.

"We sha'n't mind the weather when mother comes," said Hal, cheerfully. "Everything is different then; she's so jolly, you know. She will bring me lots of toys in her box, but I don't want them when I've got her to play with, and her cheek is so much softer to kiss than grandmamma's."

Miss Ainsworth noticed that the thought of his mother's coming predominated Hal's mind. Everything reminded him of some past action or saying of hers—what she liked or disliked. When he became silent and dreamy, his watchful companion knew well that the child-soul wandered to a mother's knee, through the bright mazes of imagination.

Larger Image

"A SURPRISE FOR THE FAIR LADY OF SONG."

In restless moments his energies ever centred in arranging some surprise for the fair lady of song—shells he had collected for her in the summer were to be hidden under her pillow, and long dried ribbons of white seaweed found their way to the guest-chamber prepared for Mrs. Court.

Miss Ainsworth herself caught his feverish excitement—the coming of the famous singer held the charm of novelty.

As yet she had met none of the celebrated people of the world, but founded her social creed upon the daily lives of the middle classes.

Even little Hal, with the strain of his mother's genius running in his blood, came as a revelation of something peculiar and mystifying.

"I sha'n't notice Christmas at all," he told Miss Ainsworth, as the festive season drew near; "I shall just wait for mother and the New Year and open all my presents then. She will like to be the first to see them." So the Yuletide drifted by uneventfully, save for a thrill of expectation heralding the arrival of a beloved traveller—that child-like counting of days and hours in which [99] the oldest may share, when the heart pines and the spirit yearns for the touch of an absent hand.

The days were drawing near to New Year's Eve when Mrs. Court wrote announcing her safe arrival in London. Hal's grandmother read the letter aloud, and Miss Ainsworth watched the rapt expression on his face with a strange intuition of coming sorrow, a fear lest disappointment, black-winged and ugly, should mar the seraphic beauty of the child's features. The little mouth, slightly inclined by Nature to droop, smiled softly as the older woman read, and a flush crept over the boy's cheek, while his whole attitude denoted breathless excitement. So keen was the tension that, as the letter closed, Miss Ainsworth felt she could hardly bear the concluding words:—

"It is just possible, tell Hal, that, after all, I may not get to Slaneyford for the New Year. Your account of the weather is not encouraging, and, dearly as I long to be with you, I am bound to be cautious and not run any risks. I have a slight cold in my throat, and the thought of the floods round Castle Stewart holds terrors, with their suggestion of dampness. My doctor advises me to

give up all thought of visiting Ireland while these stormy days of deluge last. Ask my sweet boy to write to me."

Grandmamma laid the letter down with quite a matter-of-fact air, remarking, "Cristina was very wise!"

Miss Ainsworth took a sidelong glance at Hal. He had not moved, but his lip trembled and he stared very hard at the floor.

"I shall be writing to-day," said grandmamma, "so you had better put in a line, Hal, and she will get it in London to-morrow morning."

Hal nodded. His voice sounded odd and strangled as he replied:—

"Please, I would rather send my letter quite alone in an envelope by itself."

"Very well."

The boy walked slowly to the door. The pathetic droop of his shoulders spoke more eloquently than words, telling of a spirit crushed by hope deferred, of a little heart breaking under a childish tunic of blue serge.

"The day after to-morrow will be New Year's Eve," he thought; "and she—she is afraid of the weather, because of her voice!"

Perhaps he had always been unconsciously jealous of that wonderful gift which took her away from him, though to the child's pure nature all hurtful emotions came as aliens, tarrying but for a moment on forbidden ground.

He crept to the far corner of the school-room, and, hiding the tiresome tears that made writing difficult, scribbled hastily in his new drawing-book.

"She shall have the first sheet as a letter," he said, tearing it out, and re-reading the words, clearly written in a bold, childish hand. "Perhaps she will come after all, when she gets this."

Miss Ainsworth saw with relief Hal looked happier as the post-boy trudged with a bag of correspondence down the soaking drive.

The following morning there was a certain watchfulness about Hal. He could settle down to nothing, and appeared to be constantly listening; every bell sent him running to the hall door.

At last his energy met with reward, for he was the first to bring in a telegram addressed to his grandmother. He waited by her knee with glistening eyes, his pulses throbbing painfully as she read the flimsy paper: "Shall be with you to-morrow; crossing to-night.—Cristina."

It seemed to the boy that his heart stopped beating and would never go on again as he heard the wonderful intelligence. He struggled for breath as he gasped out the good news to Miss Ainsworth, who had just appeared to take him for a walk.

"She will be here for New Year's Eve! She rests in Dublin, you know, and gets to us late in the afternoon," he cried, his face like a sunbeam. "She changed her mind when she got our letters; I expect she saw we wanted her very, very badly."

The hours flew quickly with so much gladness in store, and Hal was quite ready to go to bed early, that to-morrow might come the sooner—to-morrow, the day of days, long waited for, through weary months of watching. Miss Ainsworth came to the boy's bedside fearing he would never sleep—with his brain in such a whirl of feverish expectation.

She found him open-eyed and flushed. Immediately he began speaking of his mother.

"To-morrow night she will come in, shading the candle with her hand," he said. "She will wear a lovely dress she calls a tea-gown, all soft and lacey, and she doesn't mind how much I crumple it." He smiled at the thought and hugged his pillows.

"I wonder why she suddenly changed her mind?" murmured Miss Ainsworth. Hal sat bolt upright, [100]
his eyes very alert.

"It was all through my letter," he answered, triumphantly.

Larger Image

"'IT WAS ALL THROUGH MY LETTER,' HE ANSWERED."

"What did you say?" Miss Ainsworth felt very curious as she put the question; she had never before dealt with a child of uncommon character.

"I begged her to come," he replied, his tone vibrating with the energy of a youthful passion. "I said I would like her to lose her voice on the way and never find it again; then she would stay with me always, like other mothers, who live at home with their children. I put: 'Never mind about the old voice, dearest; it's always a bother, taking you away,' and lots of things like that, just to show her how much I cared. Oh! and I dropped some tears on the letter, so it all went crinkly."

An expression of intense longing lit his face as he paused, clutching Miss Ainsworth's sleeve. "Do you think she will lose her voice on the journey?" he gasped, hopefully. "It would be lovely if she did!"

Miss Ainsworth listened horrified; righteous indignation surged within her well-meaning breast as she pictured the mother, torn by natural affection, driven to risk her glorious gift of song for the whim of an exacting child.

"Oh!" cried Miss Ainsworth, shaking him off angrily, "I had no idea you were such a wicked little boy. I thought you really loved your mother, and now I see you don't at all; you are thoroughly selfish and horrid. Your letter must have hurt her very deeply. Of course, she values her voice above everything. God gave it to her as a wonderful inheritance, a divine talent, and you—you *hope* she will lose it, never to find it again! I don't want to talk to you any more, but if ill befalls your mother it will be a judgment on you! Naturally she ought not to travel against the advice of her doctor, but she is sacrificing her health for the sake of granting an unkind and inconsiderate request!"

With these scathing words of rebuke Miss Ainsworth snatched up the candle and strode from the room, shutting the door firmly behind her without saying "good-night."

Hal remained very still. All in a moment the room had become peopled with dark fancies and ugly forms. Dread stole like a human presence to the disconsolate little soul. Hal shivered and, shrinking down, hid his head in the sheets. The lecture, with its awful truths, returned like a heavy blow, causing physical pain to the sensitive temperament of the highly-strung boy. He had meant no harm by the ignorant words, whose child-like pathos touched the deepest chord in the [101] heart of the famous singer. Not for the world would she have had one syllable of Hal's letter altered by the tutoring hand of a shocked Miss Ainsworth, while tears and smiles together answered the appeal of that quaint, unstudied expression of the boy's mind.

But Hal knew nothing of this as the darkness gathered round him. He heard only the condemning phrases: "You are thoroughly selfish and horrid! I thought you really loved your mother! If ill befalls her it will be a judgment upon you!" He set his lips and pressed his knuckles firmly to his eyes. What was this dreadful thing he had done—all unconsciously—to the mother for whom he would willingly have given his life? She was on the sea now, against her doctor's advice, and the wind was beating on his window-pane and moaning round the house. He felt he could hardly bear the thought, and the sound of the pitiless rain tortured him.

Of course, Miss Ainsworth was right; he had been inconsiderate and unkind. If mother lost her voice God would be very angry, because Miss Ainsworth said it was a "divine talent." Whatever happened, the precious voice must be preserved, even if it took the one he loved away from him to the end of the chapter. As he mused a sudden thought came, bringing with it one bright ray of hope through the terrifying gloom.

Away across the mile-wide tideway, in the small town of Ferryport, a certain Miss Cairn, an old, wrinkled spinster, kept a wondrous sweet-shop, renowned for its good wares. When last Hal paid

her a visit one calm autumn day she had shown him a large glass jar of cough-drops, bidding him remember when the winter came that for loss of voice, or sore throat, she knew no equal in all the wide world. Miss Cairn confided to him she had once assisted in a chemist's shop, and knew the dark secrets of medicine. These drops were her own manufacture, and held the magic of deep knowledge acquired in the past.

Her words came back now with a force and power which made the great flood surging between him and the desired goal as nothing compared with the thought of saving mother's voice! The very difficulties in the way made the staunch little heart resolve to let no human power stay him from the task ahead.

What matter that the ferry could not traverse the foaming waters? Old Micky (known as Mad Micky, for risking his life in the wildest weather) crossed every morning in his worn boat with the regularity of a postman!

The inhabitants on either side were glad enough to make use of his fearless enterprise, for to be cut off from communication often proved highly inconvenient. So they paid him to carry their wares, and traded with each other, while they shrugged their shoulders at the danger entailed.

"Poor craythur!" they would say; "shure, and he's bound to go under some day, but there's none at home to mourn him, and he's set his mind on a watery grave!"

To Hal that night Mad Micky appeared as the one bright spot on the dark horizon of his childish sorrow.

If only he had Miss Cairn's cough-drops safely at Castle Stewart when Mrs. Court arrived, all anxiety could be at an end. The lost voice must needs return under the influence of such wonderful round, coloured lozenges, with purple or pink stripes for choice. He fancied mother would like the pink stripes best, because they were prettier.

Lulled by the glad notion of repairing his sinful past, little Hal let his heavy, tear-stained eyes close, and dreamt of a beauteous lady in a tea-gown, of Mad Micky, and sweets in a huge glass jar away across the tide.

II.

When Hal, after many difficulties, escaped the watchful eyes of Miss Ainsworth, and running through torrents of rain hid himself under a drenched tarpaulin at the bottom of Micky's boat, the supreme moment of his life had been reached.

He suspected that on such a morning of storm even Mad Micky might possibly refuse to pilot human cargo across the rough water, for New Year's Eve outvied the previous days of tempest.

The boat, moored at the Castle Stewart end of Slaneyford Lough, lay in sight of the roaring sea, whose billows broke upon innumerable creeks made alive by the hurrying presence of foam-crested waves.

Hal had collected all the money he possessed in his small pockets—silver for Miss Cairn, and three big pennies for Mad Micky when the moment should arrive to reveal his hidden presence.

