FIELD AND GARDEN.

IRRIGATION.—The soils most suitable for irrigation are those of a porous nature, like sand and gravel. Clay and peat soils are not so often benefited by it, except in dry and tropical climates. Crops specially adapted for irrigation are, first, of grasses and leguminous plants, rye-grass, and lucerne, which yield the best results from it. The different species of cabbage, beet and turnip thrive well with occasional waterings, as to grain crops up to the period of inflorescence, after which watering becomes injurious to them, except for very short interval when the grain is filling. In small holdings and upon market-garden farms the benefits of irrigation would no doubt be very great, even if considerable expense was involved in obtaining the necessary water, as vegetables in growing state require lots of moisture—70 and 90 per cent., sometimes more. The circumstances favouring irrigation are a good water supply and the possibility of applying some part of it to irrigation. Streams, where they exist, furnish the most ample and most economical supply of water. Sometimes drainage water can be used for irrigation purposes—lands lying in low situations on the borders of rivers, or in sloping directions on hillsides, where a command of water can be obtained from higher ground. The success of irrigation depends a good deal on the climate; it answers better in a dry one than a moist one; it will also be more profitable in a mild and genial climate, as it will naturally then produce heavier crops.

PERCHES FOR FOWLS.—Most farmers make a mistake in having the perches of their poultry-houses raised one high above the other, like steps. The fowls all try to get on to the highest perch, and accidents frequently result. The proper plan is to have all the perches in a fowl-house upon the same level, and preferably low down; then there is no struggling and fighting for the highest place. Especially is this necessary in the case of the heavier breeds, such as Orpingtons, Brahmas and Dorkings, which are liable to damage themselves very seriously by falling from perches placed high up. The perches should always be wide enough—narrow sticks of the brooms-tail type are worse than useless, for they not only prevent the birds from sleeping comfortably without danger of overbalancing, but they tend to produce "bumble-foot"—a complaint very difficult to cure.

DRY ROT IN TIMBER.—The various processes for the prevention of dry rot in timber are applicable mainly to the wood before it is worked up, and it is doubtful whether there is any remedy now short of removing the affected timbers and improving the ventilation. The fungus which attacks timber and causes the well-known powdery degeneration is differently named according to the tree from which the timber is cut, but the method of attack and the action of the mycelium in destroying the cohesion of the tissues of the timber is in each case the same. It is supposed that dry rot begins with a decomposition of the sap in unseasoned timber, and winter-felled timber is not so liable to the disease as that cut while the sap is flowing freely. The circumstances that are most favourable to the development of the dry-rot fungus are damp, unventilated situations, and a sub-acid state of the wood. Solutions of corrosive sublimate, sulphate and muriate of lime, and sulphate of iron, sulphate of copper, chloride of zinc, and creosote are among the chemical agents employed in the protection of timber from dry rot, but whether any of these could be effectively employed to prevent its extension in timber in which it has already set in, and which is fixed in position in a building, it is unable to say. It is difficult to see how they could be effectively employed.

RATIONS FOR MILKING COWS.—Give generous feeds of unchopped hay evening and morning, as much as is cleared up with relish. Of unchopped hay and straw for chaff work as much off as you can with the roots—this latter for economy's sake a good deal. Chaff and roots may be fed morning, noon, and night in small feeds, say half a scuttleful to each cow. It is not advised to cram the rack or manger—little and often is the line to work on. As to barley-meal, it appears the only substantial concentrated food given, and not ideal either. Serve, however, 8lb. per day of it, giving equal parts morning and evening mixed in a little of the chaff. Of mangel and swedes give just as many as keep the animals' bowels in free working order, but swedes must not be put in the mixture so plentifully as to make the butter "taste." It is said by some folk that roots are best served directly after the cows are milked to prevent unpleasant taste in butter. Bran may be given at the rate of one gallon (or a bit over) per head per day, divided into two feeds, served morning and evening, and grain may be served in a similar manner, but in larger quantities, even at the rate of half a bushel or six gallons per day per head.

