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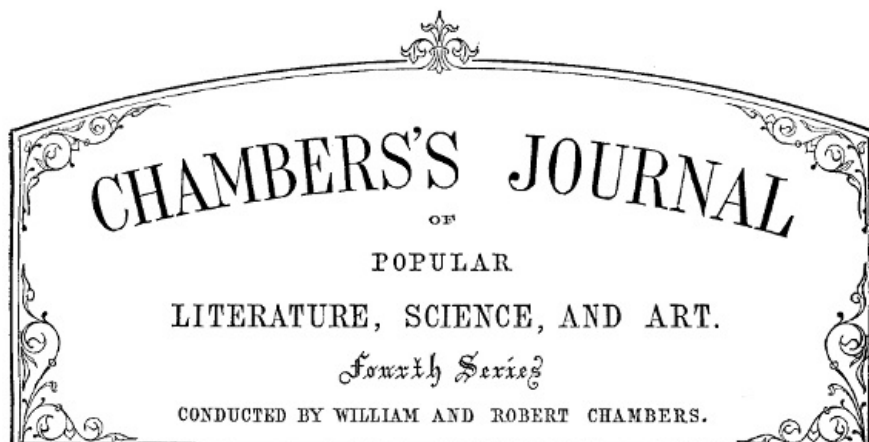
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**CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL
OF
POPULAR
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.
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THE GREEN FLAG OF THE PROPHET.

SINCE the commencement of the war between Russia and Turkey, the world has several times been startled by the announcement that the 'Flag of the Prophet' was about to be unfurled in the streets of Stamboul. Such an event, if it should happen (which may heaven avert), would proclaim a crusade in which all true Mussulmans would be bound to take an active part, and to fight against Christianity in every part of the world. They may be in India, Arabia, Egypt, or wherever else their scattered race has found a home; the raising of the green standard is a call which none may disobey without, as the Koran lays it down, sacrificing all his hopes of Paradise.

This fearful appeal to all the worst passions of the Eastern races hangs like a menace over the Mohammedan world; and if the word was once uttered and the dread flag unfurled, there is no telling to what sanguinary excesses it might lead an enthusiastic and half-savage people. It may be of interest to our readers if, under these circumstances, we endeavour to make them acquainted with the origin and history of a banner which has not seen the light of day since the Empress Catharine of Russia attempted to reinstate Christianity in the City of the Sultans, and which once unfurled, would set a whole world ablaze.

There have been many flags or signals used by various nations at different crises in their history to incite the peoples to battle on behalf of religions, dynasties, and ideas; but none has attained to the fearful notoriety which appertains to the terrible Flag of the Prophet, which is really a banner of blood, for it dispels the idea of mercy from the minds and hearts of its followers, and gives no quarter to man, woman, or child.

The Red Cross banner of the Christian Crusaders was an emblem of chivalry, mercy, gentleness, and love; but under its folds many a dark deed and many a shameless act were committed; and it was understood by the members of the Mohammedan faith to mean nothing less than the utter extermination of their race. This feeling, with its consequent hatred of Christianity, shews itself even at this advanced period in the world's history, by the recent refusal of the Turkish government to allow its ambulance corps and hospitals to bear the red cross of the Geneva Convention (a sign which is entirely neutral, and is designed to protect its wearers while they are engaged on their errands of mercy to the sick and wounded of both sides), adopting instead thereof their own emblem of the crescent. Thus we see these rival emblems once more waving over the field of battle, though, happily, to mitigate rather than increase the horrors of war.

In France the 'oriflamme' or golden sun upon a field of crimson signified 'no quarter;' but this celebrated Flag of the Prophet means infinitely more than this. It is a summons to an anti-Christian crusade, a challenge of every believer in the Prophet to arms; a war-signal in fact, which, like the Fiery Cross of Scotland, would flash its dread command through the domain of Islam. In the interests of humanity, however, we may hope that the 'Commander of the Faithful' will never utter the dreadful word; for then indeed would the whole soul and strength of Christendom turn against the enemy of all civilised laws, human and divine.

The Prophet himself predicted that one day when his followers should number a hundred millions—which they do now, with twenty millions more added to it—his flag should fly against the advancing power of the northern races; and the Koran or Mohammedan Bible says that when its silken folds are flung forth 'the earth will shake, the mountains melt into dust, the seas blaze up in fire, and the children's hair grow white with anguish.' This language is of course metaphorical; but it is easy to conceive, by the light of very recent history, that some such catastrophe might take place, as the displaying of this terrible symbol would raise a frenzy of fanaticism in the breasts of the Mohammedan race all over the globe.

The origin of the insignia is a curious one. Mohammed gazing out upon a vast prospect of fields, said: 'Nature is green, and green shall be my emblem, for it is everlasting and universal.' In course of time, however, it lost that innocent significance; and amid his visions, the great dreamer saw the Green Flag floating as a sign that all true believers should take up their arms and march against the Infidel; in fact the green turban was the sacred head-dress of the pilgrim or perfected Islamite who had gone to Mecca; and hence the sanctity of this formidable standard.

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When once unfurled, it summons all Islam by an adjuration from the Koran that the sword is the solitary emblem and instrument of faith, independence, and patriotism; that armies, not priests, make converts; and that sharpened steel is the 'true key to heaven or hell.' Upon that fearful ensign are inserted the words which are supposed to have been written at Mecca itself—namely, 'All who draw it [the sword] will be rewarded with temporal advantages; every drop shed of their blood, every peril and hardship endured by them, will be registered on high as more meritorious than either fasting or praying. If they fall in battle, their sins will be at once blotted out, and they will be transported to Paradise, there to revel in eternal pleasures in the arms of black-eyed houris. But for the first heaven are reserved those of the Faithful who die within sight of the Green Flag of the Prophet.' Then follow the terrible and all-significant words, the fearful war-cry against God and man: "Then may no man give or expect mercy!"

This is the outburst of barbarism with which the world is threatened in this year of grace 1877; and the reader cannot do otherwise than mark the cunning nature of the portentous words inscribed on the Prophet's banner. What would not most men do, civilised or savage, for 'temporal advantages?' While to the Eastern peoples fasting and praying are looked upon as of so meritorious a nature, that to find something else which, in the eyes of Allah, would be deemed of greater value still, would be a desideratum which none would fail to grasp, by any means whatever, if it came within their reach. But Mohammed's wonderful knowledge of human nature, and more especially of Eastern human nature, is shewn in his picture of Paradise as prepared for

the Faithful who fall in battle; while his declaration that the highest heaven in this so-called Paradise will be reserved for those who die within sight of the Green Flag, is a masterpiece of devilish policy unequalled in the annals of mankind.

It scarcely needed the fearful words which follow to add emphasis to this dreadful appeal to the passions of a semi-barbarous race. Another motto on this sacred flag is not without significance at the present time: 'The gates of Paradise are under the shade of swords;' and this alone would, if the flag were unfurled in the holy mosque of Constantinople, give to the Turk a moral power over his subordinates the effect of which it would be vain to calculate. Civilised though he partially is, he still firmly believes in the old doctrine of *kismet* or fatality, and in angels fighting on his behalf; not less implicitly than did his ancestors at the battle of Beder, where this formidable green standard was first unfurled. 'There,' says the historian, 'they elevated the standard, which Mohammed from his height in heaven blessed.'

Thus arose the great tradition of this sacred war-emblem, which it is a Turkish boast was never yet captured in battle, though it was once in extreme peril in a fight between hill and plain; when Mohammed himself had it snatched out of his hands. Ali, his kinsman, however, thrust himself in front of a hundred spears, and won the victory with the immaculate flag flying over his head.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that a race so superstitious as the Turks should attach an almost miraculous value to such a symbol of their past history and their present power. It is a spell wherever their race or religion flourishes, and its invocation in the serious form now menaced cannot be regarded without anxiety. The day of the military apostles of Mohammed may be past, it is true; but the tradition survives; and the unfurling of this flag might be the spark which would set fire to the latent enthusiasm of the Mohammedan race and involve the world in a religious war.

We have referred to the great French banner, the oriflamme; and it was that which led the French Crusaders through the Holy Land and headed the royal armies of France in the campaigns of the sixteenth century, while it also divided the Blue from the White in the Burgundian civil wars; but this Flag of the Prophet to-day exercises a magical influence over one hundred and twenty millions of the human race, scattered about in Arabia, Syria, Asia Minor, Persia, and Egypt, over the Nile and the Ganges, and from Jerusalem to the Red Sea.

The desire of Mohammed, however, was, that while all pilgrims whose task had been duly fulfilled should wear the green turban, no sovereign in his succession should unfurl the Green Flag of the Faith unless Islam were in imminent peril. The unfurling of the banner would be performed with great religious ceremony, and in the presence of the Commander of the Faithful, who is himself supposed to carry it at the head of his army; while a fearful curse would be called down upon the head of every Mohammedan who, capable of bearing arms, failed to rally round it.

The standard itself is not a very handsome one, and is surpassed both in value and appearance by many of the banners which belong to the various benefit societies and other mutual associations of men in this country. It is of green silk, with a large crescent on the top of the staff, from which is suspended a long plume of horse-hair (said to have been the tail of the Prophet's favourite Arab steed), while the broad folds of the flag exhibit the crescent and the quotations from the Koran already mentioned.

The state colour of one of our regiments of the Guards is a much prettier and more expensive standard than the great banner of Islam; but (to such small things is man's enthusiasm attached) if the latter was the veriest 'rag' in existence, nothing could mar the beauty which the prestige of more than a thousand years has given to it in the eyes of a Mussulman.

The Flag of the Prophet is kept in the mosque of St Sophia at Constantinople, and is in the custody of the Sheik-ul-Islam, or Mohammedan chief-priest, where all well-wishers of humanity may sincerely trust it will ever remain. {611}

FROM DAWN TO SUNSET.

PART II.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

DEBORAH and Mistress Dinnage were walking in the old garden, in the moonlight, on the mossed green walk along which they had played hound and hare in 'madder merrier days.' They walked slowly, arm in arm, talking plentifully and earnestly, and still the old difference shewed between them. Deborah, so cold with most of her own sex, and so wont to accept passively their enthusiastic tokens of affection and admiration, dealt only the most caressing tenderness to Margaret Dinnage; which Mistress Dinnage, on her part, returned with brusqueness and no outward show of affection whatever.

