NOW-A-DAYS.

Alas! how everything has changed
Since I was sweet sixteen;
When all the girls wore homespun frocks,
And aprons nice and clean;
With bonnets made of braided straw,
That tied beneath the chin,
And shawls laid neatly on the neck,
And fastened with a pin.

But now-a-days the ladies wear
French gloves and Leghorn hats,
That take up half a yard of sky,
In all queer shapes and flats;
With gowns that do not fall so low
As such things ought to fall,
With waists that you might break in two,
And shoes a size too small.

I recollect the time when I
Rode father's horse to mill,
Across the meadow, rocks and field,
And up and down the hill;
And when our folks were out at work,
As true as I'm a sinner,
I jumped upon a horse, bare-back,
And carried them their dinner.

Dear me! Young ladies now-a-days
Would almost faint away
To think of riding all alone
In wagon, chaise or sleigh;
And as for giving "pa" his meals,
Or helping "ma" to bake,
Oh, saints! 'twould spoil their lily hands,
Though they sometimes make cake.

When winter came, the maidens' hearts
Began to beat and flutter;
Each beau would take his sweetheart out
Sleigh-riding in a cutter;
Or, if the storm was bleak and cold,
The girls and beaus together
Would meet and have most glorious fun,
And never mind the weather.

But now, indeed, it grieves me much
The circumstance to mention,
However kind a young man's heart,
And honest his intention,
He never can ask the girls to ride
But such a war is waged!
And if he sees her once a week,
Why, surely, they're engaged.

I never thought that I should try
My hand at making rhymes,
But 'tis the way to reprobate
The present evil times;
For, should I preach morality
In common, sober prose,
They'd say 'twas older than the hills,
Or else turn up their nose.

STORY OF A BANK CASHIER.

Outside the portal of the bank, a commissionaire, named Copp, has for many years taken up his position. He is not in the service of the bank, but, being a man of tried probity and trustworthiness, his right to the station is tacitly admitted. He is an old soldier, and has served with distinction in many glorious battles, as the numerous medals, which he proudly displays upon his breast, bear witness. He has been a Sergeant Major, and comports himself with a suitable dignity. Upon many occasions, on busy days, he has been intrusted with missions of delicacy and responsibility, and has always fulfilled them with tact and exactitude.

One morning I was waiting at my desk for the arrival of our early customers, when I saw Copp advancing toward me with his military step, and with even more than his customary dignity. He held in his hand a dirty canvas bag, which he placed on my desk.

"Well, Copp," I said, "whose account is this for?"

He stood at attention, and said, after saluting:

"This bag, sir, was placed in my hands an hour ago by a man who asked me to take care of it till he came back. Thinking, perhaps, he was a customer of the bank, I took charge of it, and, as he hasn't come back, I thought I had better bring it to you, sir, as it seems to contain money."

I opened the bag and found it contained £750 in bank-notes and gold; but there was no indication of the person to whom it belonged, either written upon a paper, as is customary, or upon the backs of the notes. Copp, seeing my surprise, added:

"I beg pardon, sir, but I may as well tell you that the party who handed me the bag was decidedly inebriated—in fact, sir, I might say drunk. He could scarcely stand, and didn't seem hardly able to speak."

"Very well," I replied, "you may leave it with me, and, when the man comes, bring him in here."

"Yes, sir," said Copp, who saluted and retired.

I put the bag on one side, fully expecting that the owner would soon call and claim it. At the end of the day, however, nobody had called, although Copp had kept a sharp lookout at the door. I was much surprised at this, and put by the money. The next day and the next passed by, and still no claimant appeared. I interrogated Copp as to the description of the man. He said he was a short, thick-set man, with dark hair and whiskers, but no mustache. He wore a black coat, very seedy-looking, and his face and hands and shirt were very dirty; "looked as if he had been on the loose, sir," he added.

At the expiration of another week, I inserted advertisements in all the principal daily papers, stating that a bag containing a sum of money had been found, and inviting the owner to claim it and specify the contents. No satisfactory answers were received to the advertisement, and the question remained, what was to be done with the money? We could not place it to any account in the bank, and we could not, of course, open an account in an unknown name. The manager was of the opinion that, as the money had been left in the hands of Sergt. Copp, who was not an official of the bank, and, besides, who was standing in the street at the time, there was no evidence of its having been intended to be lodged in the bank, and that, therefore, it should be handed over to the comissionaire.