GLADIOLUS GANDAVENSIS.—The corms of Gladiolus Gandavensis should be placed firm in the trench or hole made for it about three inches deep and covered as lightly as possible with the fine top-soil. The ground should be kept thoroughly clean from weeds, which, if allowed to make headway proves detrimental to the health of the plant, causing the leaves to turn yellow. Before the plants get too high the ground should be mulched with stable litter or chaff to keep it moist after watering, which should be done copiously in dry weather. It is also very convenient to walk upon when cutting the spikes. When the spikes begin to show they should be watched, and those inclined to bend should have a stake put to them. Other strong varieties will not hurt unless blown over by the wind, when they should be placed upright at once by simply pushing a small stake or cane slantways against it so that the top part comes under the flower bud. Another important process is when cutting the spikes not to take too many leaves from the plant, which would deter the development of the corm. A good method to adopt is to hold the spike in the left-hand, then with the right-hand insert the point of a sharp knife in the middle of the stem, at about the length required. Then with a slight twist with the left-hand the stem comes clean out and the leaves are left intact as though the plant had not flowered. A succession of bloom may be obtained from a very small collection from July to the first week in November, by planting at intervals, providing frost does not set in before.

PEAS.—SUITABLE SORTS FOR SMALL GARDEN.—Tall growing varieties of peas are unsuitable for small gardens, as they shade other crops, and require tall stick which are often difficult to obtain. Chelsea Gem is a first early wrinkled marrow, very hardy, free bearing, and of first-rate quality. Wordsley wonder is an excellent second early variety, very robust and producing its long, dark, well-filled pods in great profusion. It is not so well known as it deserves to be. Stratagem is a variety that has stood the test of time and still holds its own as one of the best all-round peas in cultivation. The pods, which are long and handsome, are covered with a dense bloom, and contain from eight to nine large, deep green peas of delicious quality. The seed should be procured from a reliable source, as there is an inferior variety with pale green pods in commerce. Fillbasket is one of the most profitable varieties. If well grown, it produces its long, curved, handsome, deep green pods for a long time, and the quality is all that can be desired. Autocrat is a grand drought-resisting sort, and well adapted for light soils. If mulched and well watered, it is astonishing how long it will continue bearing.

BONE MEAL.—Among chemical manures bone-meal is one of the best. It should be fine as flour, and sown on a perfectly quiet day, or the wind will carry it over the fences. The quantity to apply is according to the quality or the amount of phosphates it contains. A very good bone-meal may be obtained for about five pounds per ton, which would be enough for three acres of lawn. Where only small quantities are required, the bonemeal may be bought in by the hundredweight, and applied at the rate of four ounces per square yard. The great value of this manure is that it keeps feeding the grass throughout the season, encouraging the better kinds of grasses to grow, and also the clovers. Basic slag is another manure most suitable for lawns, having somewhat the same effect as bonemeal, but not being quite so rich, it should be applied at the rate of four ounces to the square yard. The weeds, which are so troublesome on the lawns, must either be got up with an old knife, or every crown must be cove ed with a little heap of salts.

REUNITED.

A STORY BY

A POPULAR AUTHOR.

SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTERS 1–2.—Mrs. Rosser, the widow of a farmer, with her two sons Paul and Harry and an adopted daughter Clara Leroy, are prosperous farmers. The time is the eve of the American Civil War and the adherents to North and South in the one family sundered kinship, and so it way with Paul and Harry, as their sympathies were divided, Harry being for the South and Paul for the North. Harry was engaged to Dora Burns, the daughter of a neighbour; but Dora broke off the engagement on learning that her lover was going to the South and would therefore be an enemy of her father, who was in the North. This did not deter him and he left to take up his command as captain of a company.

CHAPTER 3.—In the meantime Paul left to join the belligerents of the North, but not before he had declared his love to Clara Leroy. Before many days hostilities had commenced.

CHAPTER IV.

FACE TO FACE.

"HURRAH! Zollicoffer's army is over the Cumberland!"

The cry ran through Kentucky, bringing despair to some, carrying joy and exultation to many.

And what an army that was! It was composed of young men; the flower of Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee; all full of courage and high hopes; all ready to make any sacrifice for a cause, of the ultimate success of which they had no doubt. Better horsemen the sun never shone on, and men more familiar with the rifle could not be found; but they had yet to learn that it takes more than horsemanship, more than skill with the rifle, and more than high courage to make a soldier.

Discipline was only a form in Zollicoffer's army. But had he been a trained soldier instead of a cultured lawyer, it is doubtful if, in a few months, he could have reduced to soldierly obedience the daring young spirits with which he found himself surrounded.

There were hundreds of private soldiers in that army who had not only provided their own horses and arms and their own uniforms—such as they were—but who actually came provided with their own body servants and waggons to carry their own supplies; as if they thought war a picnic, and the battlefield a one-sided hunt.

As a captain of cavalry, Harry Rosser felt justified in keeping his servant, Ovy, with him; but, unlike a majority of his comrades, he did not affect to treat with contempt the valour of the army General Thomas was then heading South to oppose the Confederates.