'I made him take it,' said Deborah. 'I know not what sore trouble had got hold of him. I think it was worse than need of money, or a greater debt than he has ever had before.'

'And he has gone to Master Sinclair? O Lady Deb, you should have made him see Sir Vincent first; though, good sooth, it is easier to preach than to practise, and it is no light task for ye to lead Master Fleming. But I, like you, abominate that old man. Whenever he rides up the chase, I

say to father: "Father, the old fox comes! He wishes no good to Enderby."

'I know it well; more strongly my heart tells me so each time. He comes for poor Deb Fleming; but time and coldness will soon unearth his cunning, and turn his hateful love to cruel hate.'

'Ay, and he will urge your brother on to ruin, in hopes of winning you.'

'O Mistress Dinnage, good Mistress Dinnage, say not so, so coldly! Sweet heart, how could this thing be? Marry the man who compassed my brother's ruin? You speak wisely!'

'Ah,' said Mistress Dinnage scornfully, 'you are blind; but I, shut out from all great folk's doings, can see and know them well. I can see how Master Sinclair, that old fox, would bring you and yours to *beggary*—ay, to shame—that he may say to ye: "Wed me; I will save your father and brother." *He* knows your love for them. *He* knows o' what stuff you're made. And indeed you'd be sore pressed between your love for them and your hate for Master Sinclair.'

'O Meg, say no more. You wrong me. I had rather see them *dead*. But what can I do? The swiftest horse would not catch Charlie now. O Mistress Dinnage, you have scared me, and I am not wont to be scared. What if Adam Sinclair drives him mad? gives him some great sum, and then has him up to pay it! No; stay! Charlie is not of age. But worse, if he refuses aid, and my poor boy flies the country. O merciful heaven!' Deborah stood with her hands clasped upon her head, and her eyes regarding Mistress Dinnage wildly.

'No,' said Mistress Dinnage thoughtfully; 'this will not be. If Master Fleming is in debt, old Adam Sinclair will give him the money needful, and draw him on and on; for the time's not come yet. Lady Deb, you must talk to him—to Master Fleming. You alone can save him, an' it's a down road he's goin'. If father hadn't spared the rod so oft, an' we hadn't screened him so oft from blame, this thing might not be. But that is past. If ye will save Master Fleming from utter ruin, *now* is the time.'

'Ay, you talk,' said Deborah scornfully; 'you had better turn a wild Arab horse afield, and bid me catch him. Don't I pray? Don't I plead to him—ay, till my very soul dissolves in words, to keep him at home from mad companions? What can I do? A sister cannot tether him. *Love* alone would save him.'

'Love? Ah, you speak to me o' what I know nothing; my heart, you know, is'—

'True as steel.'

'Ay, but as cold. But if a maiden's love indeed would save him, ask some one whom Master Fleming could love; ask Mistress Warriston; and he may come to love her.'

'Well; indeed he might. And May is an heiress too, and lovely. When Charlie cared not for her, he was a boy; and now he is grown a man, older than his years. Do you truly advise me to ask May here, who had indeed, we both thought long ago, some secret liking for my poor Charlie?'

'I don't advise,' quoth Mistress Dinnage. 'But, ask her.' Then again: 'Well, do as it pleases you. I won't advise. I know not if it would be for good or ill.'

'How could it be for ill?'

'It might break Mistress Warriston's heart, which is so tender!'

'How know you it is so tender?'

'Because it is worn upon her sleeve, and ever melts in tears.'

'I love her for that womanliness.'

The proud lip of Mistress Dinnage curled. 'Yes, it is well. Tears ease the heart, and ladies have time to weep.'

'*You* would never weep, whatever ailed ye. Oh, thou'rt a proud incomprehensible little maid. I would like to see thee well in love.'

'That ye never will.'

'Never boast. It is a sign of weakness, Mistress mine. But is there a doubt that Charlie Fleming would *not* love one so charming as May? Were I a man, I would worship her; and it is such bold spirits as his that love the soft and tender. Charlie *will not* woo; he looks askance to *be* wooed, and would love the maiden wooer! *I* know Charlie Fleming.'

'Then if he loves to be wooed,' said Mistress Dinnage, with a fierce scorn, 'let him seek it in the streets of Granta; fair enough women there, and ready too. I thought not that Master Fleming would love such kind!'

Deborah withdrew her arm from her companion's, and answered coldly: 'You offend me. You wilfully misunderstand me. But how can I look to be understood by one who knows no softness, no weakness of her sex! You have a hard, hard heart, Mistress Dinnage, if it be a noble one. The good *you* do is never done for love.'

'True enow, good sooth. But such poor love as ye describe, defend me from! It is water and milk at best. If God made me love, my love would lie so deep that the man who would win it must dig and dig to find it. Ay, hard!'

'Proud Mistress mine, do you value yourself thus highly?'

'Ay, I am a poor girl; but I have an honest heart, Mistress Fleming, and value it as highly as any lady in the land. He who loves, but thinks it not worth the winning, let him go; he who sets not

such store by my love, let him go; and if the right man never comes, let the others go! If Margaret Dinnage could have loved, it would have been thus with her; and the hidden unvalued love would live and die within one heart.'

'I know it, I know it!' cried Deborah impulsively. 'O noble heart! *this* is the kind of love I can feel for, for I have it beating here;' and Deborah laid her hand upon her own breast. 'One thing you lack, Meg—that would make you perfect. *Love!*' Pleading, earnest, sweet, significant, tender, emphatic, was the utterance of the last imperative word, and Deborah's arms were round her friend, and her upturned face upon Margaret's breast. So in the moonlight the girls stood: a fair picture, for the head of Mistress Dinnage was turned aside, and her grave dark eyes averted; and in that moment each proud heart was revealed to each. '*Let thyself love,*' continued Deborah, in her sweetest softest tones. 'Ye can be *too* proud, Mistress Dinnage. The day will come when ye will rue it bitterly. I would not urge ye, if I divined not the secret of another heart. Are you so blind that ye cannot see it too? The restlessness when you're not by; the wistful eye—that *I* dare not answer! O Mistress Dinnage, if Kingston Fleming had had *one* such look for me, in those old days, child as I was, I would have loved him before all the world, truly and unchangeably. Know ye not that I speak the truth? Would I urge ye to your ruin? When once a Fleming loves, he never loves but honourably. Then, his fate is not in *my* hands—but in thine.' There was silence. The last three words, though whispered, rang again and again in the listener's ears like music. What Mistress Dinnage thought then, was not told, but Deborah felt the wild heaving of her breast.

So a few moments passed, and Margaret put Deborah from her with firm but gentle hands. 'Talk no more of this,' she said, while they walked on. 'I will not be so stubborn as to seem ignorant of your meaning. But I do not think with you. No; do not speak, my sweet Mistress Deborah; no words will make us think alike. What! was it not so in the old days, that your heart would ever outrun your head, and ye *would* believe what ye longed for? Noble it is of ye to long for this; but Deborah Fleming, ye are like no other woman living, rich or poor. Ye are *yourself*; and I know you to be above all the littlenesses of woman-kind.'

Deborah blushed with pleasure. 'Hush, hush!' she said. 'This from you is too high praise; and dangerous, because you mean it all, and no flattery. But if it *is* noble to plead for one's dearest wish, and to choose above all rank and riches one's best and dearest friend, then I must be a very noble maid! But it seems to me simple nature, and no nobility. God has given me no ambition for great things; on the other hand, He has given me the power of loving faithfully; so that through all, with all her faults, never think but that Deborah Fleming will be true to her nature—true to those dearer than her own life!'

And then, Mistress Dinnage beginning, they talked of Kingston Fleming. A very frequent subject of conversation was he. It would not be fair to write all the nonsense that maidens will talk, even a Mistress Fleming and a Mistress Dinnage, for diamonds are found in dust. And they talked with great earnestness and gravity of the lace cap and discussed every minute point of dress; and what should be done if King Fleming came, and there was no host to receive him. Would he stay? Would it be seemly? Surely, with Dame Marjory—and much laughter even; for laughter and tears are near akin; and in April, sun follows showers.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

The next morning, Deborah, in her great saloon, was tending her flowers and thinking of Charlie, when she heard her father's step. With a rush she was out, and the sun streamed out with her through the open door.

'My Rose of Enderby, art smartening up! The lad Kingston will be here to-morrow.'

Deborah's treacherous heart gave a great leap. 'Who told you so?' she asked calmly.

'This scrawl. Why, Deb, ye must look gladder than that; he is your cousin, ye know: or have ye forgot him?'

Deborah read the note in silence, and then her busy bewildered thoughts flew off. Oh, she must be calm; this would never do; she must be 'Mistress Deborah Fleming,' receiving in all cousinly courtesy the affianced lover of Mistress Beatrix Blancheflower, her rival beauty in a rival county.

'Father,' said Deborah, with sudden laughing joy, 'I must have some guests to meet him. Why, I have seldom had a party here; a very little money will go a long long way to make this bright and gay, and you have a store of good old wine still left. Wine and flowers and *women*, father! What more do mortals want? And it will be returning Master Sinclair's generosity, which necessity weighs heavily on us, till it be paid. Oh, leave it to me, father, and you will think me a rare Mistress of Enderby!'

Sir Vincent looked round somewhat ruefully. '*Must* it be, sweet heart, and even to-morrow? It cannot be.'

'It can. Trust in me. Why, father, you will be the gayest of the gay, as ye always are at such times. Dost give consent?'

'Why yes, tyrant. But ask Adam Sinclair.'

'Trust me.' And Deborah was out and away to Dame Marjory and Mistress Dinnage. The lord of Lincoln for once would be welcomed!

It pleased Deborah to have a banquet in the hall and music in the saloon. Why, she had twenty pounds a year; and good lack! One could not *always* contemplate ruin. A Fleming was coming

home; they would 'kill the fatted calf.' Such pleasures were far between.