No wonder the boy's heart beat furiously, for of all his life's adventures this appeared the most thrilling and terrifying.

It was one thing to play at shipwrecked mariners and to storm castles in which no ogres dwelt—it proved a different matter to lie calmly concealed while Micky, who "had set his mind on a watery grave," let his frail barque tear across the Lough under a single head-sail. [102]

The boy knew enough of the treacherous current and the strength of the tide to realize fully the perils of his passage.

Peeping from under his covering he could see the reckless face of his unconscious guide, fully aware that no man valuing his safety would sail as Mad Micky sailed that morning.

Larger Image

"HE COULD SEE THE RECKLESS FACE OF HIS UNCONSCIOUS GUIDE."

The child's sensitive nature would have been tortured by fears but for the encouraging influence of a great unselfish love.

"It's for mother's sake!" he said, hiding his eyes from the swift, deep body of water, whipped into fury by the wind as it viciously lashed the sail.

"It's for mother's sake!" he repeated, when the personal discomfort of his position warned him there can be few places wetter or more cheerless than a small boat unprotected from the elements when the rain descends in really gross solidity.

Mrs. Court felt none the worse for her journey as she drove to Castle Stewart late that afternoon.

She was really rather amused at having flung caution to the winds, and was by no means depressed at landing in a hurricane of squall and dirt on the dear, familiar Irish shore.

Her first thought was for Hal as she crossed the threshold of her old home, and a sudden keen misgiving pierced her like a knife when faces of frightened distress greeted her on the doorstep.

"Where is Hal?"

The words broke sharply; the bright, magnificent eyes flashed a glance of terror from right to left.

"We don't know!" The answer came unsteadily from faltering lips. "He disappeared this morning; he was last seen by one of the gardeners, running towards the Lough, slipping over the slimy stones and rocks. The man wondered we allowed him out in the wet to play on the weedy boulders, but the foolish fellow said nothing till it was too late. When he heard Hal was missing he spoke, but not till then. The shore has been searched, but——"

Mrs. Court stayed to hear no more. The blank, hopeless faces of the speakers told the rest.

Miss Ainsworth was weeping hysterically, and grandmamma's features grew stone-like in their set misery.

All the new-comer realized was that Hal—her Hal—had met with some disaster. Only the gravest accident would keep him away at such a moment. Her mind leapt to the worst fears. Like one possessed she rushed alone down the long drive, hardly knowing what she did, till her feet reached the very brink of the flowing tide. [103]

Surely the cry of her heart must call, even above the storm, to little Hal, the tender, clinging child, accustomed to think always of her pleasure during the happy days they spent at home together.

Larger Image

"RUNNING AT FULL SPEED, CAME A SMALL BREATHLESS FIGURE."

As if in answer to her soul's appeal, along the bank of the Lough's dark, swollen water, running at full speed, came a small breathless figure, drenched to the skin, holding aloft a tiny paper packet, which he waved victoriously.

"Dearest, it was for you!" he cried. "And, oh! I'm so sorry to be late, but Micky nearly got shipwrecked this time, the wind was so high, and his mast broke. I was frightened you'd lose your voice, so I went to Ferryport to buy Miss Cairn's cough-drops. They are splendid, dearest; try one and see!"

Already he had ferreted into the bag, and was holding between a salted thumb and finger a brilliant specimen of Miss Cairn's triumph in pink-striped lozenges.

As Mrs. Court heard the eager tidings: "Dearest, it was for you!" a rush of tears to her eyes and a sudden choking in her throat made Hal anxious.

"You—you *have* caught a cold!" he exclaimed, with conviction, forcing the sugared cough-drop into her protesting hands.

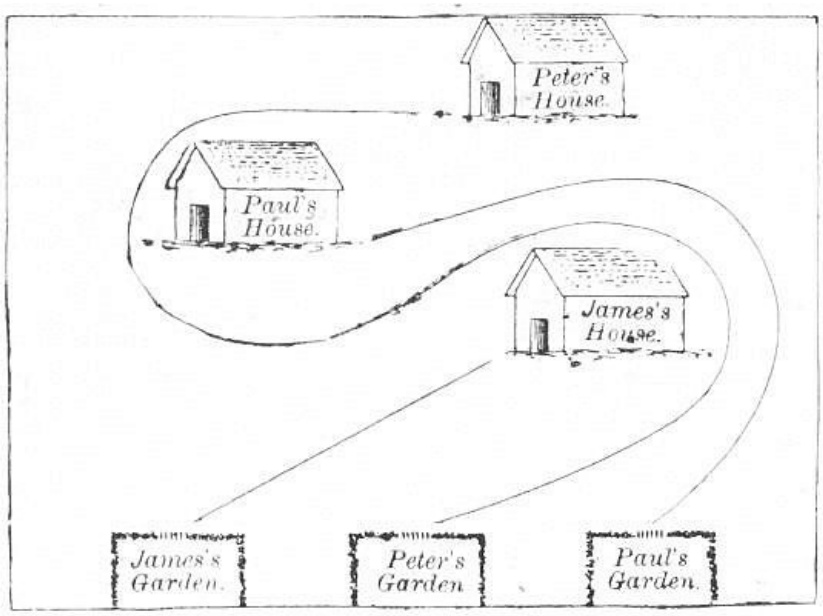
"No, darling boy—no," she stammered, mastering her emotion with an effort; "the New Year gladness choked me for a moment, that's all!"

Solutions to the Puzzles in the December Number.

TRACKING THE FUGITIVES.

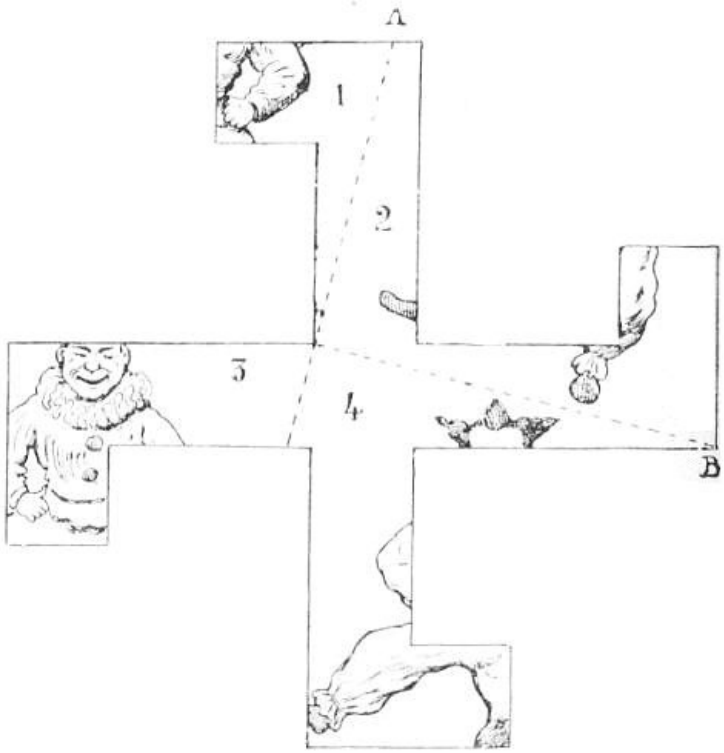
The solution of this amusing problem is as follows: The fugitive started from station No. 1 on foot, carrying the child; at station No. 2 he mounted a bicycle and, still carrying the child, rode to No. 3; there he placed the child in a wheelbarrow; as indicated by the marks of the legs of the wheelbarrow, he stopped before reaching No. 4 and put down the child, who walked by his side to the station; thence he continued his journey on a tricycle, which also carried the child; at No. 5 he changed his tricycle for a monocycle (that is, a single-wheeled cycle, such as is used by trick-riders), but the child which he was carrying caused him to lose his balance and he fell; he then took the child in his arms and carried it to No. 6; thence he started holding the child by the hand, but farther on he again took it in his arms and so completed the journey at No. 7.

THE QUARRELSOME BROTHERS.



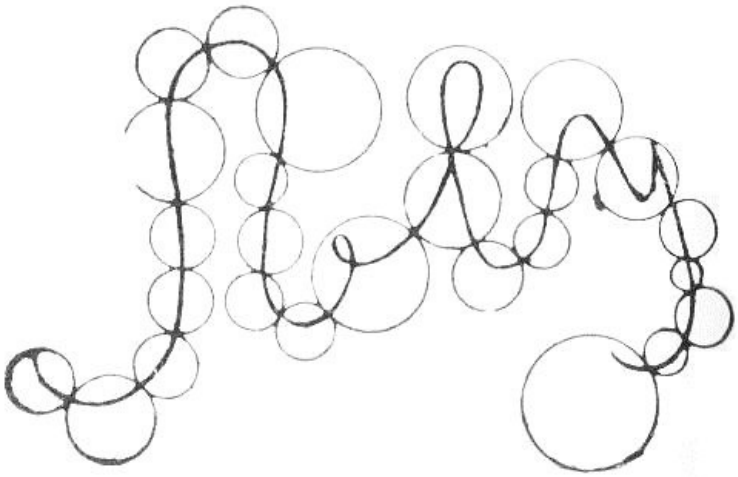
The solution of this problem will be found in the above sketch. Of course, the problem may be solved by drawing the lines the reverse way.

TO RECONSTRUCT THE CLOWN.



The reader will see, by inspection of the accompanying drawings, that the only way to solve this problem is by making a cut along the dotted line "A" before making that along the dotted line "B." This is the only possible method of obtaining four pieces with two cuts of the scissors. This being done, the method of rejoining the pieces so as to form the clown, as shown in the smaller diagram, will easily be followed, the pieces being numbered in order to show more readily where they fall.

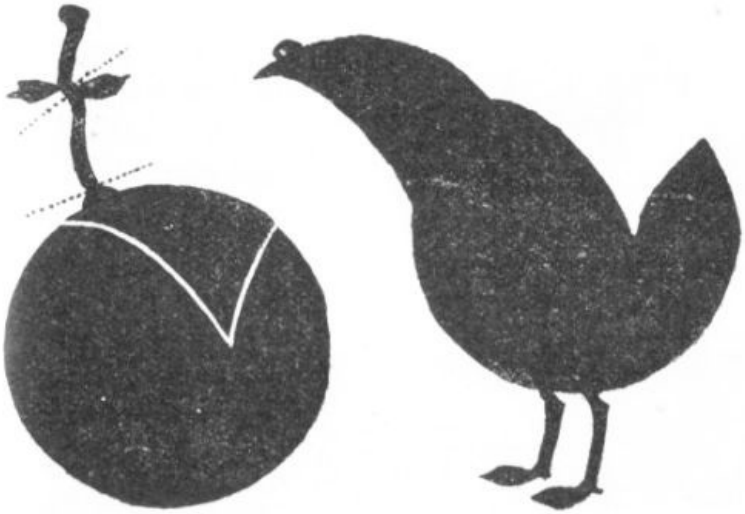
A STRANGE SIGNATURE.



It will be seen that the signature is that of the celebrated French General, Marshal Ney.

[105]

TO MAKE A HEN OUT OF AN APPLE.