Harry Rosser had the born instincts of a soldier, and though he had not the authority to enforce discipline outside his own command, he set an example he would have the others follow, by constant drill when in camp, and that attention to military detail on the march, with which inferior men can be made into good soldiers, and without which the bravest men are unfitted for regular warfare.

General Zollicoffer was a man in the prime of life, with a strikingly handsome person and the soul of a poet. From the very first he became attached to Harry Rosser, and to him and his company he entrusted the dangerous but essential duty of scouting in the advance of the Unionists, who were hourly coming nearer from their rendezvous at Camp Dick Robinson.

The night of the 17th of January, 1862, was dark, and the drizzling rain, that had softened the mountain roads into a marsh, froze on the horses and equipments of the cavalry in the Union advance, and chilled to the bone the vigilant scouts under Captain Harry Rosser, who knew himself to be in the same woods with his foemen.

Ovy, who had no love for war but much love for his young master, remained with the company, and he had built a fire in the shelter of a little hill, and was making some coffee, when, about midnight, two men came in, bringing with them a prisoner.

The blue tunic, with its yellow trimmings, and the long boots and belted sabre told that the young man belonged to the Union cavalry.

Seeing that the prisoner looked cold and hungry, Harry shared with him the coffee, corn, bread and bacon Ovy had prepared, and then asked:

"What is your name?"

"My name's Sam Martin," said the prisoner, with the unmistakeable accent of an East Tennessean.

"What is your regiment?"

"Ain't j'ined to no reegment yet," was the reply.

"You belong to an independent company, then?"

"Go up head: guessed it first time," said the prisoner, as he drained the last drop of coffee from the tin cup.

"Who commands your company?"

"Captain Rosser," was the astounding reply.

"Captain Rosser!" exclaimed Harry.

"Yes, sir—Captain Paul Rosser; an' if you don't light out right smart, afore daylight, he'll warm you more'n if all the woods 'bout har was afire," said the prisoner, as, in obedience to a request from one of Harry's men, he took off his sword and threw it, with his belt, on the ground.

"Ha! has Mauss Paul got a boy wid him named 'Virgy?' Coz, if he has, dat's my brudder, and Ize bound to see him," said Ovid; and he looked as if ready to start off the instant he received an answer in the affirmative.

Before the prisoner could reply to this, Harry ordered him to be taken to the rear, and then he wrote a note, and sent it to General Zollicoffer, saying that he did not feel well, and asking that another company be sent forward to take his place.

He did not equivocate in saying he was ill. The news brought by the prisoner unnerved him for the time, and made him feel like a coward. The meeting he had dreaded, and which he tried to believe was impossible, had come about, and, here, on the eve of his very first battle, he found himself face to face with the brother whom he loved even the more for the danger he was subjected to—the brother for whom he would die, without question, to shield from harm.

That night Captain Harry Rosser was relieved, and Captain Paul Rosser the next morning led his men through the woods, near Somerset, which his brother had guarded a few hours before.

From information received before leaving home, Paul believed that Harry was at that time with General Buckner at Fort Donelson. He was, therefore, not a little startled, on the afternoon of the 18th, to learn from a farmer, at whose house he stopped, that Captain Rosser, of the Confederate Army, had been there the day before.

Paul was hoping that his informant might be mistaken, when Howard Raymond appeared on the scene, and said that he had seen a muster-roll of Zollicoffer's army, and that Harry Rosser was that officer's chief of scouts.

Paul was not a little surprised to see Howard Raymond in the uniform of a Union staff officer. He had never liked the man, and the fact that they were now fighting under the same flag gave him no reason to change his feelings.

He knew only too well of his brother's love for Dora Burns, and of Raymond's rivalry; but this apart, he disliked the man because of his bitter and ignoble character.

"Captain Rosser," was Raymond's salutation, "you will have your mettle tried to-morrow."

"What do you mean?" asked Paul.

"I mean that we shall be on the banks of the Cumberland, and the enemy are eager for our coming."

"I do not know how it is with you, Raymond," replied Paul, "but, as for myself, I entered the army with the full expectation of meeting the enemy, and as to my mettle, I am not afraid to have it tested."

"Oh! I did not mean to doubt your courage," Raymond hastened to say. "I had only in mind the fact that you will be fighting face to face with your own brother. This may not affect you, for you are made of stern stuff, but I must confess the knowledge would weaken me, if I was so unfortunate as to be in the same position."