It was short notice, but willing messengers were soon afoot, and Granta was laid under requisition for guests. Deborah, happy and proud, sent the word to all invited guests that short notice was involuntary on her part; her cousin Kingston Fleming was coming home suddenly, and who could, must come and dance at Enderby. So what with Granta men and young belles of Deborah's age, and a few old dowagers and a few Adam Sinclairs, the party was made up. Deborah was lucky. She, in her sheeny lovely dress, was well-nigh worshipped by the men, she looked so full of life, so brilliant. But no Charlie! That was the one drawback; nor did Adam Sinclair know where he was, save that he had left Lincoln the day before in good spirits. Deborah knew in her heart what that meant. As she conversed, she looked full at Adam Sinclair, and felt to love all man and woman kind. The aged wooer trembled before the gracious girl; time only heightened his passion and hardened his determination to win Deborah Fleming at all hazards. The county had already begun to whisper about his infatuation and her coldness.

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Eyes enough were upon them though, and the dowagers decided that so far from being 'cold,' Deborah Fleming encouraged him by every means in her power.

'Mistress Fleming,' he whispered ardently, 'give me some token to-night—some slight token of favour. Your eyes look kind to-night. Give me that rose.'

Deborah glanced at the red rose in her breast. 'This rose, Master Sinclair? Nay; not this: there are a thousand others in the garden. Marjory shall bring ye one.'

'I covet this one, Mistress Fleming, warm from your heart. What is it to you? And *I* would give a hundred crowns to possess it.'

'It would seem perchance a love-token, and those I never give.'

'Ye are obdurate.'

Deborah turned away from those gleaming eyes. 'I am honest,' she said.

'Mistress Leyton,' said Adam Sinclair, turning with a courtly smile to an old dame who was sitting near, drinking elder-berry wine and listening open-eared, 'will ye not plead my cause? Here is Mistress Fleming will give me nought. And what do I ask? Nothing, but that red rose from her gown.'

'What would you do in my place, Mistress Leyton?' asked Deborah.

'Why, if I favoured Master Sinclair, I would give him the rose.'

'You put it very strongly,' laughed Deborah. 'But you have released me from my strait, for I could neither be so bold as to *favour* Master Sinclair nor so rude as to shew him none; so I give my rose to you.'

'Keep it, child; it looks so lovely. It suits too thy name—Rose of Enderby.'

'Mistress Leyton, you must bring this Rose to Lincoln one day,' said Adam Sinclair. 'Now do this much for me, for old acquaintance' sake!'

'But will Mistress Deborah come?'

'I know not,' answered Deborah, smiling. 'What I would like now, I may not like to-morrow.'

'Thou art a spoiled child and a wilful one.'

'Yes; I fear me it is so. But Master Sinclair, I am not ungracious.'

'I think ye are. Come one moment to this window.' He led Deborah into the recess, and asked her to gather him a rose, a red rose. The brilliant lights flashed athwart them; near by stood a bevy of young and scowling men; the roses were laughing and fluttering about the casement. The tall old figure was bending down, and Deborah, gay yet reluctant, and looking gloriously beautiful, raised her eyes to present the gift, when Kingston Fleming entered.

He had heard enough on the way about 'Mistress Deborah Fleming' and 'Master Sinclair;' all rumours united their names, till he knew not what to believe, but laughed and wondered. So, with his old indolent curiosity, he looked up at Enderby, and saw lights gleam through the great windows, heard music, and saw dancing forms flit by. He raised his glass, and laughed. 'Why, Deb is queening it right royally! I imagine Master Sinclair is among the guests.' And wondering at it all, and greatly edified, Master Kingston Fleming, having first put his travelling-dress in some slight order, was conducted by Dame Marjory along the gallery. 'Are they often so gay, Marjory?' he asked, laughing at her grim but important countenance.

'*Never, never*, Master King! Bless thee, no. There are lonesome hours enow at Enderby, an' Master Charlie never here. This is a whim of the young mistress to welcome *thee*, Master King;' and her features relaxed into a grim smile. 'She has such a whim now and again.'

So Kingston Fleming entered, and saw the picture we have drawn. From that moment the mad young hoyden faded for ever from Kingston's mind, into the stately beauty who stood there. She turned, the colour flushed to her cheeks and light sprang to her eyes. 'Kingston!'

'Why, Deb! But "*little* Deb" no longer. How changed! I scarce know you.'

Then Sir Vincent came forward, and they were parted, for Mistress Fleming had duties to fulfil. But ever Kingston's eyes followed her, though she had no eyes for him. Then there was the dancing, and all were seeking Deborah; she was surrounded; and often she saw herself in the tall old mirrors, and her beauty flashed on her like a surprise. Deborah Fleming carried all before her

that night; she sang—that was her one perfect gift; she had a splendid voice, and sang with power and sweetness, and some deep emotion threw passion into her song that night. Then there was the supper, when Adam Sinclair sat on Deborah's right hand. Then another measure. But Kingston would not dance, though he loved it with enthusiasm. Then there was the hour of two tolled out from the chimes of Enderby, and the last carriage rolled away.

'Come down and smoke a pipe, boy,' said Sir Vincent; and Kingston said he would follow.

Deborah, tired, but strangely happy, had thrown herself on a sofa. 'Not yet, King,' said she. 'You have been away for two long years; you have much to tell me, sure. You have seen May Warriston?'

'Ay; in a picture-gallery at Florence.'

'Was she changed?'

'She was prettier and graver. I even thought little May somewhat staid and prim; but then old Guardy was at her elbow.'

'Did she speak of me—of us?'

'Of you, a hundred times.'

'Sweet May! And you, Kingston'—Deborah blushed and hesitated—'you have come from Rimbolton?'

'Yes.'

(Why would he not speak, and aid her?) Deborah continued shyly: 'And is—Mistress Blanche-flower well?'

'I thank ye, very well.'

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Deborah could say no more anent that. 'Are you changed, King, in looks? Let me see.' She bent forward, and laid one hand upon his. 'Nay; the old comic King, with whom I oftentimes quarrelled sore; only browner, thinner, graver too, as I see thee now.'

'Cares o' the world, Deb. Where is boy Charlie?'

'Nay; I know not.' What a sudden paleness and abstraction overspread the sweet face! 'Charlie is much away, Kingston. I hope you will see him and talk to my dear boy like a good kinsman. Charlie needs a sterling friend.'

Kingston looked grave, thinking perhaps how far he himself had led Charlie from the straight and narrow track. He answered gaily, however: 'Oh, he is young yet. Charlie promised to be a fine fellow in the end; and with his talents, we must make something of him. Don't despair, Deb.'

'Nay; I never despair.'

'I hear that he is a friend of Master Adam Sinclair's.'

'Yes. Didst hear that at Rimbolton?'

'Yes; and elsewhere too.'

'Then ye have doubtless heard most tidings?'

'Yes, Deb. Tidings spread like wild-fire on a country-side; but I don't credit all I hear, or I should believe ye to be betrothed to Adam Sinclair.'

'When I tell you, you may believe that, not till then,' answered the maiden.

Then followed a long silence, and Kingston looked on vacancy through the fading rose on Deborah's breast. O irrevocable past! O vague dark future! 'You used to hate me, Deb,' said he suddenly, at last.

'Ay? Did I? Well, perhaps I hate you now.'

'Perhaps you are grown a little hypocrite, as you give me kind smiles in place o' former frowns.'

'That is a necessary duty. I smile at Master Sinclair.'

'There is no disguise *there*. It springs from the heart, Deb.'

'You can read my heart then? No; I do not hate you, Kingston; I love you as my kinsman and my brother's truest friend.'

'Not always his true friend, Deb,' said Kingston quickly. 'Don't give me more than my due.'

'Well, I don't hate you for your candour, but rather love you, King.'

'Dost love me, Deb?' Kingston Fleming looked up strangely and suddenly from under his long love-lock with his old arch smile, but there was a wistful sadness in it too.

Deborah blushed scarlet at the sudden question. 'Love ye?' she begged curtly, to hide her confusion. 'Ay, well enough. We *shall* be friends, I know. We will quarrel no more, King; we two *must* be friends.'

'Friends, sweet heart—*friends*?' What ailed him as he murmured these words? He seemed like one distraught. Springing up, he paced to and fro the long length of the saloon, then stopped before the maiden.

'Well, good-bye, Deb. I am tongue-tied in thy presence. I had better go. Kiss me!'

Deborah blushed. 'Nay; I never did that.'

'Is that a reason ye *never* should?' And Kingston stooped and kissed her.

He was gone. Was it pleasure or pain that caused Deborah's heart to beat so wildly?

'Oh, this must not be,' she exclaimed passionately. 'This shall not be. I love him madly. And he? Oh, shame on me, to let him do this thing, and trifle with me thus! He, affianced meantime to Mistress Blancheflower; and thinks the while to play with Deborah Fleming's heart!' The girl started up, and paced where Kingston had paced before her. '*Two* can play at this,' she said. 'Ah, Master King Fleming, if ye think to lower a Fleming's pride, it shall go hardly with ye! But if ye mean well, I will bless thy future, and still love thee—as neither friend nor foe.' Deborah's voice sank to a whisper of unutterable tenderness. "Friends, sweet heart—*friends*?" What meant he by that, but to put vain and wicked love-thoughts in my head? Can I believe thee so dishonoured, Kingston? Thou, whom I thought the soul of honour! It cannot be. But I will watch thee well. Love thee as a *friend*, forsooth! It is Deborah Fleming's curse to have a heart true to one life-long love, one long unmaidenly love—because unsought, uncared for. Ah me! I fear myself. I dare not think on Mistress Blancheflower, lest I seek to do her some grievous harm. I dare not think on that marriage-day. O Beatrix Blancheflower, do ye love him well? So well, that ye are worthy of my sacrifice? Ah! why did King Fleming come here! For the love of honour and of good faith to Mistress Blancheflower, I will estrange him from me.'

ITALIAN VAGRANT CHILDREN.

LITTLE Giovanni Alessandro Bosco, the bright-eyed Italian boy who has a couple of white mice to attract the attention of passers-by, or believes that kind folks will perchance give a copper for hearing a tune played on a small barrel-organ, is not perhaps aware that he has risen to the dignity of being officially noticed. In other words, Italian organ-boys, image-boys, street exhibitors, and appellants to a compassionate public, have been the subject of correspondence between the diplomatists of Italy and those of England. The despatches or communications have lately been published in a blue-book or parliamentary paper; shewing that European governments are now alive to sympathies which would have had but little chance of manifesting their presence in an earlier and ruder state of society.