Upon my telling Copp this, however, he stoutly refused to have anything to do with it. "It was not his," he said, "and he had only taken charge of it upon the supposition that it belonged to one of the customers of the bank." The matter was finally settled by opening a deposit account in the joint names of Copp and myself.

Two years rolled by, and nothing further was heard of the mysterious depositor, and I began to think that the amount would ultimately fall into the hands of the worthy Sergt. Copp or his family, to whom it would be a small fortune. At length, however, one morning, Sergt. Copp walked up to my desk with an expression of great pleasure upon his honest face.

"Beg your pardon, sir," he commenced; "can I speak to you for a few minutes?"

"Certainly," said I; "what is it?".

"Well, sir, do you remember that bag of money—two years ago?"

"Of course I do," I replied with interest; "who could forget it?"

"Well, sir, I think I've got a clew to the man who left it with me."

"It appeared that the Sergeant's son was apprenticed to an upholsterer in the city. Among the workmen in the establishment who had recently joined was a French polisher. One day, in the course of conversation, he told his fellow-workmen the following facts concerning a foreman of the firm of Smith & Jones, where he had formerly worked. This foreman, whose name was Thompson, had been with the firm a great many years; he was intrusted by his employers from time to time with the collection of large amounts of money, and had always been found honest and upright. Upon one occasion, about two years before, a shipping order had come to the firm for a quantity of furniture from a new foreign house of which they had some suspicions. The goods were ordered to be shipped on a certain day, and it was agreed that they were to be paid for in money before being placed on board. As the order came to £750, the foreman went down himself in charge of the goods, with strict injunctions from his employers either to bring them back or the money. The goods were placed on board the ship from the lighter in the docks—so much was ascertained—but the foreman, who had received the money and had given a receipt for it, was never seen again, either by the firm or by his wife and family. The lighterman, who had been present at the payment of the money, and had conveyed Thompson ashore, deposed that he had not been able to get the goods on board the day when they were sent down, and Thompson passed the night in a sailors' coffee-house in the neighborhood of the docks, in order to be in time for their transhipment in the morning. When he arrived on board he acted very strangely, and the lighterman noticed that his watch and chain were missing. Altogether Thompson's appearance was that of a man who was still suffering from the effects of a night's debauch. On taking him ashore, the lighterman had conducted Thompson, at his urgent request, to a public house, and had there left him. From this point impenetrable mystery hung over the whole matter. Had Thompson decamped with the money, or had he been the victim of some foul play? The first hypothesis was scouted by Thompson's friends and fellow-workmen. He had shown himself for more than twenty years a man of probity; he was a sober and prudent man, who see only delight was in his home and his children. He was always preaching habits of saving and economy to the men under him, and, when he disappeared, it was found that he had a considerable sum in the savings bank, which he had never touched. It was incredible, therefore, that he could have embezzled his employer's money. The second hypothesis seemed the more reasonable one. But if he had been murdered, how had his body been disposed of? The river had been closely watched from the Tower to the sea, but no corpse answering to the description had ever been found.

Young Copp had carried this story to his father, and the Sergeant had with much difficulty succeeded in discovering Thompson's unfortunate wife and family, who were now reduced to great poverty. From them he learned the confirmation of the sad story, and felt sure that at last he had found the missing clew.

The good Sergeant then waited on Messrs. Smith & Jones, in whose employment Thompson had been, and ascertained two facts which confirmed him in his supposition. The £750 had been paid by the foreign firm which had bought the goods in exactly the same proportion of notes and gold as the sum left with the commissionaire, and the date upon which they were paid corresponded with that of the mysterious deposit. The unfortunate hiatus in the chain of evidence was that nobody knew the numbers of the bank notes which had formed part of it.

"What do you think, sir?" continued Copp.

I replied that I thought the solution probable, but that we should proceed very cautiously in the testing of every proof.

After turning over the matter carefully in my mind, I came to the conclusion that the only means of identifying the sum paid to Thompson with that left with Sergt. Copp would be a comparison of the numbers of the notes in each instance. But then came a formidable difficulty. The foreign firm had been dissolved and its members had left England. They had already informed Messrs. Smith & Jones that they had omitted to take the numbers of the bank notes, which had been remitted to them from the continent.

The plan I at last hit upon was as follows:

When the £750 were paid into the deposit account, the notes which formed a portion of the sum were sent by us to the Bank of England in the regular course of business, and were there canceled. I ascertained at the Bank of England the name and address of the firm to whom the notes had been first issued, and then traced them through the several hands through which they had passed. Following up the clew, I discovered that some of them had been sent to a bank at Paris. I wrote to this bank, inquiring to whom they had been paid, and to my great gratification was informed that they had been sent to the very firm in London a few days before they had handed them over to Thompson.