"If Harry is in the army in our front, you will hardly care to find out for yourself the particular part of the field he is defending, unless it may be for the purpose of avoiding it," said Paul, and he turned away to avoid giving vent to his indignation.

"You may change your mind about that," hissed Raymond, adding, when Paul had gone out of hearing: "You ought to be on the same side as your brother; our side wouldn't lose much by the change."

Through the night of the 18th, men from Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana and Ohio pushed South through the woods and fields, for the artillery and waggon trains had cut up the roads till they were impassable for infantry.

Before daylight, the little army under General Thomas came to a halt, and went into camp along Fishing Creek, near the village of Somerset.

A circle of fires to the South told that the point for which they had been straining through weary marches was reached, and that the light of another day would see the opening of the battle, and be the last day to many a stalwart man now on the picket-line, or standing in dripping great-coats about the campfires.

There was no singing, no joking, no loud talking on either side; for no matter how brave the man, he has doubts of his own courage on the eve of his first battle, and he cannot keep from himself the question: "How will it be with me on the morrow?"

Paul Rosser's men had just fed their horses, and were eating an early breakfast in a clump of timber, about a mile from the opposing army, when an aid galloped out of the darkness, reined in before the fire, and after saluting, asked:

"Is this Captain Rosser?"

"That is my name," was the reply.

"I bear you an order from General Thomas."

The aid took the order from his dispatch pouch, and Paul knelt before the fire and read:

"Captain Rosser will at once move his command to the extreme right, where he will find a body of the enemy's cavalry posted. Drive them back, and hold the ground till further orders."

"All right," said the captain.

The aid took a receipt for the dispatch, wheeled his horse, and disappeared.

Day was breaking when Paul gave the order to "saddle up and mount."

Bugles were sounding and drums were rattling in the camp to the south. A silence like death pervaded the camp to the north.

Every man in Paul's command was a good rider, and knew well how to handle the carbine with which he had been provided, but the sabres, with which all were armed and with which none were familiar, were worse than useless—they were in the way. The men fastened them to the pommels of their saddles, and only a sense of duty kept the green troopers from throwing them away.

Over a soggy cornfield they rode, and, just as they were about to gallop into the woods, they were met by a scattering fire that brought them to a halt, and knocked one man from his horse.

It was the first man any of them had seen fall in actual combat, and a feeling of mingled curiosity and humanity swept away all thought of discipline for the moment, and the men gathered about the poor fellow gasping on the ground. Little they thought then how familiarity with such scenes would make them indifferent.

Paul saw the danger, and ordered the men forward.

They discharged their carbines and dashed into the woods, a small body of horsemen giving way before them, and leaving two of their wounded companions behind.

Meanwhile, the rattle of musketry, the booming of artillery, and cheers and yells came from the undulating space to the left, where the first battle between kinsmen was being fought in Kentucky.

Over the field there hung a canopy of silvery smoke, through which bayonets gleamed and the artillery flashed, but the battle tide came no nearer to Paul Rosser and the men on the hill.

About the middle of the afternoon it became evident that the Southern troops were falling back on the river, and to Paul this was confirmed by the appearance of Howard Raymond, who galloped up with an order, commanding him to support a section of Kinney's Battery, which was hurrying to the river bank to prevent Zollicoffer's men—or rather Crittenden's, for Zollicoffer had been killed—from crossing.

Raymond said his instructions were to see this order carried out, and so he accompanied Paul Rosser's troop to the river, where the artillery was unlimbering.

Already many of the Southern troops had been ferried over at a point lower down, and out of range of Kinney's guns.

While they were watching the two steamers plying back and forth, there suddenly shot out from the northern shore, not two hundred yards away, a little yawl, rowed by a black man, and with a white man in the stern.

Paul looked at them through his glass, and, to his horror, he saw that the occupants of the boat were his brother and Ovid. At the same time he heard Raymond shouting, as he rushed to the guns:

"Fire, men! Fire! Don't let that man escape!"

On seeing his brother's danger, Paul Rosser forgot all about the victory, all about the war, everything, indeed, but his love for the brave youth down in the river.

"Stop!" he shouted to the men who were training the two pieces of artillery so as to bear on the fugitive.

"Get out of the way!" thundered the lieutenant who was in charge of the guns, and who stood with the lanyard of one of them in his hand, ready to fire when the piece had been sufficiently depressed.

Paul sprang directly in front of the nearest gun and the artillerymen looked at him in amazement.

"Shoot him down if he does not get out of the way!" roared Raymond.