About three years and a half ago, we gave an account of what had come under our knowledge in Italy concerning the deportation of Italian boys as beggars or exhibitors. We stated that 'Much to its credit, the parliament of Italy have before them a bill to abolish the system of apprenticing children of less than eighteen years of age to strolling trades or professions, such as mountebanks, jugglers, charlatans, rope-dancers, fortune-tellers, expounders of dreams, itinerant musicians, vocalists or instrumentalists, exhibitors of animals, and mendicants of every description, at home or abroad, under a penalty of two pounds to ten pounds for each offence, and from one to three months' imprisonment. It is to be trusted that this will shortly become law, and so put an end to one of the most crying evils of our time.' Subsequent facts shew that, although this law has passed in Italy, and may in that country be producing some good results, it has not in any way lessened the number of vagrant Italian children seen in the streets of London and other English towns. How it happens that the remedial measure has not relieved our shores from this incubus, we will explain presently; but it may be well first to summarise a few of the statements in the former article, sufficient to shew the mode in which this cruel traffic is carried on.

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In years gone by, when Italy was split up into a number of kingdoms, dukedoms, and petty states, very little attention was paid to the general welfare of the people; the peasants and small cultivators were often so hardly driven that the support of a family became a serious responsibility; and a people, naturally kind rather than the reverse, were tempted to the adoption of a course from which their better feeling would have revolted. They did not actually *sell* their children, but they apprenticed them off for a time, on the receipt of a sum of money. The *padroni* or masters, to whom the children were apprenticed, were men whose only sympathy was for themselves and their own pockets; they made specious promises, and got the poor young creatures, eight years old or so, into their hands. Too often, the parents never saw the children again, and remained quite ignorant of their fate. It was not in Italy that the scoundrels kept their victims; they mostly crossed the Alps into France, whence many of them found their way to England. Or else they were shipped at Genoa, and conveyed at cheap rates to such shores as seemed likely to be most profitable to the *padroni*. As these men acquire an accurate knowledge of the extent to which sheer open beggary is illegal in this or that country, they adopt a blind, by turning the poor children into exhibitors of white mice, marmots, or monkeys. Advanced a little in age and experience, the boys are intrusted with small organs, and perhaps later with organs of larger size. Those whose strength of constitution enables them to bear a life of hardship during the so-called apprenticeship can sometimes obtain an organ on hire from one of the makers of those instruments, and become itinerant organ-grinders on their own account. But there is reason to fear that the poor boys too often succumb to the treatment they receive, and die at an early age. As to what befalls the girls thus expatriated, another sad picture would have to be drawn.

No resident in London, no visitor to London, need be told of the organ nuisance. Some of the organs, it is true, are really of excellent tone, and play good music; but they become a pest in this way—that the men, taking note of the houses whence they have obtained money, stop in front of

those houses more and more frequently, in the hope of being paid, if not for playing, at least for going away. Some of these organ-men have been organ-boys who came over with *padroni*.

And now for the diplomatic correspondence relating to this subject.

In 1874 the Chevalier Cadorna, Italian Minister at the Court of St James's, addressed a communication to the Earl of Derby relating to these wretched and ill-used children. He stated that a law had been passed in Italy, the success of which would depend largely on the co-operation of other governments. It had been ascertained that in many provinces of that country parents lease or lend their children for money; boys and girls under eight years of age, who are taken by vile speculators to foreign lands, there to be employed as musicians, tumblers, dancers, exhibitors of white mice, beggars, &c. It is a white slave-trade, in which the unfeeling parents participate. London is especially noted for the presence of these unfortunates; the *padroni* or masters find that a good harvest may be made out of the injudicious because indiscriminate charity of the metropolis. 'Miserable it is for the children,' says M. Cadorna, 'if they fail any day to obtain the sum which their tyrants require from them! This is the reason why we often see them wandering about till late at night, exhausted by fatigue and hunger, rather than return to the lodgings where they dread ill-treatment of various kinds from their pitiless masters.' The police magistrates of London are frequently occupied in listening to the complaints of these poor creatures. But no: this is hardly the case; for the victims are generally afraid to make their sorrows known, lest they should suffer still worse from the vengeance of their taskmasters; sometimes, however, they are too ill from bad treatment to conceal their misery; while at other times they are taken up for begging. Who knows? perhaps the poor things receive better food and lodging during a few days' imprisonment—certainly better in a reformatory or a workhouse—than in the squalid rooms which their tyrants provide for them.

The Italian government are endeavouring to check the evil at its source or fountain-head; making the leasing of children by their parents illegal. If this does not produce a cure, then they are endeavouring to watch the slave-traders (as we may truly call them), and forbid them to carry their victims across the frontier or out to sea. When the Chevalier Cadorna made his communication to the Earl of Derby, the new law had been too recently passed to supply evidence of its practical effect; but he pointed to the fact that the law could not meet with full success unless foreign governments would render aid, by making this kind of Italian slavery unlawful in the countries to which the *padroni* bring their little victims. A suggestion was made that the Extradition convention, signed between England and Italy, might possibly be made to take cognizance of this state of things. Not so, it appears. The Home Secretary, when appealed to, stated that traffic in children is not within any of the crimes named in the English Extradition Acts. 'It appears to Mr Cross that the source of the evil arises in Italy, and that measures might be there adopted for preventing the egress from that country of such children as are described in the letter of the Italian Minister. He supposes that it would be competent to the Italian government to decline to grant passports for such children, and thus prevent their crossing the Italian frontier. There is no power to prevent such children from landing in this country. All that can be done is to protect them from any cruelty or ill-treatment on the part of *padroni*; and Mr Cross is assured that the metropolitan magistrates are most anxious to carry out that object, and that they are very desirous to abate the evils as far as our laws empower them to do so.'

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So the matter rested for a time. Three years later, in May of the present year, the subject was mentioned in the House of Commons; and the Italian Minister, General Menabrea (successor to the Chevalier Cadorna), informed the Earl of Derby that the Italian government cannot effect all they wish in preventing the exodus of the *padroni* and their victims. 'It is easy for them to elude the vigilance of the authorities; for passports being now practically abolished from Italy to France, and thence to England, the traffickers in children can, by expatriating themselves, relieve themselves from the punishments they have incurred.'

Thus the inquiry ended nearly as it began, so far as definite conclusions are concerned. England is very chary of making restrictions on the freedom of entry of foreigners on our shores. Deposed emperors and kings, princes in trouble, defeated presidents and past presidents, persecuted ecclesiastics, patriots out of work—all find an asylum in little England; and many things would have to be taken into account before our government could legally forbid the Italian children and their *padroni* from setting foot on English ground.

No one can glance habitually through the daily newspapers without meeting with cases illustrating the condition of the poor Italian children. Some months back the magistrates of North Shields had a boy and a girl brought before them charged with begging. The fact came out in evidence that their *padrone* had bought or farmed them of their parents, and brought them to England. Marianna Frametta was fourteen years of age, Marcolatto Crola eleven. He had bought or rather leased them for twelve months, at ten pounds each: his calculation being that this sum, four shillings a week, would be amply covered, and much more, after providing them with board and lodging, by their earnings. They usually, it appears, got from nine to fifteen shillings a *day* by begging, possibly with the addition of some small pretence to an exhibition of white mice. If they brought home less than ten shillings each, they were beaten instead of fed at night. These sums appear strangely large; but so stands the record. It is satisfactory to know that the fellow was punished with imprisonment and hard labour for his cruelty. But what would eventually be the life of the children themselves? They were sent to the workhouse for temporary shelter, food, and medical treatment; these could only last for a time; and the youngsters would still be aliens, without definite occupation or means of livelihood.

There can be no doubt that the English habit of giving small sums of money to people in the streets and at the street doors has something to do with this matter. It may be due to a kind

motive, but it unquestionably increases the number of applicants, and opposes a bar to the endeavours of governments and legislatures to bring about an improvement. Nevertheless it is quite right that all should be done that can be done to prevent ruthless speculators from bringing over poor Italian children to our shores, and then treating them like veritable slaves. This should all the more sedulously be attended to, because the *padroni* (so far as concerns the metropolis) live almost exclusively in one district, around Hatton Garden and Leather Lane. The narrow streets, courts, and alleys in that vicinity are crowded with them; every room in some of the houses being occupied by a distinct Italian batch, crowded together like pigs in a sty, and forming hotbeds of disease. When the 'Health Act' and the 'Lodging-Houses Act' gave the police power to enter such wretched apologies for dwellings, fearful scenes of this kind were brought to light. Matters are gradually being improved, but only by dint of constant vigilance.

Evidently there is an anxiety on the part of the Home Secretary to do all in his power to suppress the scandal, as is evidenced by the following circular, addressed to the police authorities of the metropolis: 'The attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the practice under which children bought or stolen from parents in Italy or elsewhere are imported into this country by persons known by the name of *padroni*, who send them into the streets to earn money by playing musical instruments, selling images, begging, or otherwise. It is most important to suppress this traffic by every available means, and Mr Cross relies on the vigilant co-operation of the police for this purpose. In many cases the employer will be found to have committed an offence against the Vagrant Act, 5 George IV. cap. 88, by procuring the child to beg. If so, he should be forthwith prosecuted, and the result of such prosecution should be made the subject of a special report to the Secretary of State. The child will probably come within the provisions of the 14th section of the Industrial Schools Act, 1866 (29 and 30 Vic. cap. 118), either under the first clause (as a child begging alms), or under the second clause (as a child wandering and without proper guardianship). An application should therefore be made to the justices for the child to be sent to a certified industrial school. Further application should be made, under section 19, for the temporary detention of the child in the workhouse until the industrial school has been selected, information being at once communicated to the Secretary of State, in order that, if requisite, he may render assistance in making the necessary arrangements. The final result of each case should also be reported to the Home Secretary.'

In conclusion, we are glad to see from the newspapers that the Brighton School Board, by enforcing the provisions of the Elementary Education Act, have been successful in terrifying the *padroni* who bring Italian vagrant children to the town, and thereby have banished them with their unhappy victims. The circumstance offers a good hint to local authorities. Rigidly apply the School Act, and we shall probably hear no more of the infamous practice of importing Italian children for vicious purposes.