Here, then, was the missing link, and I had no longer any doubt in my mind that the money paid to us was the same as that which had been lost by Messrs. Smith & Jones.

Honest Sergt. Copp was overjoyed, and wished to go at once to Mrs. Thompson and give her the good news. This, however, I would not permit, as I thought it would be better to endeavor, in the first instance, to ascertain the fate of the poor foreman. I, therefore, called upon Messrs. Smith & Jones, and informed them that I had obtained certain information, which led me to believe that a sum of £750 paid into the bank was identical with that lost by them, but that the only person who could satisfactorily prove the fact was Thompson, and that he must therefore be found. They promised to do their best to aid my inquiries, and employed a detective for the purpose. In the course of a few weeks they were able to inform me that Thompson had been discovered in Paris, working under an assumed name, and that, on being informed of the discovery, he had at once come over to his family, who were overjoyed at his return.

On the following day Thompson called at the bank, and was recognized by Sergt. Copp as the very individual who had left the money with him.

The explanation given by Thompson of the transaction was, that his coffee had been drugged at the house where he slept, and his watch stolen from him. He had, however, nerved himself by a violent effort the following morning to be at his post on the lighter, and, although half stupefied, had with some difficulty received and counted over the money; that on going ashore he had repaired to a public house near the docks, in order to get some soda water; that, after taking it, he had rambled through the streets on his way to the workshop.

His mind, however, was a complete blank as to everything which occurred afterward, until he found himself lying in a narrow alley, surrounded by ill-looking people. When he came to himself he was paralyzed by fear on finding, as he thought, that he had been robbed of his bag. His brain was dazed with the thought of the fearful accusations which would be certainly brought against him. Who would believe that he was guiltless of any crime when appearances were so much against him? How could he explain away his seeming state of intoxication when he went on board in the morning? And, above all, how could he explain the loss of the bag? He could remember that up to a certain time, after leaving the public house, he still had the bag safe in the breast-pocket of his coat, for he had a distinct recollection of keeping his arm tightly pressed against it. He had a dim recollection of finding himself amid streets of tall stone houses, and of reeling against several people on the pavement; but after that his memory was altogether blotted out. All was darkness and vacancy until he awoke.

Then a feeling of blank despair took possession of his mind. How could he ever again show himself among his friends—he who had held his head so high, and had been so forward in denouncing vice and drink? He would be a laughing-stock to all the world; then the stain upon his honesty! Messrs. Smith & Jones he knew to be very hard people; they never had spared anybody in their business dealings, and they would certainly bring a criminal charge against him. The idea was horrible. He would rather die than submit to such indignity.

Pondering these things over in his mind, he had wandered heedlessly through the streets without remarking whither he was going. Fate or instinct seemed to lead him to the riverside again, and he found himself at last at St. Katherine's dock. Exactly facing where he stood was a flaming placard, announcing the departure that day of a boat direct for Calais, at a very low rate of passage. The thought darted into his mind: Why not cut the difficulties at once, and put the sea between himself and the scene of his disgrace?

It was a cowardly temptation which, if his intellect had been in a clearer state, would have been instantly rejected with scorn, but the poisonous drug which he had imbibed seemed to have utterly unmanned him and deprived him of the courage necessary to face his trouble. He yielded to the temptation and made his way through to Paris, where, under an assumed name, he succeeded in getting work, for he was very expert in his business.

Nothing could exceed the delight of the worthy commissionaire at having been the means of clearing up the mystery, except, indeed, his pride in retelling the oft-told tale. Nor was his honesty unrewarded in a more substantial manner. Messrs. Smith & Jones presented him with £100 as a recognition of his integrity and intelligence.

Railroad Construction in 1877.

The last number of the *Railway Age* contains a carefully-prepared table showing the number of new roads and extensions constructed during the year 1877, and the miles of track laid. It appears that during a year of continued depression to all industry no less than 2,265 miles were added to the railway system of the United States, which are divided among the various States as follows:

	Miles.		
	Wide.	Narrow.	Total.
Alabama	1¼	..	1¼
California	190	39	229
Colorado	69	54	123
Connecticut	5	..	5
Florida	5	..	5
Illinois	73	..	73
Indiana	16	..	16
Iowa	136	33	169
Kansas	52½	24	76½
Kentucky	21	6	27
Massachusetts	17	8¾	25¾
Michigan	33	8	41
Minnesota	182	29	211
Missouri	23	27	50
Nebraska	69	10	79
New Hampshire	18	..	18
New Jersey	28¾	54	82½
New York	99	12	111
North Carolina	27	..	27
Ohio	61	166	227
Pennsylvania	63½	86	149½
Rhode Island	1	..	1
South Carolina	36¼	5	41¼
Tennessee	7¾	20	27¾
Texas	62	142½	204½
Utah	..	20	20
Vermont	66	..	66
Virginia	..	25	25
Washington Territory	53½	..	53½
West Virginia	25	..	25
Wisconsin	24	30	54
Total	1,365¾	799	2,264¾

This is almost equal to the new mileage reported at a corresponding time for the year 1876. It is a notable fact, however, that the cost of construction and equipment never ruled so low as during the past year, and also that railways were never before built so nearly for the cash cost and with so little fictitious capital; so that the aggregate of capital invested in the 2,300 or so miles of new road is far less than that represented in a corresponding increase of mileage in former years. To show the remarkable growth of the narrow-gauge system inaugurated only half a dozen years ago in this country, the *Age* has given in its summary the figures for "wide-gauge" (including, in two or three instances, roads of five feet) and narrow-gauge separately. No less than 65 per cent. of the roads in number, and 55 per cent. in mileage, were of the latter class—three-feet gauge—except in one or two cases, where three feet six inches was used, and in another, where the novel width of two feet was chosen. These narrow-gauge roads have all been constructed very cheaply, and in many cases where it would have been difficult or impossible to raise the money for even a "light" standard-gauge road. In some cases a mistake has been committed in varying from the usual standard of the country, but in may others the three-feet gauge is equal to all possible demands that will be made upon it, and as the roads are intended solely to supply limited local needs, where the people have no expectation of or ambition for building parts of a great "through" system, they are well adapted to their localities.

Hard Times for Railways.

Some facts are gathered by the Chicago *Railway Age* regarding the foreclosure of mortgages on American railways during the year just ended. It appears that the actual sales under foreclosures cover 3,875 miles of road, with bonds and debts of $119,938,700, and capital stock of $79,045,700. The capital stock is practically rendered voluless by foreclosure, and mortgages later than the first generally go the same way, so that it is probable that the proceedings recited above involve a net loss of not less than a hundred millions of dollars. In addition to this, there have been ordered sold, but not yet brought to the hammer, 2,388 miles of road, with $128,833,400 of bonds and floating debt, and $126,921,900 of capital stock; and in these cases the sales involve a loss of not less than $150,000,000. In the preceding year sales were made of 3,846 miles of road, with $218,000,000 of debt and capital, so that it is not unreasonable to set down the shrinkage of railroad property involved in the cases of these two years at $350,000,000. The end is not yet, but it is generally believed to be near, and the 10,000 miles or more of road involved in the above statistics may, as a rule, be regarded as reduced to "hard pan," and ready to do fair work at reasonable profit for their present owners.

English Journalists.

Many journalists of the present day dictate their work to short-hand writers. One of the most prolific writers on the *Daily Telegraph* dictates every line of his work. He has a cautious habit of composition. He makes a point of producing his leader at the office every night. He takes off his coat, waistcoat and boots, lights his pipe and walks about the room, and in an hour his article is finished. Now and then it is completed in half that time. Lucy, of the *Daily News*, dictates the whole of his matter. Yates hardly ever writes a line. His short-hand clerk is ever at his elbow. Several men have tried to bring the type-writer into use, but only Farjeon has been able to achieve success with it, and Farjeon was originally a printer; so that the mechanical character of the work bothered him less at the outset than is the case with most writers. Then the "copy" is not altogether pleasant to read, being all capital letters.—*London Cor. New York Times.*

Oklahama Territory.

It is reported from Washington that the Congressional Committee having the matter in charge are going to report favorably a bill to organize the new Territory of Oklahama out of a portion of the Indian Territory. A Washington correspondent says it is a scheme to bring 23,000,000 acres of the best land of the Territory into the hands of three railroad corporations, with all that such a subsidy implies, with confusion, litigation and disorder and other evils. The Indians oppose the measure, and have their representatives at the capital. They claim that they have something more than a "usufruct" title to their lands; that they own them as tribes by virtue of a patent regularly issued by the United States, and that they cannot be lawfully and equitably deprived of them without their consent. They claim that they are rapidly advancing in education and civilization, in numbers, and in wealth; that the Government cannot afford to break faith with them; and that the friends of the Indians ought not to countenance these efforts in that direction by their silence.—*Chicago Journal.*

AGRICULTURAL AND DOMESTIC.