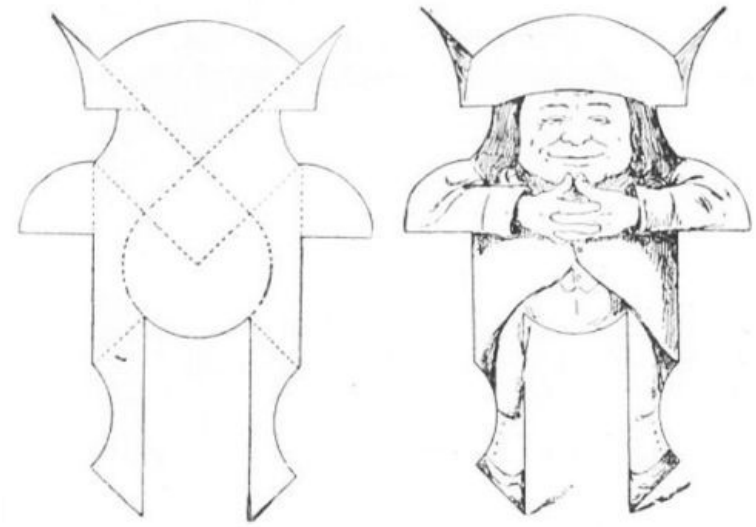


The white lines on the diagram given above of the apple will show in what manner the piece is to be cut out of it, which, being placed in its proper position, forms the neck and head of the hen. The stem being cut off and divided into two parts, as shown by the dotted lines, will give the legs, which, when attached to the body, complete the figure.

TO TURN THIS MAN INTO ANOTHER.

[Larger Image]

This problem is one of the most difficult of our collection. The dotted lines in the first of the accompanying three illustrations show how the original sketch has to be divided, while the other two show the manner in which the pieces require to be put together in order to form the new figure.

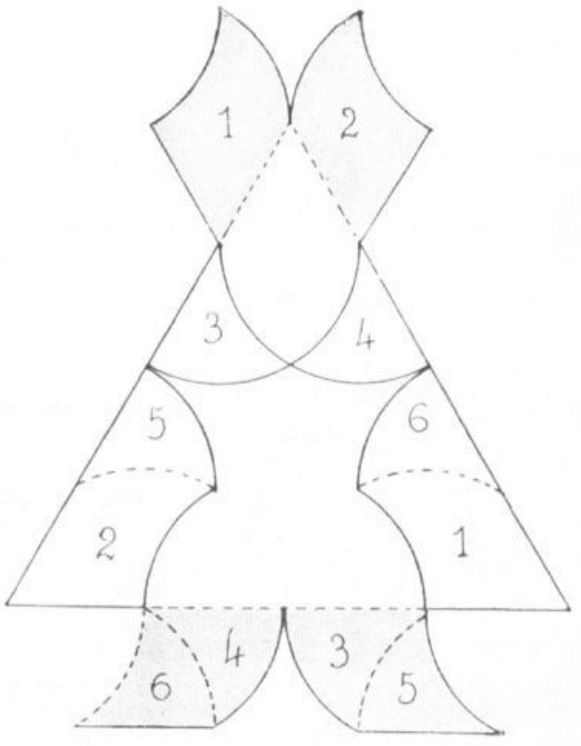


Larger Image

A CURIOUS MENAGERIE.

Unlike the preceding one, this problem is quite easy, and no doubt many hundreds of our readers will have found the correct solution. In order to obtain this it is only necessary to take the last triangle and paste upon its three sides the three other triangles, so as to complete the cat, the dog, and the cock, at the same time producing one large triangle composed of four small ones. The three summits of these triangles are then brought together, thus forming a pyramid. The menagerie, with the swan, the eagle, and the rabbit complete, will then be found to have been reconstructed.

A STRANGE GEOMETRICAL FIGURE.



Larger Image

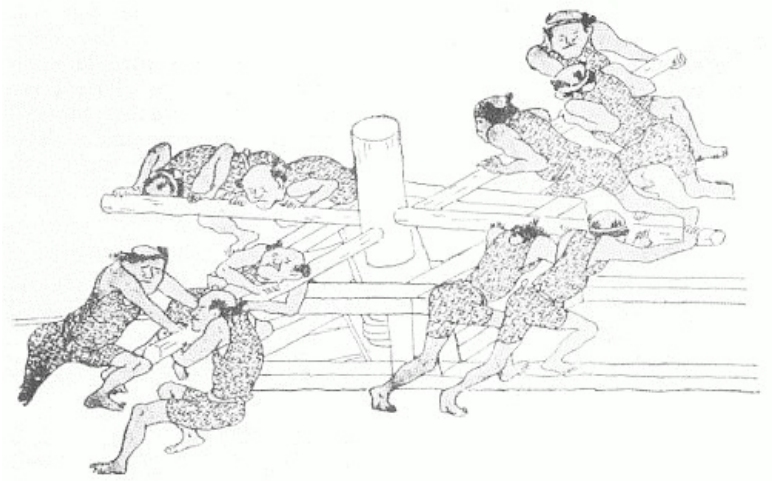
The following design gives the solution of this curious problem. The dotted lines show in which way the figure is to be cut, and the numbers indicate the new position of the pieces.

THE FACETIOUS SCHOOLBOY.

Our readers will see by a glance at the accompanying drawing what features of the original landscape it was necessary to preserve in order to solve the problem, and which were produced by the schoolboy's pencil and must accordingly be removed. The drawing represents a light-house built on the edge of a cliff.

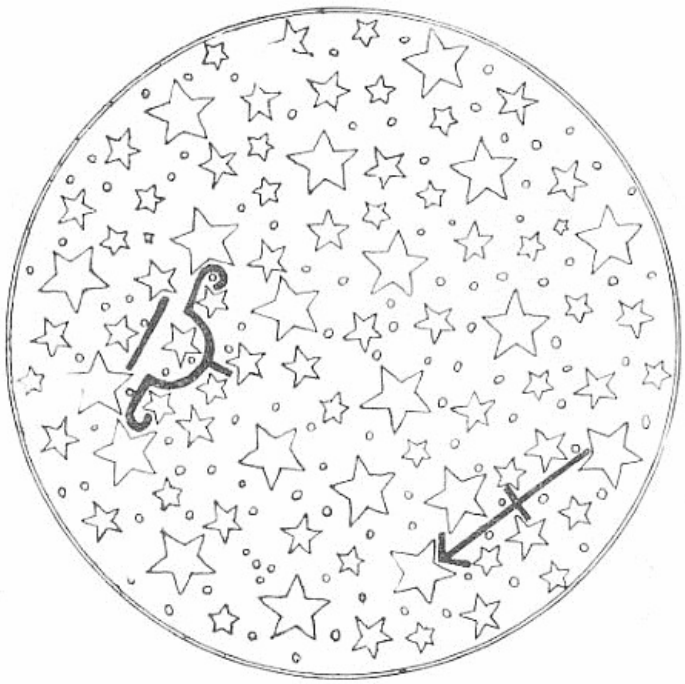
[106]

ROUND THE CAPSTAN.



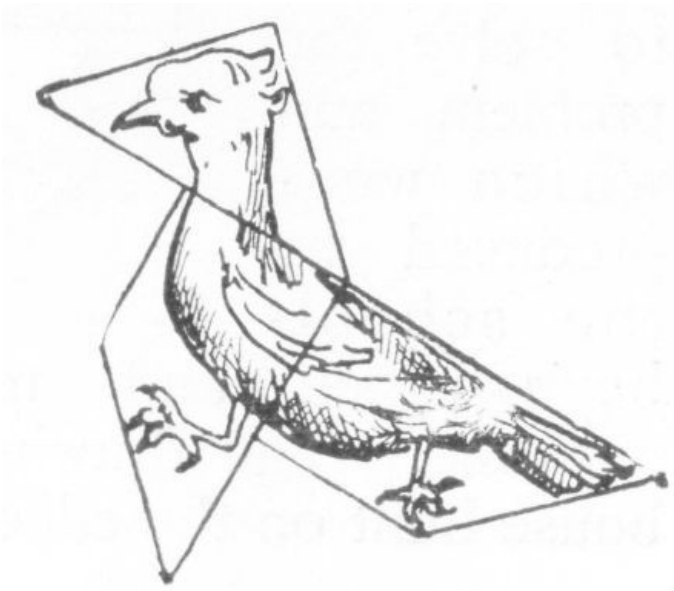
This drawing gives the solution of the problem, showing to what bodies the respective heads and legs should be attached.

THE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC.



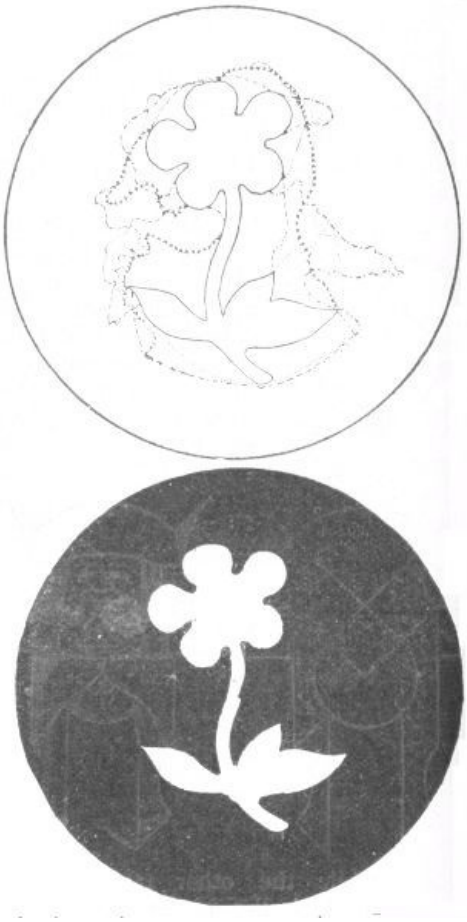
The two signs of the Zodiac which it is necessary to choose, and the method of placing them among the stars and dots, are here shown.

TO COMPLETE THE BIRDS.



Cut the paper into an exact square just containing the birds and fold it in the well-known manner of making a "paper bird," when the two birds will appear, one as shown, and the other on the reverse.

TO MAKE A FLOWER OUT OF FOUR FREAKS.