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MAJOR HAMMOND'S RING.

'WHAT'S this?' cried Miss Hammond, breaking open a letter just handed to her by a servant. 'You read it, Maggie; your eyes are better than mine.'

Small wonder at that indeed, seeing that Maggie is aged about eighteen, and the other sixty-five at the very least, a pleasant-looking, well-preserved spinster, with a brown resolute face and sausage curls over the forehead. Maggie, a handsome modern girl, sits down and reads:

MADAM—The parishioners of St Crispin, Gigglesham, in vestry assembled, have determined to rebuild their parish church, pronounced unsafe by the surveyors. Contributions are earnestly requested. The alterations will necessitate the removal of many vaults and graves; among others, that of the Hammond family. It is the wish of the churchwardens to respect the wishes of survivors and others in the disposal of the remains. Any directions you may have to give, you will be good enough to communicate to the undersigned.—Your most humble obedient servants,

THOMAS TRUSCOTT,
WILLIAM BONNER,
Churchwardens.

The two Misses Hammond (Margaret and Ellen) are joint proprietors of the comfortable estate of Westbury, near Gigglesham, and of the handsome mansion thereto belonging. Maggie, the young girl, is a distant cousin—although she calls them 'aunt'—and lives with them. There is also a young man, Ralph Grant, somewhere about the place, of whom more anon.

Old Tom Hammond, the father of the two maiden sisters, was born in the year 1740, and might have seen the heads over Temple Bar after the rising of 1745. He lived till 1830. He had married late in life, and left only these two daughters. Thus two generations bridged over a space of time generally occupied by many successive lives; as in the case of another branch of the family, the founder of which, Major Richard Hammond (the uncle of the two old ladies), who had been at the capture of Quebec when General Wolfe was killed, being the great-grandfather of Maggie Lauderdale and Ralph Grant. Major Hammond was the elder of the two brothers, and should have inherited the Westbury estate; but he offended his father, General John Hammond, by what was called a low marriage, and was disinherited in consequence.

Tom Hammond had done his best to remedy his father's injustice, as far as he could without injuring himself and his own, by making a settlement of the estate, in failure of his own issue, upon the lawful descendants of Major Hammond, his brother; providing that if the issue of his elder brother should fail, the estate should go to the issue of a younger brother Henry, who, by the way, had been well provided for by the small estate of Eastbury. This brother Henry was now represented through the female line by a Mr Boodles of Boodle Court, who now also held the Eastbury estate.

The descendants of Major Hammond are now confined to these two young people, Maggie and Ralph. They are both orphans and without means, their forebears having been mostly in the soldiering and official lines. Ralph is a lieutenant in the artillery, and his battery is now in India; but he is at home on sick-leave; and he has taken advantage of his furlough to win the affections of his fair cousin. As the Westbury estate would come to be eventually divided between them, it was considered a most fortunate thing that the young people had come to an understanding. Ralph was to leave the service when he married, and take the home-farm. By-and-by he would fall naturally into his position as country squire; and it was arranged that eventually he should assume the name of Hammond; hoping to continue the old line.

This preamble being necessary, let us now return to the comfortable old-fashioned drawing-room at Westbury.

'What do you think of that, Ellen?' cried Miss Hammond, having read over once more the circular to herself with subdued emphasis. Miss Ellen was sitting looking into the fire, her great wooden knitting-pins and bright-coloured wools lying idle on her lap, as she shook her head while talking gently to herself.

'Do you hear, Ellen?' cried Miss Hammond more sharply. 'What do you think of that letter from Truscott?'

'I don't like the idea at all, Margaret. No, not at all. Why can't they leave our ancestors alone? And I am sure I always looked forward to being buried there myself.'

'La! don't talk about that, Ellen, and you five years the younger!' said Miss Hammond briskly; 'and as we can't prevent its being done, we must make the best of it. Ralph had better go and see to it.'

'Very well, sister; as you like,' said Ellen. Presently she resumed: 'Sister, I've been thinking that this would be a good chance to try to get back Uncle Richard Hammond's ring.'

'Uncle Hammond's ring!' repeated the elder sister. 'I don't understand.'

'You must have heard our father talk about it. The family ring that ought to have gone with the estates—a ruby and sapphire that General Hammond brought home from Ceylon.'

'I ought to know all about it Ellen, I daresay; but you were so much more with my poor father, and had more patience with his stories.'

'My father often tried to get the ring, and had offered to give Major Hammond a large sum for it. But he was so vexed with father for supplanting him, that he vowed he never should have it; and they say, sister, that rather than it should ever fall into his brother's hands, he had it buried with him, upon his finger. Our father always said that if he had a chance he would have the coffin opened to see.'

Maggie, who had retreated to a sofa, and buried her head in a novel, roused up at this, and joined in: 'I hope you will, auntie. I do hope you'll have it looked for.'

'I don't know, my dear,' said Miss Hammond. 'I don't approve of violating the sanctity of the tomb.'

With the elder Miss Hammond, a phrase was everything; she delighted to bring a thing within the compass of a well-rounded phrase, upon which she would then make a stand—invincible. So Maggie threw up her head in a kind of despair, and ran off to look for Ralph, who when last heard of was smoking a cigar on the terrace. {618}

'Ralph!' said Maggie as soon as she had found him, and had submitted to a very smoky kiss—they were in the heyday of their young loves, when kisses were appreciated, even when flavoured with tobacco—'Ralph! auntie is going to give you a commission—to go and see about a vault at St Crispin's where some of our ancestors lie.'

'I know,' said Ralph; 'they are going to pull the old place down. All right; I'll do it.'

Then Maggie went on to tell him about the ring, and how Miss Hammond would not have it searched for. 'But it is a very valuable ring—a family one too. It would be a great pity to miss it, if it's really there.'

Ralph agreed.

'Well, then, mind you look for it, sir; only don't say a word to auntie, or she'll put a stop to it.'

'I'm fly,' said Ralph, with a knowing wink, and attempted a renewal of the oscillatory process; but Maggie escaped him this time, and came fleeing in at the dining-room window panting into the presence of her aunts.

Since she first left the room, a visitor had appeared—a Mr Boodles, a distant relative, who had inherited some of the family property, as before explained; a tall grim-looking man, with thin iron-gray hair, carefully brushed off his temples.

The aunts were looking rather serious, not to say frightened, and both started guiltily when they saw Maggie.

'Leave us, my dear, please,' said Miss Hammond gently.

Maggie had just caught the words, 'No marriage at all,' from Mr Boodles, who seemed to be speaking loudly and excitedly; and she went out wandering what it all meant. Some piece of scandal, no doubt, for Boodles was the quintessence of spitefulness.

'It is very dreadful—very,' said Miss Hammond. 'I never had much opinion of Uncle Richard, you know; but for the sake of the young people, I hope you'll let it be kept a profound secret.'

'Sake of the young people!' screamed Boodles at the top of his harsh voice. 'And what for the sake of old Boodles? I'm the next heir, you'll remember, please, through my maternal grandfather, Henry Hammond.'

Mr Boodles had come to Westbury to announce an important discovery that he had recently made. In turning over some of his grandfather's papers he had come across some letters from General Hammond, in which it was firmly asserted that his son Major Hammond had never been legally married to the woman known as his wife.

'What end do you propose to serve, Mr Boodles, by bringing this ancient scandal to light?' asked Miss Hammond with agitated voice.

'End!' cried Boodles. 'This is only the beginning of it. I am going to a court of law to have myself declared heir to the Westbury estates under the settlement.'

'In that case,' said Miss Hammond, rising with dignity, 'you cannot be received on friendly terms in my house.'

'Oh, very well, very well,' cried Boodles, snatching up his hat and whip, and sweeping out of the room without further ceremony.

As soon as the door had shut upon him the sisters looked at each other in blank consternation.

'I always feared there would be a difficulty,' said Ellen tremulously; 'but oh, to think of Boodles having discovered it!'

'We must send for Smith at once; the carriage shall go in and fetch him,' said Miss Hammond, ringing the bell.

Mr Smith of Gigglesham was the family solicitor, and the carriage was sent off to bring him up at once for a consultation. But Smith brought little encouragement. He had heard from his father that there were curious circumstances attending Major Hammond's marriage, and if Boodles had put his finger on the flaw— Smith shrugged his shoulders for want of words to express the awkwardness of the case.

'But search must be made everywhere; the evidence of the marriage must be found; the children must not suffer, poor things, and always brought up to look upon the property as their own!'

'Why, they could never marry,' cried Miss Ellen; 'they could never live on Ralph's pay.'

'It's altogether dreadful; and not getting married is the very lightest part of the calamity,' said Miss Hammond.

Smith undertook that every possible search should be made, and went away, promising to set to work at once. But his inquiries had no result. He had traced out the family of the reputed wife, who had been the daughter of a small farmer living at Milton in Kent; but they had now fallen to the rank of labourers, and had no papers belonging to them, hardly any family traditions. He had searched all the registries of the neighbouring parishes: no record of such a marriage could be discovered. He had issued advertisements offering a reward for the production of evidence: all of no avail. What more could he do? To be sure there was a presumption in favour of the marriage; but then if Boodles had documents rebutting such a presumption— Again Mr Smith shrugged his shoulders, in hopelessness of finding fitting words to represent the gravity of the crisis. 'And then,' he went on to say, 'the very fact that Boodles is spending money over the case shews that he thinks he has a strong one.'

Boodles did not let the grass grow under his feet; he instituted proceedings at once, and cited all interested to appear. The thing could no longer be kept a secret; and Maggie and Ralph were told of the cloud that had come over their fortunes.

'I don't care if the property does go away,' said Maggie bravely. 'It will make no difference. I shall go to India with Ralph, that's all. I will be a soldier's wife, and go on the baggage-wagons.'

Ralph shook his head. He had never been able to manage on his pay when there was only himself, and there were ever so many lieutenants on the list before him, so that he could not hope to be a captain for many years.

There was no use in sitting brooding over coming misfortunes; and Ralph took the dogcart and drove over to Gigglesham, to see about the family vault at St Crispin's. It was an occupation that agreed well with his temper; the weather too seemed all in keeping—a dull drizzling day.