Around the Farm.

"BULL BUTTER" is the not-inappropriate name bestowed by the trade upon oleomargarine.

THERE is a current paragraph—without credit, but good enough to be true—to the effect that a Connecticut farmer turned down a rank growth of clover and sowed winter wheat, which yielded twenty-seven and a half bushels per acre. A neighbor sowed the same kind of seed in an adjoining field, not fertilized with clover, and harvested—a fair crop of straw, that contained no grain.

I FOUND one of my pullets with the tips of her comb bleeding profusely, it having previously been frozen. She had become very weak. I carried her into a warm room, bathed her comb in warm water, and then sprinkled the tips with wheat flour, which soon stopped the bleeding. I kept her in a warm room for a day or two, then put her with the rest; she is now laying, and is as well as ever.—*Cor. Exchange.*

THERE have been many foolish things said and printed about saturating stumps with oil or saltpeter, to cause them to burn out, or to set a length of stovepipe on the stump to make a draught so as to consume it. All these plans are useless, and would fail. The practical methods are: to wait until they rot, to pull them out with a stump-puller, to dig them out, or to blast them out. This last method is the cheapest and quickest.—*American Agriculturist.*

HOW TO PLANT POTATOES.—My theory, which I have proved in my own practice, is this: If the soil is wet and heavy, plant shallow, and hill up heavily as the season advances; but if it is light and dry, plant deep, and hill lightly only during a wet season, or more heavily during a very dry one. The reasons are obvious. Never plant two years in succession in the same place, because the soil wants rotation, and because potato bugs always are more numerous in last year's field.—*S. Rufus Mason.*

AN intelligent farmer of Northern Iowa spread a light covering of straw over his newly-sown wheat, thinking that the growing grain would readily find its way through, and that during the probable midsummer drought the mulch would help the crop to mature. In this he was not mistaken, for the average on ten acres thus treated was forty bushels to the acre, while on the same kind of land adjoining, with the same seed sown, and as carefully put in, the yield per acre was twenty-two bushels. The increase was thus nearly double, while the straw was in excellent condition to turn under the past fall, and a double benefit consequently secured.

OFTEN in a fine orchard we find one or more trees leaning over so far as to destroy the beauty of the whole orchard. It is also much more difficult to cultivate around a leaning tree. This trouble may easily be remedied while the trees are young by partly digging up and replanting them. The roots will be found smallest on the side from which the tree leans; therefore, these roots should be loosened from the earth, and the tree set in a perpendicular position and carefully fastened by stakes and guys, and the earth replaced around the roots. It would be well to add some rich compost to promote their growth. If, as is very probable, the top of the tree has become one-sided, it should be pruned so as to restore the balance. In this way we have "righted up" pear trees six inches through the stem; but the best way is to look after the young trees and not permit them to depart from the way of uprightness.—*Ohio Farmer.*

THE bones of all animal creation are composed of three substances—phosphoric acid, lime and gelatine or glue, three of the best fertilizing substances to produce good seed. But where do the bones of animals come from? Certainly from the soil, through the grass, hay, grain, etc., consumed as food. Therefore, every horse, bullock, cow, sheep and hog sent off the farm without returning a like quantity of bone to the earth causes our land to yield less and less every year, till the land becomes what is called worn out. Beside, every load of hay and every bushel of grain sold off the farm carries away the same material, as it is the hay and grain that make the bones of cattle, horses etc. Five per centum of all plants are composed of ten mineral substances, of which bone forms a large part, and which comes directly from the earth, while the fat of the animals is composed of carbon, oxygen and hydrogen, three of the gases that plants take exclusively from the air, in the forms of carbonic acid and water, which constitute about 94 per centum of all plants.—*Boston Transcript.*

About the House.

COOKIES.—Three eggs, two cups o sugar, one cup of sour cream, two thirds of a cup of butter, one teaspoonful of soda. Mix hard enough to handle easy.

NUMBER CAKE.—One cup of butter; two cups of sugar; three cups of flour; four eggs; one cup of sweet milk; one teaspoonful of soda, and two of cream-of-tartar. Flavor with lemon.

GINGER SNAPS.—One cup of brown sugar, one cup of molasses, two eggs, one cup of fried meat gravy, one tablespoonful of cider-vinegar, two heaping spoonfuls of soda, one teaspoonful of ginger. Flour enough to roll.—*Mrs. Nettie Skee's.*

COOKED CABBAGE.—Cut fine as for raw; put into a kettle and add water to cook until tender; then add one-half cup of sweet cream; one-half cup of vinegar, in which mix one table-spoonful of flour; season with pepper and salt to suit the taste; let it boil up and serve.