Looking directly at the artillery officer, and pointing over his shoulder at the river, Paul called out:

"That man in the boat is my brother!"

"But an enemy!" hissed Raymond.

"Blood is thicker than water, Captain," said the young officer, as he dropped the lanyard; "and confound the man who won't stand by his brother, whether in blue or grey!"

Paul Rosser ran forward, seized the artilleryman's hand, and then turned to watch the boat, which, caught by the mid-current of the river, was sweeping down and out of sight.

"I shall report this!" said Raymond, as, with an oath, he flung himself on his horse. "I'll report this to the general at once!"

The artilleryman sent back the oath with interest, and suggested to Raymond the propriety of going home and having a responsible guardian appointed.

Meanwhile, the boat drifted down the river. It was a rather leaky affair, and it was only by constant bailing that Harry could keep it afloat, while Ovid pulled at the oars with all his might. Indeed, he pulled so hard that one of the oars broke, and at once the boat was at the mercy of the current.

"Great massy!" cried Ovid, when he realised the situation. "We's a-driftin' to de side we come from, an' if we gets dar, we'll fall into de hands of dem dog-goned Yankees!"

It looked for a time very much as if this would be their fate, but, telling Ovid to bail, Harry took the remaining oar, and, standing erect in the stern, he used it as a paddle, and so kept away from the dangerous bank.

It was dark for an hour, and they had drifted about eight miles from their place of departure, when, guided by a light on the left bank, and favoured by the slowness of the current at that point, Harry succeeded in making a landing. His men had been forced to abandon their horses, but he sent them all over the river in the steamer some time before he left the dangerous side.

He had with him his own arms and a considerable sum of money, so that he did not fear for himself, so long as he kept out of reach of the enemy.

"I tell you what, Mauss Harry," said Ovid, after they had abandoned the boat and climbed up the slippery bank: "dis yar t'ing of warrin' an' fightin' ain't what it's cracked up to be! Golly! jest t'ink how nice it'd be ef you an' me was bofe home at de ole place now! We wouldn't be cold an' wet an' hungry, and not know whar to go, very long. But now it does 'pear powerful like 's ef de Confed'rit Army had lost us!"

"Don't lose heart, Ovy; we'll come out right after awhile," said Harry, with affected cheerfulness.

"Wal, sah, de fac' is, I ain't got no heart to lose," groaned Ovy.

"Then you'd like to go home?"

"For a fac', sah, I would."

"Very well. We'll find some place to stay to-night, and to-morrow I'll give you money and start you back."

"An' you, Mauss Harry? w'at 's yeh gwine to do wid yehsel'?"

"I shall make my way back to the army and fight till the end."

"Den I'ze gwine to stan' by yeh. No, sah; you can't send me away, ef you don't come along. I told mammy I'd stick to you cl'ar de ind, an' I ain't gwine to let you send me home. Now, let me tote yer gun an' make foh some house. Dar must be one close by, foh it seems to me pawahful like's ef I smelt hoe-cake an' fried chicken."

Harry laughed, for he thought the boy's imagination was as strong as his appetite, and together they made their way through the woods, in the direction of the light they had seen from the river.

After groping along for about a mile, they heard the sharp, wolfish barking of a dog, and soon after a steady light came to view in front; in the centre of which they could see the dark outline of a woman's form.

(To be continued.)

CLEARING THE UPPER NILE.

EXPEDITION TO AVENGE AN OFFICER'S MURDER.

The Ministry of War at Cairo has communicated the following news:—The Sirdar, Sir Rudolf Slatin Pasha, and several other British officers are expected to arrive at Khartum in a day or two from a trip to the Upper Nile, where they proceeded as far as Gondo Koro. They also visited the Belgian posts at Lado and Kiro, where the Congo Free State officers received them cordially. The Soudan Government has established posts at Shambeh and Mongalla, which latter place is 15 miles north of Gondo Koro. The punitive expedition against the Kinkas, who murdered Lieutenant Scott-Barbour, of the Highland Light Infantry, together with 40 men, left Shambeh on March 8 for Rumbek, where it will co-operate with Lieutenant-Colonel Hunter, who, hearing of the incident, promptly left head-quarters and prevented the spread of the rising. The low Nile rendered the voyage between Gondo Koro and Kiro difficult. An early flood is, however, expected, as the rain has already begun falling. The Sirdar was fully satisfied with the sudd cutting executed by Major Peake last year, which has greatly assisted the flow of water. Another expedition under Major Matthews is now removing other sudds. The health of the garrisons on the Upper Nile is now good, though during the rainy season the men suffer from malaria. Sir Rudolf Slatin joined the Sirdar at Fashoda, after effecting a tour of inspection across the Bahr-el-Ghazal, during which he visited the powerful Sultan of Shakshak.