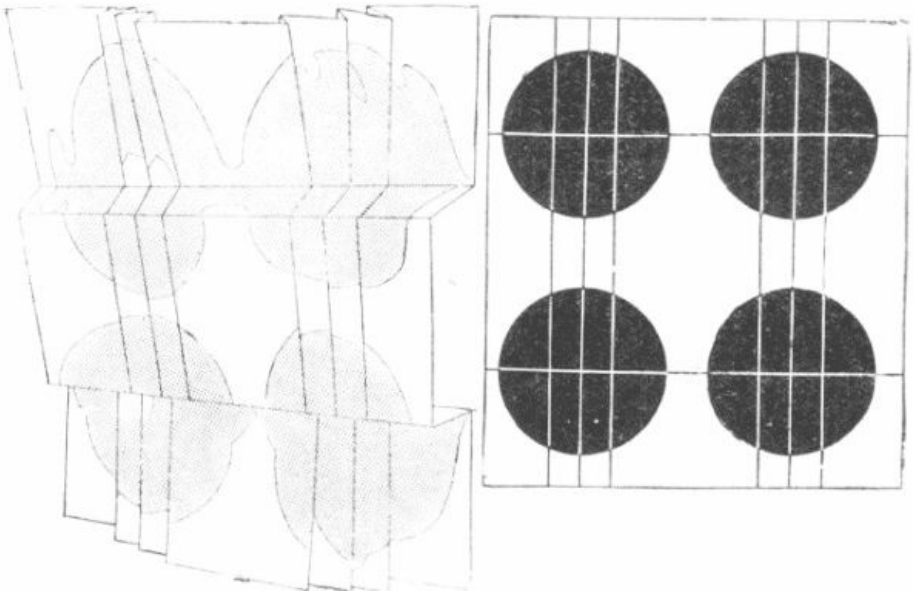
The method of making a flower out of the four grotesque heads which were represented in the diagram is one of the simplest of the series. All that is required is to cut out the four heads, remove the white part, and place them one upon the other. The space left empty then forms the flower, as will be easily understood by inspecting the two designs here given. Each figure is represented by a dotted line.

THE SERPENT AND THE FILE.

Roll the strip of paper in a spiral, and the pieces of the serpent will be joined, while the file will disappear.

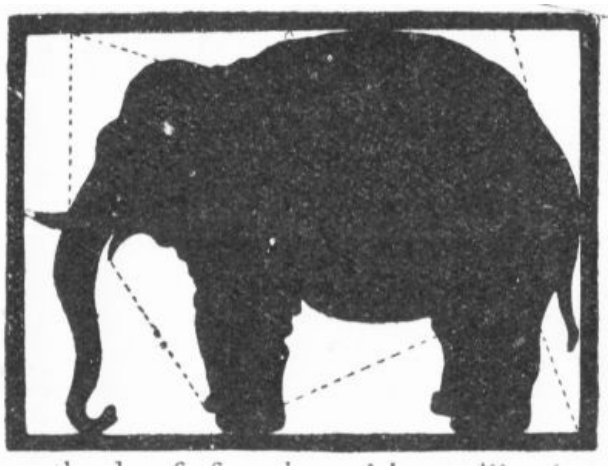
[107]

A BLOT OF INK.



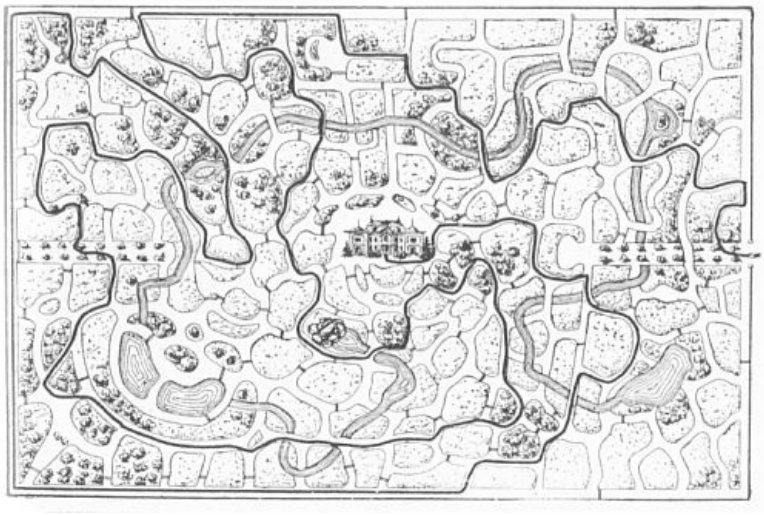
Four black discs will be obtained by making six folds the long way of the design and two across it, as shown in the two accompanying drawings.

WHAT ANIMAL IS THIS?



The animal is an elephant, as the reader can see for himself, and the method of forming him will also be readily apparent without further explanation.

THE CASTLE IN THE FOREST.



Larger Image

The outline shows the track which is to be followed by the traveller in order to penetrate the forest and reach the castle in the centre.

A MOTOR-CAR PROBLEM.

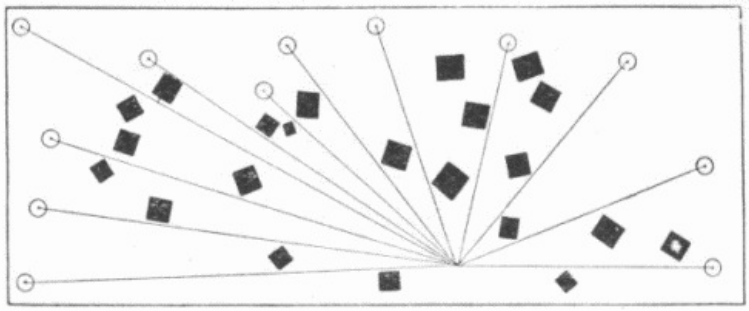
The following is the series of eighteen movements which are required to transfer motor-cars from one shed into the other:—

1. Move car No. 5 into the refuge.
2. Move No. 2 into the place of No. 5.
3. Move No. 3 into the space between the refuge and the lower shed.
4. Move No. 5 into the place of No. 3.
5. Move No. 3 into the place of No. 2.
6. Move No. 2 into the refuge.
7. Move No. 6 into the space between the refuge and the upper shed.
8. Move No. 2 into the place of No. 6.
9. Move No. 6 into the refuge.
10. Move No. 3 into the lower shed in the place of No. 5.
11. Move No. 1 into the space between the refuge and the lower shed.
12. Move No. 6 into the upper shed in the place of No. 1.
13. Move No. 1 in the place of No. 2 in the upper shed.
14. Move No. 3 into the space between the refuge and the upper shed.
15. Move No. 4 into the refuge.
16. Move No. 3 into the place of No. 4 in the lower shed.

17. Move No. 1 into the lower shed.
18. Move No. 4 into the upper shed.

THE RIFLE RANGE.

The point is shown in the diagram below:—



The Phœnix and the Carpet.

[108]

Larger Image

By E. Nesbit.

VII.—CATS AND RATS.

When you hear that the four children found themselves at Waterloo Station quite untaken-care-of, and with no one to meet them, it may make you think that their parents were neither kind nor careful. But if you think this you will be wrong. The fact is, mother arranged with Aunt Emma that she was to meet the children at Waterloo when they went back from their Christmas holiday at Lyndhurst. The train was fixed, but not the day. Then mother wrote to Aunt Emma, giving her careful instructions about the day and the hour, and about luggage and cabs and things, and gave the letter to Robert to post. But the hounds happened to meet near Rufus's Stone that morning, and, what is more, on the way to the meet they met Robert, and Robert met them, and instantly forgot all about posting Aunt Emma's letter, and never thought of it again until he and the others had wandered three times up and down the platform at Waterloo—which makes twenty-four trips in all—and had bumped up against old gentlemen, and stared in the faces of ladies, and been shoved by people in a hurry, and "by-your-leaved" by porters with trucks, and were quite sure that Aunt Emma was not there.

Then suddenly the true truth of what he had forgotten to do came home to Robert, and he said "Oh, crikey!" and stood still with his mouth open, and let a porter with a Gladstone bag in each hand and a bundle of umbrellas under one arm blunder heavily into him, and never so much as said "Where are you shoving to now?" or "Look out where you're going, can't you?" The heavier bag smote him at the knee, and he staggered, but he said nothing. When the others understood what was the matter I think they told Robert what they thought of him.

"We must take the train to Croydon," said Anthea, "and find Aunt Emma."

"Yes," said Cyril, "and precious pleased those Jevonses would be to see us and our traps."

Aunt Emma, indeed, was staying with some Jevonses—very prim ladies. They were middle-aged and wore very smart blouses, and they were fond of *matinées* and shopping, and they did not care about children.

"I know mother would be pleased to see us if we went back," said Jane.

[109]

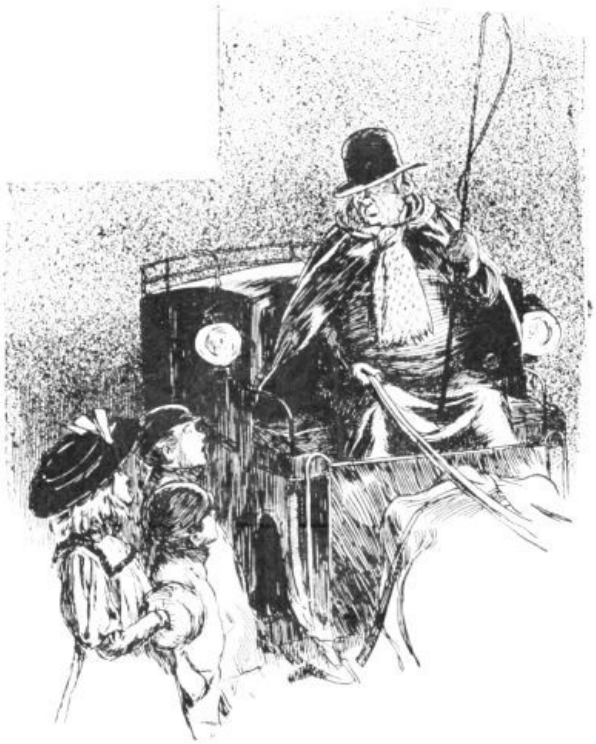
"Yes, she would; but she'd think it was not right to show she was pleased, because it's Bob's fault we're not met. Don't I know the sort of thing?" said Cyril. "Besides, we've no tin, except my tip grandfather gave me, and I'm not going to blue that because Robert's gone and made an ass of himself. No; we've enough among us for a growler, but not enough for tickets to the New Forest. We must just go home. They won't be so savage when they find we've really got home all right. You know auntie was only going to take us home in a cab."

"I believe we ought to go to Croydon," Anthea insisted.

"Aunt Emma would be out, to a dead cert," said Robert. "Those Jevonses go to the theatre every afternoon, I believe. Besides, there's the Phœnix at home, *and* the carpet. I votes we call a four-wheeled cabman."

A four-wheeled cabman was called—his cab was one of the old-fashioned kind, with straw in the bottom—and he was asked by Anthea to drive them very carefully to their address. This he did, and the price he asked for doing so was exactly the value of the gold coin grandpapa had given Cyril for Christmas. This cast a gloom—but Cyril would never have stooped to argue about a cab-fare, for fear the cabman should think he was not accustomed to take cabs whenever he wanted

them. For a reason that was something like this he told the cabman to put the luggage on the steps, and waited till the wheels of the growler had grittily retired before he rang the bell. "You see," he said, with his hand on the handle, "we don't want cook and Eliza asking us before *him* how it is we've come home alone—as if we were babies."



"HE WAS ASKED BY ANTHEA TO DRIVE THEM VERY CAREFULLY."

Here he rang the bell; and the moment its answering clang was heard everyone felt that it would be some time before that bell was answered. The sound of a bell is quite different, somehow, when there is anyone inside the house who hears it. I can't tell you why that is—but so it is.

"I expect they're changing their dresses," said Jane.