REMOVING PAINT STAINS FROM OIL-CLOTH.—A small quantity of soft soap and common soda, applied warm on flannel and carefully rubbed, will remove paint from oil-cloth, or, if not strong enough, a little (very much diluted) caustic potash will effect a clearance. The latter is very strong, and requires caution in using, not to burn or discolor the fingers.—*Boston Journal of Chemistry.*

TO GET RID OF BEDBUGS.—Wash the room and the furniture of the room they frequent with salt water, filling the cracks with salt, and you may look in vain for them. Salt seems inimical to bedbugs, and they will not trail through it. I think it preferable to all ointments, and the buyer requires no certificate as to its genuineness.—*Cor. Exchange.*

HOW TO CHOOSE POULTRY FOR THE TABLE.—Young, plump, well-fed, but not too fat, poultry are the best. The skin should always be fine-grained, clear and white; the breast full-fleshed and broad, the toes pliable and easy to break when bent back; the birds must always be heavy in proportion to their size. This applies to fowls. As regards ducks and geese, their breasts must also be very plump, the feet flexible and yellow. When they are red and hard, with bills of the same color, and skin full of hairs and coarse, they are old. For boiling, the white-legged poultry must be chosen, because, when dressed, their appearance is by far more delicate; but dark-legged ones are more juicy and of better flavor when roasted.—*Toronto Globe.*

THE SHADOW OF FATE.

BY JUDGE JARVIS.

A rider was threading his way over a road which lay along the hills at the base of the Blue Ridge mountains, in the region known as the Piedmont of Virginia, about the sources of the Rappahannock river.

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The man himself might be described in the same language, as far as it would apply. Beyond this his age was about 23, his hair brown and full in lock, his eye of a grayish blue.

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His way quickly brought the traveler to a stream now running over its banks. Slipping easily from his saddle, he tightened the girths, slackened the crupper, and, gently patting his animal, addressed a few affectionate words to him. Remounting, he fixed himself firmly in the saddle, gathered his bridle in a manner to impart to his companion his own energy and determination, and moved into the creek.

Turning up the stream, he proceeded for about a hundred yards along the bank, and then struck boldly across in a direct line, with the horse's head slanted up current. The depth of the water did not sensibly increase in the course of eighty yards, and the stranger was congratulating himself upon the probability of getting over without a wetting, when the animal in two steps increased the depth until he could no longer hold his footing, and sprung boldly into the middle of a deep, rushing channel. In an instant the rider had seized the mane of the horse in his left hand, and slipped smoothly out of the saddle to the lower side, where he floated along.

Man and beast battled bravely with the flood for a moment, when the former was startled to feel the horse flinch and turn with a terrified snort down the current. A quick jerk upon the left rein served to procure but an instant's pause in the precipitate course of the beast, but in that instant the stranger became aware of another presence by the touch of a clammy object against his hand.

Raising his head above the neck of the charger, he saw dimly outlined upon the waving and shimmering surface a dark and undefinable object. The next moment the desperate plunges of the beast had obstructed his vision, when, with the self-command of one accustomed and nerved to the hardship of athletic sports and a soldier's danger, he swung his leg over the back of his animal and gathered himself into his saddle.

Reaching out a hand, he was about to seize the object of his horror, when it exposed the ghastly features of a woman.

For an instant only he hesitated; then, recovering from the thrill, he grasped the head firmly by the loose, flowing, tangled mass of raven tresses, and raised it above the water upon the pommel of his saddle.

Turning his head again up stream, he renewed the combat with the tide. Twice it seemed as though man, woman, and beast must all succumb, and twice the noble struggles of the animal cheated the turgid grave of its victims.

Finally, the hoofs once more crunched the firm bottom of the stream, and ten paces brought the party safely to the shore.

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Feeling the forehead, he found it cold; the hands were also chilled, but he thought he felt a slight flutter of the pulse. Tearing open the dress, he pressed his hand against the heart and found it still warm.

His efforts to resuscitate her were soon rewarded, and, after a few moments, the woman made an attempt to speak, which resulted, however, only in a moaning cry.

At this point he began to look for other assistance, when he observed a light upon the hill above the creek. Once more raising the body to the pommel of his saddle and mounting behind it, he sought the road.

