

THE LUCKY HORSESHOE.

BY JAMES T. FIELDS.

A farmer traveling with his load
Picked up a horseshoe in the road,
And nailed it fast to his horse's hoof,
That every blessing known in life
Might crown his horse and his wife,
And make some kind of home
Descent upon his growing farm.

But dire ill-fortune soon began
To visit the astonished man.
His horse sprang over his eggs;
His bacon turned from the pug,
And rats devoured the fallen legs;
His coat was torn, his shirt was rent,
Misted and rotted the floor;
His grass refused to eat in hay;
His cart was broken, and
In short, all moved the crooked way.

Next spring a great drought bade the soil,
And rotted every crop in pod;

The sun beat down, the water did not grow
So long as nature acted so;

Rebundant crops were the only food;

The slaves from barrel sides went off

As if the world were at an end,
And none of the useful kind

To hold together felt inclined;

In short, all moved the crooked way;

While all the land was in a fry.

One more, demoralized with grief,

The farmer clamped for self;

And prayed right hard to understand

What he could do to turn his land;

Why he had up that "lucky shoe."

While thus the gods seemed to frown,

One more claimed to droop along

To whom he told with worn wood tears,

How his affairs were in arrears,

And who could help him out;

A picked-up horseshoe sometimes brings.

The stranger asked to see the shoe,

The farmer brought it into view;

But when the old man raised his head,

He said, "I am not quite so quicky."

"No water skies upon you now—

—you're not the last to turn your head;

Turn it round, and soon you'll see

You and your Fortune will agree."

—*Harper's Magazine.*

THE GOLD SOVEREIGN.

"Red wins!"

It was the croupier's hoarse cry, again and again reiterated, only diversified with that of "red loses!" which broke the silence of the suddenly appointed room at *Homburg*, with the gaming-table in its center, around which were gathered its votaries, behind whom were the scarcely less interested group of lookers-on.

"Come away, my dear," said a very lovely woman among the spectators, in a whisper, to her husband. "I am sorry, that we came. This is no place for Pearl," indicating with a nod of the head, as she spoke, an exquisitely beautiful girl, scarcely more than a child, of some twelve or thirteen summers, who stood beside them.

"Come, Pearl," the father said.

But the girl stood entranced, her eyes fixed upon a man's face, seated at the farthest end of the table. It was a strikingly handsome face, even when wearing, as it now did, an expression of calm, born of desperation. No tinge of color was either cheek or lip.

Her eyes, showing a courage and hard glint, were fixed upon the balls as they swung round, as though on the color uppermost, hung his hope of life or death.

And so it was. He had sat down possessed of a fortune; he wore a bright, fat head, and pursued him with mocking hopelessness, until he had placed his star to sit it, more mercilessly swept from him.

He half arose from the table. What more was to be done, save to go out somewhere into the still night air and send a bullet through his heart or brain.

It was at this moment the girl, with flushed cheeks and half-parted lips, darted up to his side.

"Take this," she pleaded, "for my sake," and pressed a gold piece into his hand.

He turned. To his excited imagination she seemed scarcely mortal in her beauty, child-like innocence. His first impulse was to return her offering—but again rang out the croupier's cry of "red loses!"

The child stood breathless in her eager expectancy, her eyes burning with fire.

A sudden impulse overmastered him. Without speaking a word, he placed the gold upon the table.

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"You would know the history of that," he said. "Let me tell you, I years ago in *Homburg*. The game-table, knowledge, Mrs. Somers," he explained. "I assure you I have never been so fortunate as to secure a sitting."

"Well, you shall have one now, and you must thank me for it," she rejoined, while Margaret turned away to examine the sketches and studies lying about in plain confusion.

"How many sketches taken while I was studying abroad, Miss Reynburn," said Harold. "Will you amuse yourself by looking at them?"

"I will return in a few moments," interrupted Mrs. Somers. "Wait for me, my dear."

A word of expostulation rose to Margaret's lips, but too late. The door had closed behind the speaker.

Silently fell between the two thus left behind, while a low cry arrested Harold's attention. He sprang to Miss Reynburn's side.

The child stood breathless in her eager expectancy, her eyes burning with fire.

"A sudden impulse overmastered him. Without speaking a word, he placed the gold upon the table."

The next minute a small pile of gold was at his elbow. He staked it all again. And his won. A bright spot of scarlet replaced the pallor in his cheek, which spread and deepened, as Dame Fortune, who was so persistently frowned upon him, now reserved for him only her smiles.

Morning was breaking when he rose from the tables, no longer a desperate man, but with his fortune three-fold restored to him.

After his first winning he had turned to return to the child her offering, but she had gone. He had sought her, and her, ever repay the debt? "He knew not her, standing at last out under the clear, pale sky, with a great weight lifted from his heart and brain. Harold Clayton vowed that it should be his life-search, but that the lesson taught him should never be forgotten, and the gaming-tables should remain closed.

"In she, then, so beautiful?" he questioned.