'Don't forget the ring,' Maggie had said to him at parting; 'that is ours, you know Ralph, if we find it; and perhaps it may be worth a lot of money.' {619}

Ralph shook his head incredulously. And yet it was possible. The ring might be there, and it might prove of great value. In misfortunes, the mind grasps at the smallest alleviations, and Ralph consoled himself in his depression by picturing the finding of a splendid ruby worth say ten

thousand pounds. No more artillery-work then—no more India.

Gigglesham boasts of several churches, and St Crispin's lies in a hollow by the river, close to the bridge. A low squat tower and plain ugly nave. But in its nook there—the dark river flowing by, the sail of a barge shewing now and then, the tall piles of deals in the timber-yard beyond, the castle-keep frowning from the heights, and the big water-mill with its weirs and rapids, the noise of which and of the great churning wheel sounded slumbrously all day long—allied with these things, the old church had something homely and pleasant about it, hardly to be replaced by the finest modern Gothic.

Workmen were swarming about it now. The roof was nearly off. There were great piles of sand and mortar in the graveyard. Mr Martin, the plumber and glazier, who took the most lively interest in the underground work, even to the neglect of more profitable business, was on the look-out for Lieutenant Grant, and greeted him cheerily.

'We've got 'em all laid out in the vestry, Cap'n Grant, all the whole family; and now the question is, what are you going to have done with them? Would you like 'em put in the vaults below, where they'll all be done up in lime and plaster? or would you like 'em moved somewhere else—more in the open air, like?'

'The least expensive way, I should say,' replied Ralph grimly. Somehow or other his appreciation of his ancestors was deadened by this last stroke of fate in cutting him adrift from his succession. 'But look here, Martin,' he went on, taking the plumber aside; 'there is one of the coffins, Major Hammond's, I should like to have opened. It can be done?'

'Easy enough, sir,' cried Martin, who, to say the truth, was delighted at the prospect of a little charnel-house work. 'He's a lead 'un, he is. I'll have the top off in no time.'

Ralph looked gravely down at the last remains of the Hammonds. The wife, if she had been a wife, on whom their inheritance hung, was not here; she had died in India. But there was the Major's coffin, the wood-work decayed, but the leaden envelope as sound as ever.

Martin was quickly at work with his tools. The cover was stripped off, and for a moment the Major's features were to be seen much as they had been in life; then all dissolved into dust.

There was no ruby ring—that must have been a fable; but there was something glittering among the remains, and on taking it out, it proved to be a plain gold hoop.

'Well, that's worth a pound, that is,' cried the practical Martin, carefully polishing up the treasure-trove. It had probably been hung round the neck of the departed—a tall bony man—for the ring was a small one, and there were traces of a black ribbon attached to it.

It was a disappointment, no doubt; and yet somehow the sight of the ring had given Ralph a little hope. It was the wedding-ring, he said to himself, his great-grandmother's wedding-ring. The Major must have been fond of her to have had her ring always about him; and it had been buried with him. That had given rise to the story about the ruby. He drove home, after giving directions about the disposal of the coffins, feeling less sore at heart. He was now convinced that they had right on their side, and there was some comfort in that.

When he reached home, he shewed the ring to Maggie, who agreed with his conclusions.

'But there is something inside—some letters, I think,' she cried.

'It is only the Hall-mark,' said Ralph, having looked in his turn. 'But stop. That tells us something: it will give us a date.'

'How can that be?' asked Maggie.

'Because there is a different mark every year. See! you can make it out with a magnifying-glass. King George in a pigtail.'

The silversmith at Gigglesham turned up his tabulated list of Hall-marks, and told them at once the date of the ring—1760.

'But it might have been made a long time before it was first used,' suggested Maggie.

'True; but it could not have been used before it was made,' replied Ralph. 'It gives us a date approximately, at all events.'

At first, the knowledge of this date did not seem likely to be of much use to them. But it gave them the heart to go on and make further inquiries. Ralph threw himself into the task with fervour. He obtained leave to search the records of the Horse Guards; and ascertained at last where had been stationed the regiment that Richard Hammond then belonged to in that same year.

It was at Canterbury, as it happened; and that seemed significant, for it was not so far from there to his sweetheart's home at Milton. Ralph went over to Canterbury, and with the help of a clerk of Mr Smith's, searched all the parish registers between the two places; but found nothing.

The trial was coming on in a few weeks, and not a scrap of evidence could they get of the marriage of Major Hammond. The other side were full of confidence, and well they might be. Ralph had made up his mind to return home, and was walking disconsolately down the High Street of Canterbury one day when he saw over a shop-window the sign, 'PILGRIM, Goldsmith; established 1715.'

'I wonder,' he said to himself, 'if my great-grandfather bought his wedding-ring there?'

A sudden impulse sent him into the shop. A nice-looking old gentleman, with long white hair, was

sitting behind the counter, peering into the works of a watch through an elongated eye-glass.

Ralph brought out his ring. 'Do you think this ring was bought at your shop?' he asked.

'How long ago?' asked Mr Pilgrim, taking up the ring and looking at it all round.

'About the year 1760.'

'Ah-h! I can't remember so long ago as that. It was in my father's time; but for all that, perhaps I can tell you.'

He took up the magnifying-glass, and examined the ring carefully once more.

'Yes,' he said, looking up, a mysterious expression on his face, 'that ring was bought from my father, I have no doubt.' {620}

Ralph questioned him as to the sources of his knowledge; and Mr Pilgrim told him at last. It was his father's practice to put his private mark upon all the jewellery he sold. He could do it in those days, when his stock was small and all his own. In these times of changing fashions, when much of a jeweller's stock is on approval, this would be impossible.

Ralph listened to these explanations with breathless impatience. Had Mr Pilgrim any books belonging to his father which might possibly shew the sale? The old gentleman admitted that he had a lot of his father's old account-books up in a garret; but it would be very troublesome to get at them; and what would be the use?

'Why,' said Ralph, 'you might possibly make the happiness of two young people, who otherwise may be sundered all their lives.' He explained enough of the circumstances to shew the old gentleman that it was not an affair of mere idle curiosity; and after that he entered into the quest with ardour. Pilgrim his father had kept each year a sort of rough day-book, in which he entered transactions as they occurred, with occasional short annotations. And at last, after a long troublesome search, they found the book for the year 1760 and 1761. Nothing was to be made of the first; but in the second they had the delight of finding the following entry: '25 March, sold ring, young Master Hammond, two guineas saw y^e wedding afterwards at St Mary's, Faversham.'

That night all the church bells of Gigglesham were set a-ringing, for the news oozed out that Ralph Grant had come home with full proofs of the marriage that would make good his title to Westbury. For the young people were liked by everybody, whilst Boodles was generally execrated. Indeed the case never came on for trial, as Boodles withdrew the record when he found that there was full evidence to refute his claim. Ralph and Maggie were married soon afterwards; and the bride wore as a keeper over the golden circle her own special dower, the long-buried but happily recovered treasure, Major Hammond's ring.

LOST IN MAGELLAN'S STRAITS.

ONE might look all the world over without finding a coast more bleak, desolate, and inhospitable than that of Tierra del Fuego and the southern part of Patagonia. Owing to certain meteorological causes, the cold is comparatively greater in the southern than in the northern latitudes; icebergs are found ten degrees nearer to the equator. In the Straits of Magellan, which are about the same distance from the equator as Central England, the cold in winter is so intense as to be almost unbearable. Here icebergs are found floating, and glaciers larger in extent than any Switzerland can boast of; the land is entirely covered with snow down to the very water's edge, while bitter piercing winds rush down the clefts in the mountains, carrying everything before them, and even tearing up huge trees in their passage. Not a pleasant coast this on which to be cast away; and yet such, in 1867, was the fate of two unfortunate men who formed part of the crew of Her Majesty's ship *Chanticleer*, then on the Pacific station; and an account of whose sufferings we propose to lay before our readers.

One day early in September a sailing-party had been sent off with the hope of increasing the ship's stock of provisions by the addition of fresh fish, which is here very abundant. The nets soon became so heavy that extra hands were required to haul them; and as there appeared even then little chance of the work being over before sunset, the fishing-party obtained permission to spend the night on shore. Tents were pitched, huge fires were lighted, with the double object of affording warmth and cooking some of the produce of their successful expedition; blankets were distributed, grog was served out, and altogether the party seemed prepared to defy the cold, shewing a disposition to be 'jolly' in spite of it that would have gladdened the soul of the immortal Mark Tapley. However, after all these preparations to keep off the effects of the biting frost, they were compelled about nine o'clock in the evening to send off to the ship for more blankets and provisions.

Two sailors, Henty and Riddles, volunteered to go on this errand in the 'dingy' (a small two-oared boat), and having obtained the desired things, they started to return; but when about midway between the ship and the shore, the wind began to rise, carrying the boat to some extent out of her course; shortly after which she struck on a sand-bank, and in trying to get her off one of the oars was lost. Soon they were drifted out into the strong current. It was now dark as pitch; the wind continued to rise; and although all through the night they made every possible effort to reach the shore, when morning dawned, to their alarm they found themselves miles away from the ship, and powerless to contend any longer with their one oar against the force of both wind

and tide. They were finally driven on to the beach in a bay opposite Port Famine, a spot not less dreary than its name.