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One stepped around to receive the woman, and another entered the house to procure the stimulant.

"What's this?" said the one who was assisting the traveler in dismounting the woman.

"Send for the nearest physician at once."

They lifted the motionless, but reviving, form into the house, and deposited it upon a sofa.

The stimulant was soon brought, and, upon a small portion of it being administered, the woman indicated an increased vitality by a broken gurgle. This, after a while, gave way to clearer articulation, in which, however, only syllables were emitted. These were in turn succeeded by one or two sharp cries of pain, which gradually subsided into a moaning chatter of wailing, inconsecutive sentences.

At this point the stranger, in raising his hand to her head to brush the tangled hair from her brow, noticed a clot of blood upon the wet skin of his finger; rubbing it off, he found no trace of a wound.

"She must be bleeding!" he ejaculated; "see if there is a cut anywhere."

An examination soon revealed a ghastly wound, an ugly, gaping abrasion upon the left side of the head, above the ear, and just behind the temple. The locks were matted over it, and the blood still oozed slowly from its mouth.

Pending the arrival of a doctor, the stranger clipped the hair from around the wound, and, after bathing it with feminine tenderness, he gave the patient over to the charge of the ladies of the house who were in attendance.

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"I presume you are the host, sir," said he, at once, addressing the elder of the two. "If you will be kind enough to let me have a bed, until I can rest for an hour or so and dry my clothing, I shall resume my journey under great obligation to you. Matters of importance urge me to lose no time, and I shall only delay until my horse can recruit for the balance of my ride. In fact, but for the incident of finding the unfortunate lady in the creek, I should have continued on the road without consulting my comfort so far."

"Will you tell me how you happened upon the adventure, and how you account for the lady's wound and present condition?"

The traveler gave a brief account of the events, without, however, throwing any light upon his own identity or business.

"May I ask your name, sir?" inquired the host, whom we will introduce to the reader as Mr. Thornton, or Squire Thornton, as he was dubbed by his neighbors in honor of his being a Justice of the Peace.

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"I beg pardon for the misconstruction. My name is Gaspard Durer, a short while since a soldier in the French service. Do you see anything in my appearance or anything else about this case which justifies you in interrogating me officially?"

"Until one who is found with a body that has been murdered or dangerously assaulted has accounted satisfactorily for his presence there, there is a legal suspicion fixed upon him."

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"If I must be detained to satisfy the law, I yield to the annoyance with as little impatience as possible, where the officer of the law exercises his duties so courteously."

After a few more remarks were passed, the Squire bade his son Eddie conduct the gentleman to his room and see him well provided for the night.

After the traveler had left, the vagrant still lingered. Shifting his hat restlessly but mechanically, he seemed to resume a conversation which had probably been interrupted by the stranger's exit from the stable.

"'Pears to me now"—an expression which indicated the assent of some mighty reflection for his caliber—"'Pears to me he ain't tellin' the truth. He sin't named Gasper Deray, because he'd a said so fust. 'Pears to me he looks like old Raoul Dupuy, and Gaston afore him; and, if I ain't mistaken, he's been in these parts afore."

"Who's the woman, Randy?"

"I have been lookin' at her, but 'pears to me I never seen her afore—leastways she don't come from about here."

"The resembance of Durer to the Dupuys is striking, and I thought at first he was the son of Gaston, who has been absent so long. What think you, my son?"

"Can't say, father, but his resemblance to Mr. Dupuy at the manor would be noticed by anyone."

"Perhaps," suggested the vagrant, "he's a son of Dupuy himself; if half they bring from furrin parts about him is c'rect, 'pears to me he must have mor'n one.

"And your friend Raoul ain't too good for a frand or lie," chiped the vagrant.

"We will dispense with your comments on the characters of my friends," retorted the Squire.

"No offense, Squire, but 'spense or no 'spense, I knows the laws, and I allers take care to have proof afore I says a libel on any man."

"What do you know of Raoul Dupuy, villain, that you dare maintain such a thing concerning his character, which is polluted by your mention of it?"

"Never mind what I know, Squire, so long as I ain't said it," answered the tramp.

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"What is your opinion, doctor?" asked the Squire.

"It is rather early to ask an opinion about the patient, Squire. The skull is fractured, and it may be necessary to trepan it, if any portion is bearing on the brain."

"Do you think the blow will permanently affect her brain, or that she will be sound in mind should she recover?"