"Too late," said Anthea; "it must be past five. I expect Eliza's gone to post a letter and cook's gone to see the time."

Cyril rang again. And the bell did its best to inform the listening children that there was really no one human in the house. They rang again, and listened intently. The hearts of all sank low. It is a terrible thing to be locked out of your own house on a dark, muggy, January evening.

"There is no gas on anywhere," said Jane, in a broken voice.

"I expect they've left the gas on once too often, and the draught blew it out, and they're suffocated in their beds. Father always said they would some day," said Robert, cheerfully.

"Let's go and fetch a policeman," said Anthea, trembling.

"And be taken up for trying to be burglars—no, thank you," said Cyril. "I heard father read out of the paper about a young man who got into his own mother's house, and they got him made a burglar only the other day."

"I only hope the gas hasn't hurt the Phœnix," said Anthea. "It *said* it wanted to stay in the bathroom cupboard, and I thought it would be all right because the servants *never* clean that out. But if it's gone and got out and been choked by gas—and, besides, directly we open the door we shall be choked too. I *knew* we ought to have gone to Aunt Emma at Croydon. Oh, Squirrel, I wish we had. Let's go *now*." [110]

"Shut up," said her brother, briefly. "There's someone rattling the latch inside."

Everyone listened with all its ears, and everyone stood back as far from the door as the steps would allow.

The latch rattled and clicked. Then the flap of the letter-box lifted itself—everyone saw it by the flickering light of the gas-lamp that shone through the leafless lime tree by the gate—a golden eye seemed to wink at them through the letter-box, and a cautious beak whispered:

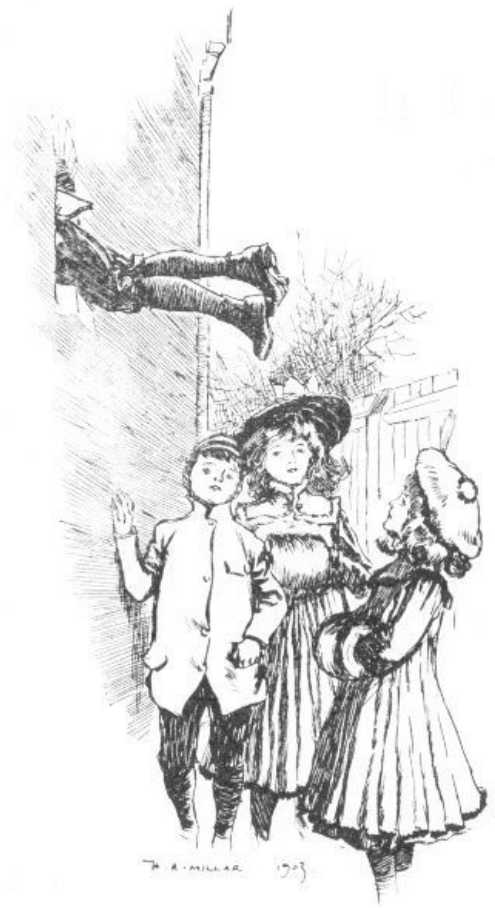
"Are you alone?"

"It's the Phœnix," said everyone, in a voice so joyous and so full of relief as to be a sort of whispered shout.

"Hush!" said the voice from the letter-box slit. "Your slaves have gone a-merry-making. The latch of this portal is too stiff for my delicate beak. But at the side—the little window above the shelf whereon your bread lies—it is not fastened."

"Right O!" said Cyril.

And Anthea added: "I wish you'd meet us there, dear Phœnix."



"HE DIVED INTO THE PANTRY HEAD-FIRST."

The children crept round to the pantry window. It is at the side of the house, and there is a green gate labelled "Tradesmen's Entrance," which is always kept bolted. But if you get one foot on the fence between you and next door, and one on the handle of the gate, you are over before you know where you are. This, at least, was the experience of Cyril and Robert, and even, if the truth must be told, of Anthea and Jane. So in almost no time all four were in the narrow gravelled passage that runs between that house and the next.

Then Robert made a back, and Cyril hoisted himself up and got his knicker-bockered knee on the concrete window-sill. He dived into the pantry head-first, as one dives into water, and his legs waved in the air as he went, just as your legs do when you are first beginning to learn to dive. The soles of his boots—squarish, muddy patches—disappeared.

"Give us a leg-up," said Robert to his sisters.

"No, you don't," said Jane, firmly. "I'm not going to be left outside here with just Anthea, and have something creep up behind us out of the dark. Squirrel can go and open the back door."

A light had sprung awake in the pantry. Cyril always said the Phœnix turned the gas on with its beak and lighted it with a waft of its wing, but he was excited at the time and perhaps he really did it himself with matches, and then forgot all about it. He let the others in by the back door. And when it had been bolted again and the luggage had been got off the doorstep the children went all over the house and lighted every single gas-jet they could find. For they couldn't help feeling that this was just the dark, dreary winter's evening when an armed burglar might easily be expected to appear at any moment. There is nothing like light when you are afraid of burglars, or of anything else, for that matter.

And when all the gas-jets were lighted it was quite clear that the Phœnix had made no mistake, and that Eliza and cook were really out, and that there was no one in the house except the four children, and the Phœnix and the carpet, and the black-beetles who lived in the cupboards on each side of the nursery fireplace. These last were very pleased that the children had come home again, especially when Anthea had lighted the nursery fire. But, as usual, the children treated the loving little black-beetles with coldness and disdain. [111]

While Anthea was delighting the poor little black-beetles with the cheerful blaze, Jane had set the table for—I was going to say tea, but the meal of which I am speaking was not exactly tea. Let us call it a tea-ish meal. There was tea, certainly, for Anthea's fire blazed and crackled so kindly that it really seemed to be affectionately inviting the kettle to come and sit upon its lap. So the kettle was brought and tea made. But no milk could be found, so everyone had six lumps of sugar to each cup instead. The things to eat, on the other hand, were nicer than usual. The boys looked about very carefully, and found in the pantry some cold tongue, bread, butter, cheese, and part of a cold pudding—very much nicer than cook ever made when they were at home. And in the kitchen cupboard were half a Christmassy cake, a pot of strawberry jam, and about a pound of mixed candied fruit with soft, crumbly slabs of delicious sugar in each cup of lemon, orange, or

citron.

It was indeed, as Jane said, "a banquet fit for an Arabian knight."

The Phœnix perched on Robert's chair, and listened kindly and politely to all they had to tell it about their visit to Lyndhurst, and underneath the table, by just stretching a toe down rather far, the faithful carpet could be felt by all, even by Jane, whose legs were very short.

"Your slaves will not return to-night," said the Phœnix. "They sleep under the roof of the cook's step-mother's aunt, who is, I gather, hostess to a large party to-night in honour of her husband's cousin's sister-in-law's mother's ninetieth birthday."

"I don't think they ought to have gone without leave," said Anthea, "however many relations they have, but I suppose we ought to wash up."

"It's not our business about the leave," said Cyril, firmly; "but I simply won't wash up for them. We got it, and we'll clear it away—and then we'll go somewhere on the carpet. It's not often we get a chance of being out all night. We can go right away to the other side of the Equator, to the tropical climes, and see the sun rise over the great Pacific Ocean."

"Right you are," said Robert. "I always did want to see the Southern Cross and the stars as big as gas-lamps."

"*Don't* go," said Anthea, very earnestly, "because I *couldn't*. I'm *sure* mother wouldn't like us to leave the house, and I should hate to be left here alone."

"I'd stay with you," said Jane, loyally.

"I know you would," said Anthea, gratefully; "but even with you I'd much rather not."

"Well," said Cyril, trying to be kind and amiable, "I don't want you to do anything you think's wrong, *but*——"

He was silent. This silence said many things.

"I don't see——" Robert was beginning, when Anthea interrupted.

"I'm quite sure. Sometimes you just think a thing's wrong, and sometimes you *know*. And this is a *know* time."

The Phœnix turned kind golden eyes on her and opened a friendly beak to say:—

"When it is, as you say, a 'know time' there is no more to be said. And your noble brothers would never leave you."

"Of course not," said Cyril, rather quickly. And Robert said so, too.

"I myself," the Phœnix went on, "am willing to help in any way possible. I will myself go—either by carpet or on the wing—and fetch you anything you can think of to amuse you during the evening. In order to waste no time I could go while you wash up. Why," it went on, in a musing voice, "does one wash up teacups and wash down the stairs?"

"You couldn't wash stairs up, you know," said Anthea, "unless you began at the bottom and went up feet first as you washed. I wish cook would try that way for a change."

"I don't," said Cyril, briefly. "I should hate the look of her elastic-side boots sticking up."

"This is mere trifling," said the Phœnix. "Come, decide what I shall fetch for you. I can get you anything you like."

But, of course, they couldn't decide. Many things were suggested: a rocking-horse, jewelled chessmen, an elephant, a bicycle, a motor-car, books with pictures, musical instruments, and many other things. But a musical instrument is agreeable only to the player, unless he has learned to play it really well; books are not sociable, bicycles cannot be ridden without going out of doors, and the same is true of motor-cars and elephants. Only two people can play chess at once with one set of chessmen (and anyway it's very much too much like lessons for a game), and only one can ride on a rocking-horse. Suddenly in the midst of the discussion the Phœnix spread its wings and fluttered to the floor, and from there it spoke. [112]

"THE CARPET WANTS YOU TO LET IT GO TO ITS OLD HOME."

"I gather," it said, "from the carpet that it wants you to let it go to its old home, where it was born and brought up, and it will return within the hour laden with a number of the most beautiful and delightful products of its native land."

"What *is* its native land?"

"I didn't gather. But since you can't agree, and time is passing, and the tea-things are not washed down—I mean washed up—"

"I votes we do," said Cyril. "It'll stop all this jaw, any way. And it's not bad to have surprises. Perhaps it's a Turkey carpet, and it might bring us Turkish delight."

"Or a Turkish patrol," said Robert.

"Or a Turkish bath," said Anthea.

"Or a Turkish towel," said Jane.

"Nonsense," Cyril urged; "it said beautiful and delightful, and towels and baths aren't *that*, however good they may be for you. Let it go. I suppose it won't give us the slip," he added, pushing back his chair and standing up.

"Hush!" said the Phœnix; "how can you? Don't trample on its feelings just because it's only a carpet."

"But how can it do it—unless one of us is on it—to do the wishing?" asked Robert. He spoke with a rising hope that it *might* be necessary for one to go—and why not Robert? But the Phœnix quickly threw cold water on his new-born flame.

"Why, you just write your wish on a paper and pin it on the carpet."

So a leaf was torn from Anthea's arithmetic book, and on it Cyril wrote, in large round-hand, the following:—

> "We wish you to go to your dear native home, and bring back the most beautiful and delightful productions of it you can—and not to be gone long, please. (Signed)
>
> "Cyril, Robert, Anthea, Jane."

Then the paper was laid on the carpet.

"Writing down, please," said the Phœnix; "the carpet can't read a paper whose back is turned to it any more than you can."

It was pinned fast; and the table and chairs having been moved the carpet simply and suddenly vanished, rather like a patch of water on a hearth under a fierce fire. The edges got smaller and smaller, and then it disappeared from sight.