The sea was so rough, that here for a day and a night our two men were obliged to remain; and when on the second day they ventured to launch the boat, it was upset; nearly all their things were lost, and they were left to endure the intense cold without the means of making a fire, with no clothes but those they wore, and scarcely any food. For a while they walked about, trying, not very successfully, to keep up circulation; and by-and-by the feet of both began to swell and grow so painful that it was no longer possible to keep on their shoes. Still, although suffering both from hunger and cold (Henty's toes being already frost-bitten), they kept up their spirits in true British fashion, not for a minute doubting that sooner or later they would be picked up; and true enough, on the fourth day the *Chanticleer* was seen in the distance under weigh, and standing over towards them. Taking the most prominent position that could be found, they made signs and tried in every possible way to attract attention, but in vain. If they had only possessed some means of kindling a fire they might have succeeded; but although those on board were at the moment on the look-out for their lost mess-mates, no one saw them; and the hope with which the two poor fellows had buoyed themselves up, faded away as the ship changed her course, grew smaller and smaller, and by-and-by, late in the afternoon, while they still watched, altogether disappeared. {621}

Although now their only chance of rescue was apparently gone, and the last scrap of food was consumed, yet the brave fellows did not despair. Their boat was very leaky; but on the 5th of September, having repaired her as far as possible, they took advantage of finer weather to endeavour to reach some spot where there would be more probability of getting rescued by a passing ship; but they had scarcely got half-way across the Straits before there was a terrific snow-storm; it blew a gale; the boat began to fill rapidly; and finally they were blown back again into the bay, upset in the surf and nearly drowned, being unable to swim through having lost the use of their legs from sitting so long in water. However, they were thrown up by the waves high, though by no means dry, and in this miserable plight and under a pitiless snow-storm, they were forced to remain all through the night. The next day they managed to erect something in the form of a hut, in which they might lie down and be to some extent protected from the weather, which was so boisterous as to render it useless to attempt to launch the boat. For some days, owing to exposure and want of food, they were both very ill; but still hoping for better weather, they kept themselves alive by eating sea-weed and such shell-fish as could be found, until the 12th of September, when the weather suddenly clearing, they again launched their small boat; and this time, after a day's hard toil, succeeded in reaching the opposite side of the Straits, where they had left the ship, which it is needless to say was by this time far away.

When first the men were missed, rockets had been fired, and blue-lights burned; and on the following day the cutter was sent to the westward, while the *Chanticleer* coasted along the opposite side; look-out men were constantly aloft; but nothing was to be seen of the missing men. The next day the ship had remained at Port Famine, and exploring parties were sent in all directions. On the third day they again weighed anchor, and examined a fresh piece of coast, but all to no purpose; and finally it was decided, with much regret, to give up the search, for every one concluded that the poor men must by this time have perished, even if they had survived the first night's cold, which no one on board thought possible. Both men were generally popular, and great grief was felt for their loss. Immediately a subscription was started by the whole ship's company for the widow of the one man and the mother of the other. Strangely enough, when the sad news reached England, the former, in spite of what seemed conclusive evidence, firmly refused to believe the assurance of her husband's death. Whether the wife's intuition or the more logical inferences of every one else proved correct, events will shew.

By the time Henty and Riddles reached, as we have seen, the opposite side of the Straits it was quite dark; but on the following day they found that the current had drifted them fourteen miles from Port Famine, towards which they had steered, and for which place they now started on foot. Here they saw in the distance a ship under steam going towards the Pacific; but again all efforts to attract attention failed. They knew of no settlement that they could hope to reach, and at this rough season there was not the slightest chance of falling in with any wandering tribes of natives. The only course left them was to endure the cold, wait as patiently as might be, in the hope of some ship passing within hail, and to keep up what little life remained in them by chewing sea-weed, and seeking and devouring the mussels, which fortunately were to be found in great abundance on the rocks. After a time, however, they grew so weak as to be only just able to crawl out of the place they had made to lie down in, and every day the effort to gather their scanty nourishment grew harder. Once more, on the 4th of October, they saw a vessel pass through the Straits, but were unable to make any signals; on the 7th, both men had grown too weak to stir, and nothing was left for them but to confront death. The 8th day passed, the 9th, the 10th, and they were still sinking slowly from starvation. On the 11th, when they could not possibly have lived more than a few hours longer, and had become little short of living skeletons, they were picked up by the officers of the *Shearwater*, and at once taken on board, where, after receiving the most careful attention, both, although still suffering greatly, began after a time to recover. Being conveyed by the *Shearwater* to Rio, they remained some time in the hospital there, and finally were sent home invalided; and yet both men lived to regain their full strength, and to serve as striking examples of what tough human nature can endure in the shape of physical hardships and mental anxiety. They had contrived, by a patience and energy almost unprecedented, to lengthen out existence for a space considerably over a month, with no other food than sea-weed and shell-fish; the last four days indeed eating absolutely nothing; while the whole time exposed to intense cold, the roughest weather, and more hardships than it is possible for those who have never seen that barren and desolate region even to imagine.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MR T. M. READE, in his presidential address to the Liverpool Geological Society, discussed the question of 'geological time,' and took as an approximate measure thereof the denuding effect of rain-water on the earth's surface. The most rainy districts in England are those in which the oldest rocks prevail; but the average annual rainfall, including Wales, may be taken at 32 inches. Assuming the area of the two to represent one river basin, the quantity of water discharged in a year would contain more than eight million tons of solid matters; and at this rate, 12,978 years would be required to lower the surface of the land one foot. Analyses of sea-water shew that there are in 100,000 tons, 48 tons of carbonate of lime and magnesia, and 1017 tons of sulphate of lime and magnesia; and the ocean contains enough of the first to cover the whole of the land with a layer fifteen feet thick; and of the second to make a layer 267 feet thick. Twenty-five million years would be required to accumulate the one, and 480,000 years the other. Again, the total surface of the globe is 197 million square miles. A cubic mile of rock would weigh 10,903,552,000 tons; so that, as Mr Reade states, 'to cover the whole surface of the globe one mile deep with sediment from the land at the rate of 800 tons per square mile of land-surface, would take 52,647,052 years.'

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Geologists have speculated over this question many years: it has now passed into the hands of mathematicians, without whose aid it will never be settled. The Rev. Dr Haughton, F.R.S., of Trinity College, Dublin, in a paper read before the Royal Society on the last evening of their session, 'On the probable age of the continent of Asia and Europe, and on the absolute measure of geological time,' says that the elevation of Asia and Europe from beneath the deep waters, separated the earth's axis of rotation from the axis of figure by 207 miles, which would produce a large amount of wobbling. At present, 'astronomers are agreed that the motion of the pole is secular and very slow, all traces of wobbling having disappeared.' Then after a series of mathematical demonstrations, the doctor continues: 'The geological age of the continent of Asia and Europe is well marked by the horizon of the Nummulitic Limestones,' which extend from the Mediterranean to Japan. 'These rocks make up the backbone of the great continent, and at its formation were raised from deep water to form the highest chains of mountains in the globe. Geologically speaking, they are modern, belonging to the Lower Tertiary Period. My calculations assign to the Nummulitic Epoch a date not less than 4157 millions of years ago. No practical geologist will feel any surprise at this result.'

In a paper read at the last meeting of the Geological Society, Mr Belt discussed various geological questions, and shewed reasons for believing that in the far remote ages, the north of Europe was covered by a great lake. 'The formation of this lake was due,' he remarked, 'to the ice of the glacial period flowing down the beds of the Atlantic and Pacific, and damming back the drainage of the continents as far as it extended. To the rising of these waters must be ascribed the destruction of palæolithic man, the mammoth, and the woolly rhinoceros. This lake was once suddenly and torrentially discharged through the breaking away of the Atlantic ice-dam, but was formed again and ultimately drained by the cutting through of the channel of the Bosphorus.' It is perhaps well to remark that these views are not as yet implicitly accepted.

In the Eocene deposits of New Mexico a fossil bone of a gigantic bird has been found, which, according to the description, had 'feet twice the bulk of those of the ostrich.' This discovery proves that huge birds formed part of the primeval fauna of North America, and that they were not confined exclusively to the southern hemisphere.

Professor Kirkwood states, in a paper on the relative ages of the sun and certain fixed stars read to the American Philosophical Society, that the history of the solar system is comprised within twenty or thirty millions of years; that our solar system is more advanced in its history than the constellation of the Centaur, and that the companion of Sirius appears to have reached a stage of greater maturity than the sun, while the contrary seems to be true in regard to the principal star.

The annual report on the great trigonometrical survey of India contains particulars which shew that surveying in India is by no means holiday pastime. Colonel Montgomerie, who has just retired after twenty-five years' service, was engaged during nine of those years in a survey of the dominions of the Maharaja of Kashmir, comprising about 77,000 square miles. Within this extensive area rise stupendous mountain ranges and peaks, the highest of which is more than 28,000 feet, and the Indus, Jhelum, Kishanganga, and other great rivers, flow through the valleys. To fix the position of heights and places in such a country requires a combination of courage, skill, and endurance rarely to be met with, but which happily for geographical science has been forthcoming ever since the Indian survey was commenced. The annual reports contain many accounts of adventurous journeys, and hazardous exploits which few readers would think of looking for among the dry details of a scientific triangulation. Sometimes on resuming work after the rainy season, the 'rays' or lanes which had been cut through the forest to clear a way for taking distant sights, would be found so choked by the shoots from tree-stumps and young bamboos which had grown to an 'astonishing height,' that more than thirty miles of such rays had to be cleared over again before the work could proceed. On extending the survey into Burmah it was only by cutting tracks through the dense forest that communications could be effected from station to station, and whenever an existing road could be made available it was regarded as a

luxury. At Kamákabo it became necessary to carry the great theodolite to the top of a rocky hill: the sharp projecting rocks 'jutting out in every direction,' and as they could not be removed, ladders were stretched from rock to rock, and thus a most perilous ascent and descent was accomplished. The labour and risk may be judged of from the fact that the theodolite weighed more than six hundred pounds, and we can appreciate the satisfaction with which the observer wrote in his journal, 'it was a day of rejoicing when the instrument was brought down in safety.' At times a region of sand-hills was traversed where vision was not obstructed, but where not more than three wells of drinkable water were found in a distance of seventy miles. And once the observer waded through a mile of mud and water under a burning sun to an old lighthouse whence it was essential to take angles to fix the position of the new one five miles distant. A consequence of this exploit was an attack of malarious fever.

It seems likely that trigonometrical surveying may be carried on with less difficulty in future; for an Italian officer of engineers, Lieutenant Manzi, has proved that the triangulations can be photographed. It is possible to construct a camera geometrically arranged, and if the rays of light converging from distant points of view are intercepted, and marked on a diaphragm, it is evident that the angular readings obtained to such points would be identical in their bearings with the objects themselves. By such a camera, negative views of inaccessible ground can be faithfully taken, and the angles can be either plotted or calculated. Photography thus offers itself as a means whereby a difficult mountain country can be surveyed without risk, while for purposes of military recognisance its advantages are obvious.