"If the pressure of the bone upon the brain be removed, she will doubtless recover her senses. But, until she is completely well again, and even after, no risk must be taken in the case. Absence of excitement or noise is indispensable, as the slightest mental shock might make her a raving maniac. Blows upon that region of the head have been known to deprive persons of the power of speech, and, if she is not kept perfectly quiet, she may recover only to linger out a dumb existence."

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After breakfast a servant, whom the Squire had dispatched across the creek upon his first arising, returned with the information that Mr. Taylor—the gentleman whom the stranger had left at his gate on the road—would be over immediately after breakfast.

Upon the arrival of Mr. Taylor, he and the Squire retired for a consultation, to which they after a while called Randy, the vagrant. They then returned to the traveler, and after hearing his account once more, and comparing the time of his leaving Mr. Taylor with that of his arrival at the Squire's, they proceeded to the creek in company.

Upon their arrival the squire addressed the traveler:

"I have taken counsel with Mr. Taylor touching this case, which seems a deep mystery, after all the information we have been so far able to gather; the lady seems unknown even to Randy, who visits every house in this and the adjoining counties, and you are equally a stranger to us. I consider, however, that you have been fully discharged from any connection with the affair. We must first attempt to gather something from the lady herself."

At this point the doctor came out of the sick-room. He stated that the lady had greatly improved during the night, and that the wound was, in all probability, not serious; the lady had even recovered, in a measure, the control of her mental faculties and language, though she was not fully conscious or coherent as yet.

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The Squire, Mr. Taylor, the traveler, and the doctor together proceeded to the bedside of the unfortunate woman, the stranger—being assured of his release by the words of the Squire—first ordering a servant to bring his horse to the door before leaving the piazza.

Upon reaching the bed the woman opened her eyes, and, seeing the kind, manly faces of the Squire and Mr. Taylor, she faintly smiled, and ran her eyes over the rest of the group.

She passed the doctor without any variance of expression, and then rested them upon the face of the stranger.

The eyes became set in a horrible stare, the light forsook them, the pupils dilated; she raised herself to a sitting posture by a convulsive movement of the arms; then, crouching to her knees and throwing herself wildly down upon her face, she shrieked out, with a curdling moan:

"Oh, oh, Dupuy! don't, don't!" and consciousness once more left her.

Despite his self-command, the traveler paled. He at once retired with the gentlemen, however, to the piazza, and the doctor moved to assist his patient.

In a short while he, too, joined the party upon the piazza. Nothing had passed between the group until the doctor broke a painful constraint which had fallen upon all.

"Gentlemen," said he, "the worst mishap that could befall this unfortunate lady has just occurred through her having seen this gentleman, Mr. Durer. She is a raving maniac. She may die, she may recover, after a lingering illness; but, in any event, she will be fortunate if she ever recovers her reason. Darkness has settled upon her brain for a long night, which may never be followed by the dawn."

"To what, doctor," asked the Squire, "do you attribute her shock?"

"She was evidently stricken with horror at the sight of Mr. Durer, whom, from my knowledge of the laws of the human brain, she has in some way associated with the violence which has been done her, to her great terror."

There was a pause, a painful lull.

Then the Squire spoke to Durer.

"The case, sir, has taken a new turn. You will not be surprised that I conclude it my duty to commit you, to await further developments in the matter."

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Upon the last syllable he strode from the piazza, booted and spurred, his steps clanging an echo to his voice. One spring and he has vaulted into his saddle; he brushes away the servant who holds his bit with imperial disdain, and turns his horse at the gate.

The animal clears it with the activity and fire of his master, gathers himself on the other side, and before the Squire can recover from the stupor of amazement, is off like the wind.

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The above is a synopsis of "THE SHADOW OF FATE," by Judge Jarvis, a wonderfully dramatic and powerful novel, which began in No. 660 of FRANK LESLIE'S CHIMNEY CORNER, now for sale at all news depots. It is a story of adventure and devotion, of an interest beyond that of any novel published for years. With No. 660 of FRANK LESLIE'S CHIMNEY CORNER is presented an exquisite steel engraving, "Love's Young Dream;" with No. 661, "Dressed for Baptism," a picture appealing to every family; with No. 662, "Nina." These three engravings cannot be purchased in the print stores under FIFTEEN DOLLARS. The price of the CHIMNEY CORNER is 10 cents weekly, or $4 per annum. Anyone wishing to enjoy the excellent stories, instructive and entertaining matter in this popular paper can receive it for three months, free of postage, by remitting ONE DOLLAR to FRANK LESLIE, 537 Pearl street, NEW YORK. Try it, and commence with No. 660, thus securing these three exquisite engravings.

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