"It may take it some time to collect the beautiful and delightful things," said the Phœnix. "I should wash up—I mean wash down."

So they did. There was plenty of hot water left in the kettle, and everyone helped: even the Phœnix, who took up cups by their handles with its clever claws, and dipped them in the hot water, and then stood them on the table ready for Anthea to dry them. Everything was nicely washed up and dried and put in its proper place, and the dish-cloth washed and hung on the edge of the copper to dry, and the tea-cloth was hung on the line that goes across the scullery. (If you

are a duchess's child, or a King's, or a person of high social position's child, you will, perhaps, not know the difference between a dish-cloth and a tea-cloth, but in that case your nurse has been better instructed than you, and she will tell you all about it.) And just as eight hands and one pair of claws were being dried on the roller towel behind the scullery door there came a strange sound from the other side of the kitchen wall—the side where the nursery was. It was a very strange sound indeed—most odd—and unlike any other sounds the children had ever heard. At least, they had heard sounds as much like it as a toy engine's whistle is like a steam siren's. [113]

"EVERYONE HELPED: EVEN THE PHŒNIX."

"The carpet's come back," said Robert, and the others felt that he was right.

"But what has it brought with it?" asked Jane. "It sounds like Leviathan, that great beast——"

"It couldn't have been made in India and have brought elephants? Even baby ones would be rather awful in that room," said Cyril.

"It's no use sending the carpet to fetch precious things for you if you're afraid to look at them when they come," said the Phœnix, sensibly. And Cyril, being the eldest, said "Come on," and turned the handle.

The gas had been left full on after tea, and everything in the room could be plainly seen by the ten eyes at the door. At least, not everything, for though the carpet was there it was invisible, because it was completely covered by the hundred and ninety-nine beautiful objects which it had brought from its birthplace.

"Cats!" Cyril exclaimed. "I never thought about its being a *Persian* carpet."

Yet it was now plain that this was so, for the beautiful objects which it had brought back were cats—Persian cats—grey Persian cats, and there were, as I have said, one hundred and ninety-nine of them, and they were sitting on the carpet as close as they could get to each other. But the moment the children entered the room the cats rose and stretched, and spread and overflowed from the carpet to the floor, and in an instant the floor was a sea of moving, mewing pussishness, and the children, with one accord, climbed to the table and gathered up their legs, and the people next door knocked on the wall; and, indeed, no wonder, for the mews were Persian and piercing.

"This is pretty poor sport," said Cyril. "What's the matter with the bounders?"

"I imagine that they are hungry," said the Phœnix. "If you were to feed them——"

"We haven't anything to feed them with," said Anthea, in despair, and she stroked the nearest Persian back. "Oh, pussies, do be quiet; we can't hear ourselves think." She had to shout this entreaty, for the mews were growing deafening. "And it would take pounds and pounds' worth of cat's-meat." [114]

"THE BEAUTIFUL OBJECTS WHICH IT HAD BROUGHT BACK WERE CATS."

"Let's ask the carpet to take them away," said Robert.

But the girls said "No."

"They are so soft and pussy," said Jane.

"And valuable," said Anthea, hastily. "We can sell them for lots and lots of money."

"Why not send the carpet to get food for them?" suggested the Phœnix, and its golden voice became harsh and cracked with the effort it had to make to be heard above the increasing fierceness of the Persian mews.

So it was written that the carpet should bring food for one hundred and ninety-nine Persian cats, and the paper was pinned to the carpet as before.

The carpet seemed to gather itself together, and the cats dropped off it as rain-drops do from your mackintosh when you shake it. And the carpet disappeared.

Unless you have had one hundred and ninety-nine well-nourished Persian cats in one small room, all hungry, and all saying so in unmistakable mews, you can form but a poor idea of the noise that now deafened the children and the Phœnix.

The cats mewed and mewed and mewed, and twisted their Persian forms in and out and unfolded their Persian tails, and the children and the Phœnix huddled together by the door.

The Phœnix, Robert noticed suddenly, was trembling.

"So many cats," it said, "and they might not know I was the Phœnix. These accidents happen so quickly. It quite unmans me."

This was a danger of which the children had not thought.

"Creep in," cried Robert, opening his jacket. And the Phœnix crept in—only just in time, for green eyes had glared, pink noses had sniffed, white whiskers had twitched, and as Robert buttoned his coat he disappeared to the waist in a wave of eager grey Persian fur. And on the instant the good carpet slapped itself down on the floor. And it was covered with rats—three hundred and ninety-eight of them, I believe—two for each cat.

"How horrible!" cried Anthea. "Oh, take them away!"

"Take yourself away," said the Phœnix, "and me."

"I wish we'd never had a carpet," said Anthea, in tears.

They hustled and crowded out of the door, and shut it and locked it. Cyril, with great presence of mind, lit a candle and turned off the gas at the main. "The rats'll have a better chance in the dark," he said. [115]

The mewing had ceased. Everyone listened in breathless silence. We all know that cats eat rats—it is one of the first things we read in our nice little reading books; but all those cats eating all those rats—it wouldn't bear thinking of.

"HE DISAPPEARED TO THE WAIST IN A WAVE OF EAGER GREY PERSIAN FUR."

Suddenly Robert sniffed, in the silence of the dark kitchen where the only candle was burning all on one side, because of the draught.

"What a funny scent!" he said.

And as he spoke a lantern flashed its light through the window of the kitchen, a face peered in, and a voice said:—

"What's all this row about? You let me in."

It was the voice of the police!

Robert tip-toed to the window and spoke through the pane that was a little cracked.

"What do you mean?" he said. "There's no row. You listen; everything's as quiet as quiet."

And indeed it was.

The strange sweet scent grew stronger, and the Phœnix put out its beak.

The policeman hesitated.

"They're *musk* rats," said the Phœnix. "I suppose some cats eat them—but never Persian ones. What a mistake for a well-informed carpet to make! Oh, what a night we're having!"

"Do go away," said Robert, nervously, to the policeman. "We're just going to bed—that's our bedroom candle—there isn't any row. Everything's as quiet as a mouse."

A wild chorus of mews drowned his words, and with the mews were mingled the shrieks of the musk rats. What had happened? Had the cats tasted them before deciding that they disliked the flavour?

"I'm a-comin' in," said the policeman. "You've got a cat shut up there."

"A cat!" said Cyril. "Oh, my only aunt! *A* cat!"

"Come in, then," said Robert. "It's your own look-out. I advise you not. Wait a shake, and I'll undo the side door."

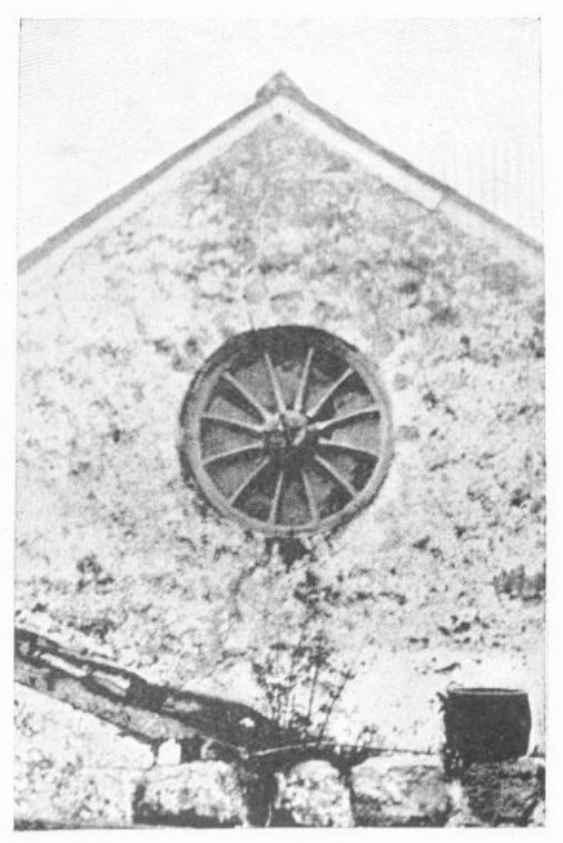
He undid the side door, and the policeman, very cautiously, came in.

And there, in the kitchen, by the light of one candle, with the mewing and the screaming going on like a dozen steam sirens, twenty waiting motor-cars, and half a hundred squeaking pumps, four agitated voices shouted to the policeman four mixed or wholly different explanations of the very mixed events of the evening.

Did you ever try to explain the simplest thing to a policeman?

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

CART-WHEEL WINDOW.

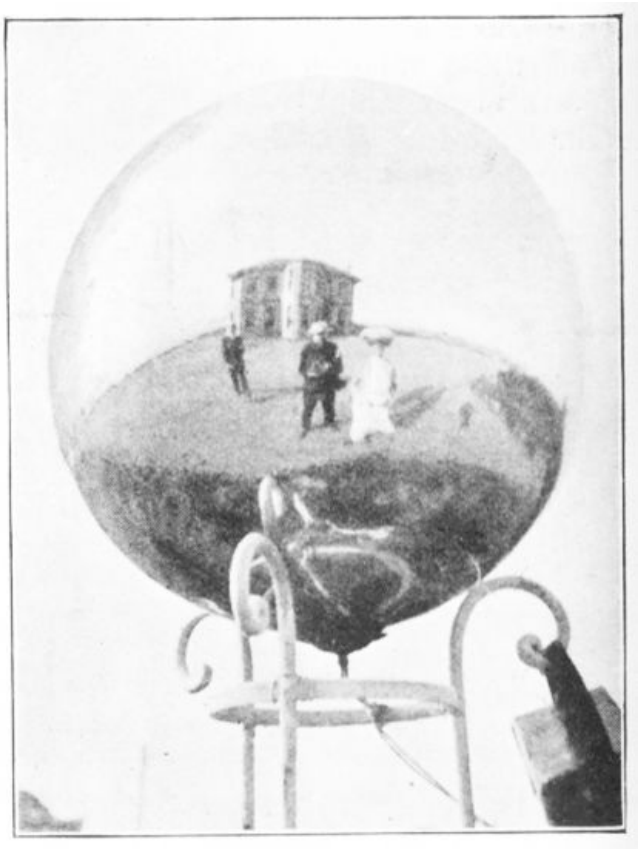


"There is a blacksmith's shop at Llancayo, near Usk, Mon., that possesses an extraordinary window. The framework of the window consists of a cart-wheel let into the wall, with panes of glass between the spokes."—Mr. W. Marsh, 1, Church Street, Monmouth.

CURIOUS ADDRESS.