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For some time past attention has been directed towards steel-wire cables; and experiments recently made in Portsmouth Dockyard have clearly demonstrated their superiority over hemp and iron. Steel, as is well known, is more and more used in the building of ships, and, because of its tenacity and lightness, in their rigging; and now it seems likely to supersede the unwieldy hawsers and chain cables everywhere in use. With a chain the safety of the ship depends on the weakest welding; and when a single link parts, either from inherent defect or from a sudden jerk, everything parts, and the vessel drifts. A wire cable, on the contrary, gives notice, so to speak, of an approach to the breaking point. First one strand, then another, gives way, and still the cable holds, and it may happen that it will hold long enough to save the ship. Now that experiment has proved that a steel-wire cable is as flexible as the best hemp, that it is three times as strong, and does not cost more, the change from one to the other may be made with confidence. Another advantage is the lightness, for by making use of steel, about two-thirds of the usual weight of the cable is got rid of. Evidence of the strength is seen in the fact that a three-inch steel hawser did not break until the strain exceeded twenty-two tons, and that a strain of more than a hundred tons was required to break the six-inch.

Lieutenant Totten of the United States Army, in writing about explosives and big guns, discusses carefully the question as to the best kind of explosive for actual service; that which will expend its entire force in driving out the projectile. With the large-grained gunpowder now in use about half of the charge is wasted, while gun-cotton and dynamite exert an injurious strain upon the gun. As a way out of the difficulty, he recommends a 'compensating powder,' each grain of which contains a core of gun-cotton, and he points out that forty pounds of this powder would be sixty pounds stronger than a hundred-pound charge of gunpowder. The explanation is that by the time forty pounds of the hundred are burned, the shot has left the gun; consequently, sixty pounds are of no help to the shot. But if the forty pounds contain fifteen pounds of gun-cotton, then this cotton, when fired, acts on the already moving shot under the most favourable circumstances as a pure accelerator, and does not injure the gun. In this way, writes Lieutenant Totten, 'we eliminate the great waste of the one, curb the straining action of both, and obtain a true artillery powder, lighter, and four and a half times more effective, charge for charge, than our best gunpowder.'

An address 'On Light in some of its Relations to Disease,' delivered to the Albany Institute (State of New York) by Dr Stevens, sets forth views and facts which are worth consideration. Light, as we know, is on the whole beneficial; but may there not be cases in which it is harmful when passing through the transparent media of the human eye? Dr Stevens is clearly of opinion that many nervous diseases are aggravated if not produced by defective vision. The strain on the muscles of the eye, when long continued, sets up an irritability which tells injuriously on the nervous system, and neuralgic affections. St Vitus's dance and severe periodical headaches are the consequence. Rectify the imperfection of the sight, says Dr Stevens, by proper spectacles, and the nervous disease will be either mitigated or cured. It is of no use to buy glasses at hazard because they seem to suit the eye; for none but a scientific oculist can really decide, after careful experiment, on what is proper. In many cases the focus of the two eyes is not the same, and each must have its proper glass. Professor Donders of Utrecht was the first to point out that the so-called 'cylindrical glasses' were generally the most efficient; and since then 'the science of correcting anomalous refractions of the eye has been brought to a perfection which is truly wonderful.'

Dr Poumeau of Guadeloupe has published a series of tables, based on the changes of the moon, by which, as he believes, it is possible to tell the sex of a child before birth. He intends to draw up similar tables for the use of horse and cattle breeders; and if any one should test his calculations by observation, the doctor would like to be informed of the result.

The *Journal* of the Chemical Society contains an account by Mr Hight, of the Indian Forest Department, of experiments made with a view to ascertain the practical nature of a proposed method of determining the mineral strength of soils by means of water-culture. It is explained that the usual object of water-culture experiments is to find what particular salts are congenial or

necessary to the growth of any particular plant. When a plant is grown in an artificially prepared solution, so that it can obtain its nourishment solely from the salts contained in that solution, the exact effect of any salt upon the growth of the plant can be easily observed by adding that salt to, or abstracting it from the solution. In carrying out this method, specimens of soil were taken from five different forests in India; solutions of these specimens were made; seedlings of *Acacia arabica* were, with proper precautions, placed in each, and the results of growth, such as increase in weight, number of leaves, and length of roots, were carefully noted. These results are published in a numerical table, and allowing for the difficulties of a preliminary experiment, may be regarded as satisfactory.

The question is frequently asked—Why is there no School of Forestry in England, while in almost all other countries of Europe schools of forest science are either established by the government, or are associated with a university or a polytechnic institution? Sir Joseph Hooker, President of the Royal Society, and Director of the Royal Gardens, Kew, says in one of his reports, that the subject is so neglected in this country, that when our government are in want of a forest inspector for India, they have first to send him to France or Germany to learn the theory and practice of taking care of a forest. On the continent, as Sir Joseph remarks, 'forestry holds a distinguished place among the branches of a liberal education. In the estimation of an average Briton, forests are of infinitely less importance than the game they shelter, and it is not long since the wanton destruction of a fine young tree was considered a venial offence compared with the snaring of a pheasant or rabbit. Wherever the English rule extends, with the exception of India, the same apathy, or at least inaction, prevails. In South Africa, according to the colonial botanist's report, millions of acres have been made desert, and more are being made desert annually, through the destruction of the indigenous forests; in Demarara the useful timber trees have all been removed from accessible regions, and no care or thought is given to planting others; from Trinidad we have the same story; in New Zealand there is not now a good Kauri pine to be found near the coast, and I believe that the annals of almost every English colony would repeat the tale of wilful wanton waste and improvidence. On the other hand in France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Russia, the forests and waste lands are the subjects of devoted attention on the part of the government, and colleges, provided with a complete staff of accomplished professors, train youths of good birth and education to the duties of state foresters. Nor, in the case of France, is this practice confined to the mother country: the Algerian forests are worked with scrupulous solicitude, and the collections of vegetable produce from the French colonies in the permanent museum at Paris contain specimens which abundantly testify that their forests are all diligently explored.'

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This is a long quotation; but it is justified by the importance of the subject, and it is quite clear that we cannot go on much longer without a School of Forestry. Diligent students can hardly fail to be forthcoming, and when once they shall have proved themselves efficient inspectors, the question of 'good' birth may be left to take care of itself.

THE DESERTED GARDEN.

BEYOND the woods, yet half by woods inclosed,
A tangled wilderness of fair growth lay;
A spot where dreaming poet might have doted
Into the dawning of a fairy day;
For in its desolation wild reposed
Something that pointed to a past more gay,
Since here and there one found the lingering trace
Of caresome hands in the neglected place.

The once trim walks were coated thick with moss;
Dwarfed were the garden roses, and their glow
From vivid crimson paled to fainter gloss
Nigh broken sun-dial; and the water's flow
Had ceased to murmur in the ancient foss,
Whose slopes were now with purple thyme a-blow;
And on the fragments of the crumbled wall
The golden wall-flower stood like seneschal.

The nut-trees made an archway overgrown,
And midst the boughs the timid squirrel leapt;
At eve the nightingale with mellow tone
Sang with the mourning wind a dirge that crept
Into all hearts—until one heart more lone
Than others, gathered up the strain and wept;
Nor knew if 'twere half joy or wholly grief
That in the sympathetic chord had found relief.

The clouds sent flickering shadows o'er the grass,
As though some spectral life were there upstirred;
And as the fitful breezes onward pass,

A murmur of strange voices might be heard,
As though some unseen quire were chanting mass,
Echoed throughout the grove by plaintive bird;
And still the wanderer listening, asks for whom
The wild Amen!—For whom the flowers did bloom?

The ancient summer-house with broken vane,
And rotting pillars where the woodbines twine;
And on a cobwebbed solitary pane
In casement, that with colours once did shine,
And shewed the seasons through each differing stain,
Was writ in jaggèd-wise a Latin line,
'*Sic transit gloria mundi*;' and below,
'My Ursula! the world is full of woe.'

It read as epitaph above the grave
Of human hopes, all blighted as the space
Around, whose wreck no hand was stretched to save;
Yet that with tender melancholy grace,
A sermon in that blooming desert gave
To him whose soul had power enough to trace
In the lone scene, so desolate, so lone,
Though man upbuilds, God shapes the crowning stone.

I spake the name a score of times aloud,
'Sweet Ursula,' a source of joy and woe!
The glory of a life, the light allowed
To make all nature flush with deeper glow.
Then light put out—then darkness—then a cloud
And agony that nought but love can know—
The bitter memory of a sweetness past,
A gleam of sunshine all too bright to last.

The lazy lilies gleamed with petals white
Upon the pool o'errun with weeds and sedges,
That once shone clear and fair as mirror bright,
With blue forget-me-nots on shelving ledges,
Where water-flags upreared their banners light,
And the marsh-mallow crept along its edges—
But in the water face to face no more
Smiled back as in the happier days of yore.

Ah! could the olden stones a story tell,
How sweet a love-tale might they not reveal
Of mystic Ursula, and what befell
In the fond hopes and doubts that lovers feel,
Till blighted by that sorrowful farewell
That all the beauty of the world did steal;
Shattered the rainbow in fresh gathered cloud,
And changed the bridal robe to funeral shroud.

Perchance her monument this wildered spot,
Tended by Nature's pitying hand alone,
For one by generations now forgot,
To whom *he* reared no proud sepulchral stone;
But with love's jealousy he willed that not
Another o'er her grave should make his moan—
But he alone through hieroglyphic bloom,
Should haunt the precincts of the loved one's tomb.

Ay, who can tell! For Time his seal hath set
On life and all its secrets gone before;
The hearts are dead that never could forget;
The hearts that live, but know the tale no more.
Each hath its bitterness o'er which to fret,
Each hath its joys eclipsing those of yore;
To each its own small world the real seems,
Outside of which is but a land of dreams.

Yet still one loves to linger here and muse,
And conjure up vague theories of the past;
And here a hand to trace; and there to lose
The touch of human life upon it cast;
And still for idle loitering make excuse,
And weave a tale of mystery to the last;
And in the old deserted garden bowers

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[Transcriber's Note—the following changes have been made to this text:

Page 611: remian changed to remain.]

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