"Judge for yourself," she lightly rejoined, leading him to a little group, and glancing around, he met the smiling face of his hostess.

"Come," she said, "I want to present you to my wife. If you can prevail upon her to give you a sitting, and transfer her colors to canvass, you will render your immortal!"

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"Miss Reynburn—Mr. Clayton," were the formal words of the introduction, as Harold bowed in acknowledgement before the woman whose artistic eye confessed the most beautiful woman in all his life he had ever met.

Before the evening had overtaken him, he had added the first woman in his life over loved, since she had awakened him within the scope of his fascinations.

Yet her nature remained an enigma to him. Although so young in years, so beautiful in form and feature, she seemed cold even to haughtiness, reticent almost to scorn.

It was as though some exquisite masterpiece had risen in his pathway, which he could not, but he scarcely acknowledged it to himself, only away from Miss Reynburn he was helpless and uneasy, until he found himself within the scope of her fascinations.

Another New Plant.

A curious plant has been discovered in Wisconsin, which produces a kind of cotton and flax from the same stalk. An exchange says: It has already been woven into fabrics, and as good cloths as can be made from this plant, which is called good paper, it has been called the paper plant. It can be planted in the fall and winter. It breeds itself white as it stands, and it will yield three or four tons to the acre. From a single root that was transplanted last spring, it grew twenty large stocks, with three hundred and sixty-five pods containing the cotton, and sixty-six seeds in each. From this root were obtained seven ounces of pure cotton, and over a pound of flax. It is a very heavy plant, and grows from six to seven feet high.

Cause and Effect.

The main cause of nervousness is indigestion, and that is caused by weakness of the stomach.

One can have sound nerves and good health—without having Hop Bitters to strengthen the stomach, and to make the liver and kidneys active, to carry off all the powers and waste matter of the system, see other column—*Adventures.*

He went back to his studio, wretched and despairing, and seated himself at his easel. He had not meant to paint her face—his brain seemed unconscious of his fingers' touch yet, and the features smiling upon him from the canvas, and he remembered the words his hostess had uttered of the night he first had met her—that thus he should render himself immortal.

He grew pale and was in the days of anxious suspense, when those who were watching over her couch, did not which would be the angel of life or death. But there came an hour, never to be forgotten, when he was admitted into her presence upon his growing farm.

He was very white, very fragile, but more beautiful than in the coloring of perfect health. A new expression, too, was in the violet eyes raised to welcome him. The words of his hostess had uttered upon him the first morning of his life.

"I am very glad to see you again," she said, gently. "I hear you have been anxious about me. You were very kind."

Then the words he had not meant to speak burst from his lips.

"Anxious?" he said, "can a man, Miss Reynburn, perish of hunger, hear of the famine without shudder? I am prepared to meet any fate."

The slaves from barrel sides went off As if the world were at an end, And none of the useful kind To hold together felt inclined; In short, all moved the crooked way.

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Gossip for the Ladies.

Her Rival.

"The belle?" "The hard to say, and yet There is a Cuban here—
"Her style?" "Her style?" Brunette
The darling of her sphere.

I've watched her, and she never moves
But some man walks close by;
And yet there's no one who loves her
But the man she loves.

"She's a little chit, and she wears
Her hair in two plaits;
And yet the sweet silence that she wears
Their malice does eclipse.

"I praise?" "Ah! no! One seldom hears
Her name mentioned;
And yet the sweet silence that she wears
Her hair in two plaits.

"Her manner?" "Never grave;
"Her golden mean," you say;
And yet the woman raves;

"I'm glad to see you again,"
she said, gently. "I hear you have been anxious about me. You were very kind."

Then the words he had not meant to speak burst from his lips.

"Anxious?" he said, "Truly, I do.
My love. I don't mind this to you—
It ended all in smoke;

What crying? "Hate her?" Then I fear
How she's got the last too far!"

"How's the last too far?"

"And her name is just—Cigar!
—*Scriveners.*

* * * An Expensive Accident.

At a fashionable dinner party a lady guest was so unfortunate as to break a plate belonging to a set of French china. The maid, by accident, knocked or replacing it, but finding both impossible she was obliged to send abroad and duplicate the entire set of 200 pieces.

* * * A Fraud.

An unattractive Englishman, visiting out-of-the-way Boston, saw a handily-dressed young lady on the street and was told that she was the daughter of a wealthy merchant. He became acquainted, and the girl, knowing the woman who watched the interests of an elegant house whose owners were at the seashore, was permitted by her to receive him there. She also gave him dinners there, hiring waiters. She told him that her parents were in Europe. He proposed, was accepted, and found that the wife he had won was a shop girl.

She then will let her daughters enjoy the liberty she used without grave abuse.

As nothing serious happened to him, he said, he was not so then.

"I shall never marry," she answered;

"but," and in her voice crept an almost pleading tone, "I need my friends very much, Mr. Clayton. Do not desert me!"

"I cannot," he replied. To desyon went to be desyon the hope of one day forcing you to unsay those cruel words— the hope which will go with the wife he had won.

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