"I send you a post-card which I received in the ordinary way by post from my brother, who lives at Sutton Scarsdale, a scattered village near Chesterfield. You will notice that the card was posted at 7.15 p.m. on the 5th October, and it was delivered during the evening of the following day. The address looks a mixture of Greek and German, but on inspection it will be found that each letter is spelled out in full. The pencilled words were inserted by the Post Office officials. The Post Office is often the object of complaints for tardiness in delivery, but I think great credit is due to it for its cleverness and promptness in this case."—Mr. John Alderson, 12, Albert Road,

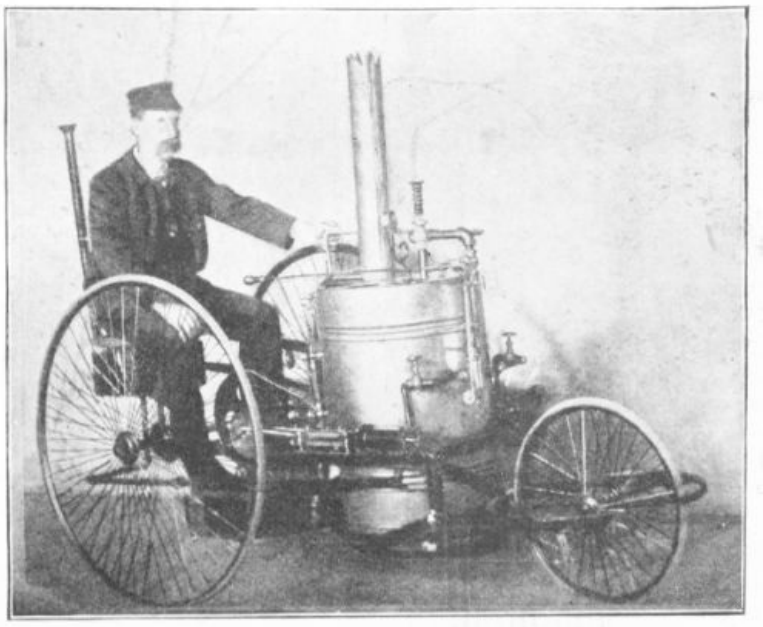
A DISTORTING MIRROR.



"While staying in Jersey I visited a point called La Corbière, where I noticed a mirror in the form of a ball standing out in the open on a pedestal. Objects reflected in it were so clear that I determined to photograph it, with the result that rather curious shapes were given to myself and friend." Mr. C. S. Wilson, 18, Milton Road, Swindon.

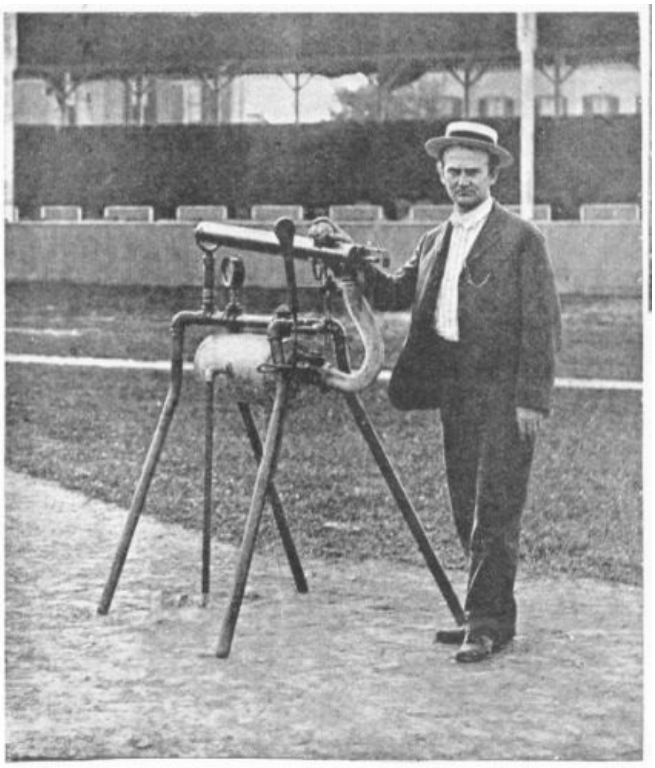
[117]

HOME-MADE MOTOR-CAR.



"This original auto was made in the winter of 1886 by Mr. Philbrick and Mr. J. Elmer Wood in Beverley, Mass. It had double engines, porcupine boiler, kerosene fuel, and only three wheels—two of which were thirty-six inches in diameter, and the front, or steering-wheel, twenty-six inches. It was used on the road with great success, carrying about three hundred pounds of steam, but wanted some changes, which even at that early date we could easily see. The machine is still existing at Beverley, though it is now, of course, somewhat dilapidated after so many years of wear."—Mr. J. Elmer Wood, Beverley, Mass.

AN AUTOMATIC BASEBALL PITCHER.



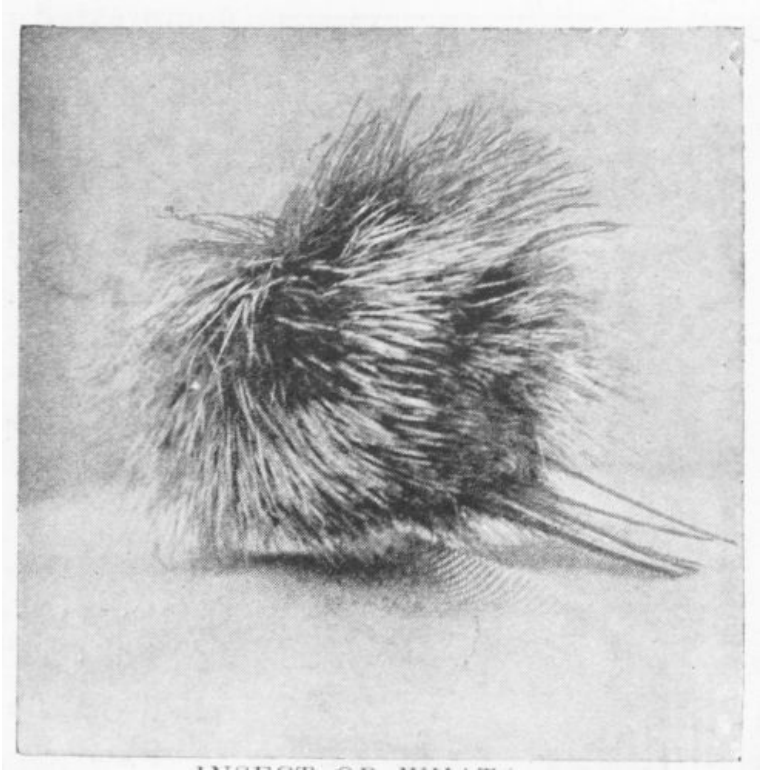
"This curious-looking machine is a baseball pitcher which is automatic. It is operated by compressed air, and is so arranged that it will 'pitch' a ball with an upward curve or downward curve just as well as an expert ball player. The machine consists of a tube about thirty-six inches long which is just large enough to hold the ball. The tube can be pointed in any direction, and the rear end is fitted with a contrivance by which the ball can be curved. When the operator wishes to make a pitch he merely presses a lever which admits the compressed air into the tube, and the ball is shot out like the bullet from an air-gun. The invention is not intended to take the place of a human pitcher, but to be used in practice games, so that the man at the bat can become expert in hitting curves and balls pitched at various degrees of speed." Why should not a similar machine be used in this country as a practice bowler at cricket?—The above is sent by Mr. D. Allen Willey, Baltimore.

A BOGUS DWARF.

"This figure of the dwarf, taken at an evening party in Kimberley, South Africa, was impersonated by my brother and a friend as follows: My brother stood upright with his hands on a table (these forming the feet of the dwarf), on which were placed stockings and small shoes. He had a little garment made with sleeves, through which his friend, who stood just behind, put his arms and hands, on which were mittens to make them look small; these formed the hands of the dwarf. My brother was adorned with a large sun hat called a 'cappie,' goggles, and a necklace, and the dwarf was complete—his friend, of course, being concealed by curtains."—Mr. F. E. Glover, 41, Drayton Park, Highbury, N.

[118]

INSECT OR WHAT?



"I send you the photograph of an extraordinarily curious insect: I am not prepared to say whether it is an insect or some kind of organism. I can only say that it is alive and lives on red lead. The lady in whose possession it is has had it for upwards of eighteen years, and who knows how many years of life it had before? It is covered with light brown hair (which has to be cut occasionally), very like deer's hair, and is the size of a large marble. The 'curious insect' was given to the lady's husband by a rich native who gave up all his worldly possessions and became a fakir. When giving it to the gentleman (who had shown the man some kindness) he said that it would always bring him good luck."—Mr. T. G. A. Baness, Hall Bazaar, Amritsur, Punjab.

STRANGE ADVENTURE OF A RAILWAY CARRIAGE.

"The discarded railway carriage shown in the photograph has had an eventful career. After being

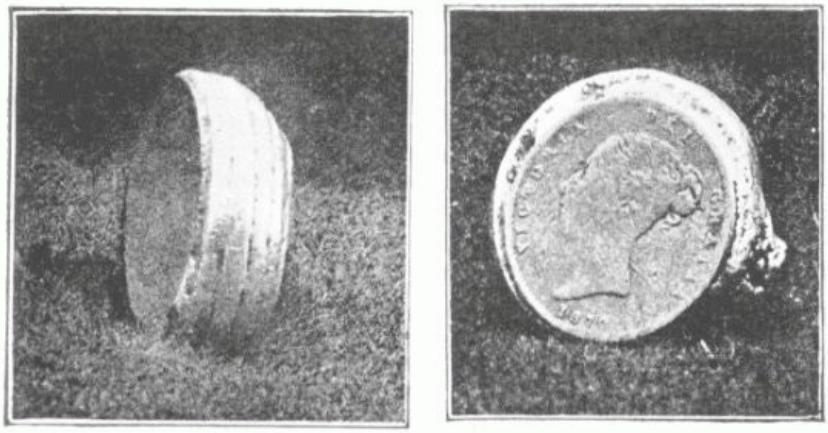
drawn at the end of freight trains over thousands of miles of the Erie Railroad tracks it was finally condemned and sent to the graveyard, where cars of this character meet an ignominious end—they being chopped up for firewood. But after it had been sent to what was thought would be its last resting-place, Lieut. Peary, the well-known Arctic explorer, asked the Erie Railroad officials if they could loan him a discarded carriage for use on his ship *Windward*. This carriage was accordingly selected, and it was placed on the deck of the *Windward*, where it was fitted up as a cabin. The journeys of this carriage, therefore, instead of being at an end had really only begun, for it was destined to make the longest trip in its history. It remained on board the *Windward* throughout the perilous trip to the Frozen North, and returned with the ship to New York a little over a year ago. Lieut. Peary having no further use for it sent it back to the Erie Railroad, and it is now an object of curiosity at Shohola Glen, Pike County, Pa., a popular excursion resort on the line of the Erie Railroad."—Mr. Adolph A. Langer, 116, Danforth Avenue, Jersey City, N. J.

GIGANTIC BEER BARREL

"This enormous barrel was erected in the great Industrial Exhibition held at Osaka, Japan. It is the property of the 'Yebisu' Beer Company, and was built for the purpose of advertising that brand of malt liquor. The height is about fifty feet and the diameter of its base some thirty feet, while the thickness of its wall exceeds two feet. It is fitted up as a beer hall within and contains ten round tables, each capable of accommodating five or six persons. There is also a large counter. It is one of the most remarkable of the many advertising devices ever carried out in this enterprising 'Land of the Rising Sun.' The photograph was taken by Mr. G. M. Arab, of this city."—Mr. W. J. Toms, Kobé, Japan.

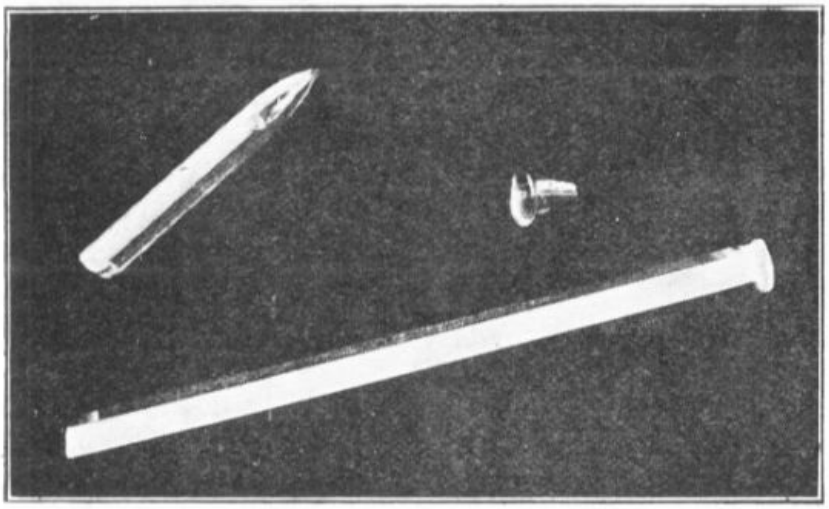
[119]

AMALGAMATED BY LIGHTNING.



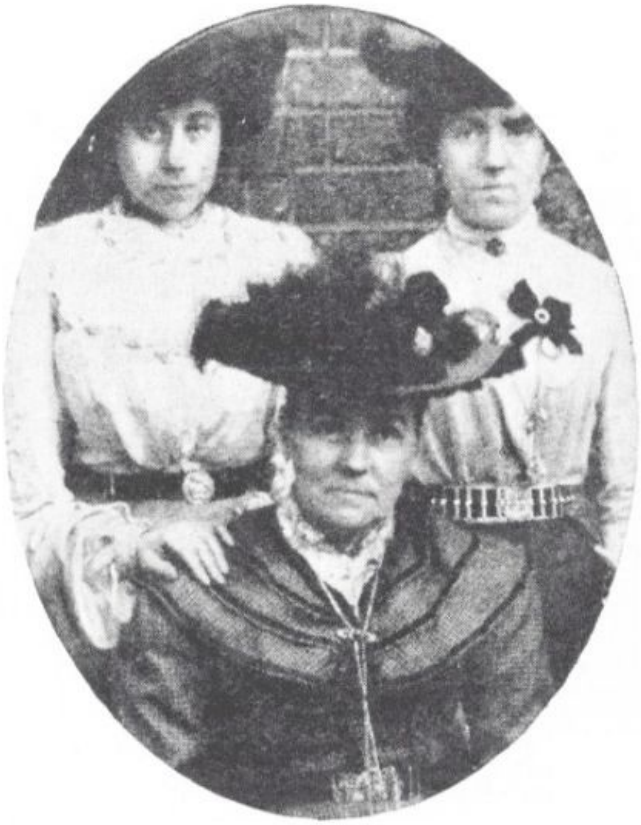
"I send you a photograph showing in two positions the curious amalgamation of coins by a flash of lightning. This incident occurred in a miner's hut in Swazieland some time in December, 1897, and the photograph represents money to the value of fourteen shillings and sixpence, viz., one half sovereign, four single shillings, and a sixpence. The money was placed on a table in the order given, the half-sovereign being under the other coins and lying on the face of the table. The hut was not injured by the lightning, as the fluid entered by the window and passed over the table (on which the coins were) and out at the open door. The table (in the centre of the hut and in a line with the window and door) had a badly scorched line over it. The money, after the flash, lay in exactly the same position as before; the only difference was its being fused into one mass instead of six different coins. At the time of the flash the miner happened to be absent."—Mr. A. E. Graham Lawrance, Barberton, Transvaal.

HOW DID IT GET THERE?



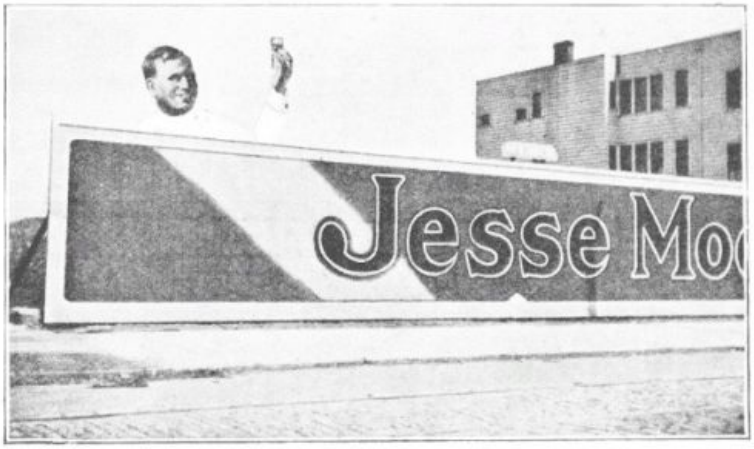
"I was cutting the corner off a gammon of bacon when I discovered I had sawn through a piece of glass which was lying quite close to and parallel with the thigh-bone, and had I known of its presence I could have taken it out whole. It measures, when put together, six and a quarter inches. How it got into this position is a mystery, as there was no indication of its progress anywhere and the meat was perfectly healthy and in no way discoloured. Whether the poor pig swallowed it or sat on it I leave for your readers to conjecture. Photo, by W. B. Gardner, Farnborough."—Mr. W. J. Buck, Cove Road, Farnborough, Hants.

A STRANGE ILLUSION.



"You will see in this photograph that the right arm of my daughter has got the hand on the wrong side, the thumb being where the little finger ought to be. This is accounted for by the photo, being vignetted, the hand really belonging to another daughter who does not appear in the picture."—Mr. Dorsay Ansell, Supt. St. George's Garden, Wakefield Street, W.C.

AN INGENIOUS ADVERTISEMENT.



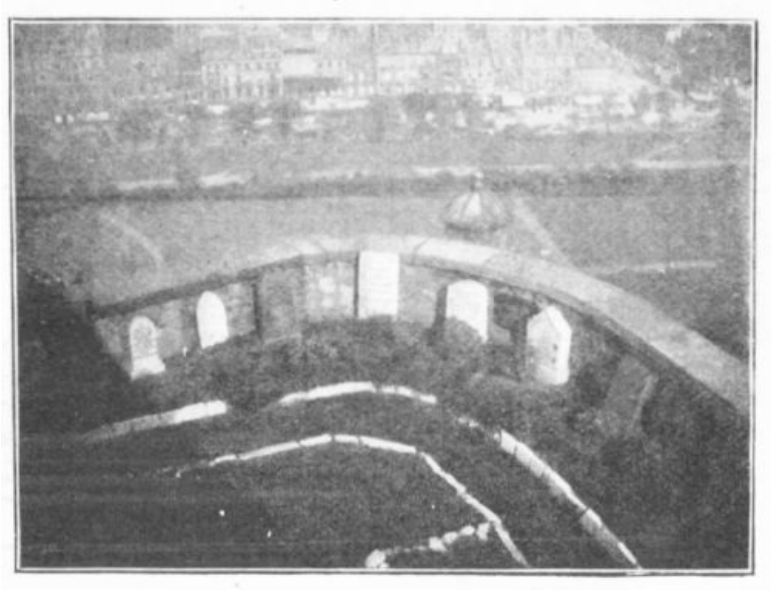
"The advertisement shown in the accompanying photograph—for some drink prepared by one Jesse Moore—is quite the cleverest I have seen in any American city. It is situated near the entrance to the Golden Gate Park, at San Francisco. The shoulders, head, and arms of the man appearing above the hoarding are cut out of wood and look most realistic, if somewhat gigantic, against the background of the sky, and the painting of the face is quite a work of art."—Mr. F. A. E. Dolmage, 243, Cromwell Road, South Kensington.

[120]

A NARROW ESCAPE.

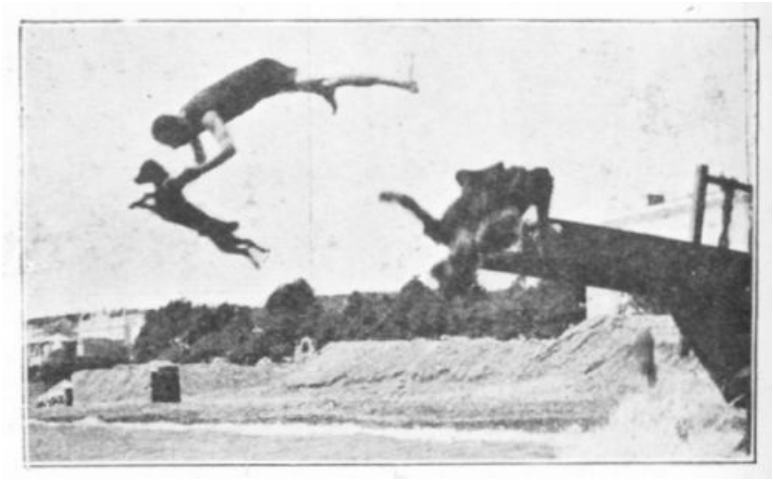
"An officer was resting and enjoying a nap after an exceedingly hard morning's drill. A flash of lightning first struck and doubled up his scabbard and thence passed to his mirror hanging close by, smashing it as the enclosed photo shows. I need hardly say this worthy gentleman, awaking so suddenly from his slumbers, scarcely knew for some time whether he was in China, South Africa, or good Old England."—Mr. F. E. Robinson, Sylvester House, Colchester.

CEMETERY FOR SOLDIERS' DOGS.



"Here is a photograph of the cemetery for soldiers' dogs at Edinburgh Castle. Judging from the inscriptions on the stones, each department seems to have had its favourite. The band pet was Tork; that of the pioneer section, Pat; the transport pet, Jess; and so on, including the general pets, such as Little Tom, Tum-Tum, etc."—Mr. E. Mallinson, 12, Golden Square, Aberdeen, N.B.

A DEVOTED DOG.



"The dog shown in the picture is exceedingly fond of his master and will follow him almost anywhere. The snap-shot reproduced here shows the dog actually diving off a board in company with his master, whilst a friend is turning a somersault behind."—Mr. J. de Tymowski, Stratford-Sub-Castle, Salisbury.

NOT SO TALL AS HE LOOKS.

"At first sight my photograph seems to be that of an immensely tall man, but in reality the legs of the giant belong to somebody else, while the top half is standing on a barrel."—Mr. H. S. Nicolson, Brough Lodge, Fetlar, Shetland.

Transcriber's notes:

P.77. 'tells it own tale', changed 'it' to 'it's'.

P.96. 'prongs of the fork'--changed 'fork' to 'forks'.

Fixed various punctuation.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other

medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™’s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation’s EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state’s laws.

The Foundation’s business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation’s website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary

Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.