LORD METHUEN'S RELEASE.

ARRIVAL AT KLERKSDORP.

The War Office has issued the following official dispatch from Lord Kitchener:—"Pretoria, March 13 (2.25 p.m).—Lord Methuen was brought in to Klerksdorp to-day, and is doing well. Everything possible is being done for him.

In the House of Commons Mr. O'Dowd asked the Secretary of State for War whether he could name the date fixed upon for the trial of Kruitzinger, or whether it was proposed that that officer should be exchanged as a prisoner of war for Lord Methuen.

Mr. Brodrick: The reply to both question is in the negative. The trial of Kruitzinger was postponed, as the evidence was not complete. As regards Lord Methuen, he and Colonel Townsend were expected at Klerksdorp about 2 o'clock that day. The medical officer in attendance states that they are both doing well (cheers).

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman: The Secretary for War speaks of Lord Methuen and Colonel Townsend being expected at Klerksdorp. Does that mean that they have been released from captivity, or that they are going to be released and handed over to the British authorities?

Mr. Brodrick: That is not specially mentioned in the telegram, but I presume, from the fact that they are arriving at Klerksdorp, and under the attendance of a British medical officer, that they have been released (cheers).

Mr. Healy: May I ask the right hon. gentleman if the British Government will be equally magnanimous and release Kruitzinger? (Nationalist cheers).

No answer was given.

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS AND THE POOR LAW.

In the King's Bench Division, in the case of the King v. Moore and others (Justices) (ex parte Saunby), a rule had been obtained at the instance of an agricultural labourer named Saunby, calling upon the Justices and the Guardians of Boston, Lincolnshire, to show cause why an order made by the Justices directing him to pay 1s. per week towards the support of his mother should not be brought up by certiorari and quashed. The matter now came on for argument, and on behalf of the Guardians and Justices it was said that they had evidence before them of Saunby's ability to pay, as the Relieving Officer said he earned 18s. a week, and although the appellant denied that, and said he was only earning 15s. a week, he did not go into the witness-box and state that and did not cross-examine the officer. On the other hand, it was argued that the "sufficient ability" which had been proved under the statute of Elizabeth before an order was made was an ability to maintain and relieve a parent to the full extent, and that orders for so much a week were illegal. The Act was not, it was said, intended to apply to labourers. It was also said that even if such orders were proper there was no evidence of Saunby's ability, because the evidence given was merely hearsay, and the Relieving Officer in an affidavit stated that certain figures showed an average of 18s. a week, when, in fact, they showed an average of 16s. Mr. Clarke Hall showed cause against the rule, which was supported by Mr. Cyril Dodd, K.C.—The Court discharged the rule with costs.

GOING TO SCHOOL DRUNK.

At Lutterworth, the other morning a schoolmaster was shocked to find that three of his pupils, whose ages ranged from nine to 12, had come to school intoxicated. On inquiries being made it was found that the boys had been drinking Irish whisky, which two other boys had stolen from a shop. The latter young culprits, Alfred Phillips, aged 11, and Tom Smith, 12, were brought up at Lutterworth Police Court, and were ordered to receive five and 10 strokes respectively with the birch-rod.

HUSBAND SENTENCED FOR MANSLAUGHTER.

A Yorkshire miner named Aaron Fisher, aged 37, was found guilty of manslaughter at the Leeds Assizes and sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude on an indictment for the murder of his wife Emma at Ecclesfield, Sheffield, on December 16. The parties had been quarrelling and the prisoner struck his wife with his open hand, a knife entering her throat. She was peeling potatoes at the time. The prisoner, who went into the box, said his wife had been a drunkard for 15 out of 17 years, and that she had frequently threatened suicide. The defence was that the injuries were self-inflicted. The jury deliberated for an hour before arriving at a verdict.

From Tokio it is reported that the Japanese officer Yamaguchi, 200 men of whose battalion were killed recently by an avalanche, has committed suicide. He did so, it is stated, because his father, an old soldier, reproached his son with having lost 200 brave men and being saved himself.

LADIES' LETTER.

MY DEAR NELLIE,

The new spring hats which are now appearing with marvellous rapidity day by day are really charming, each one more perfect than the last. In the matter of taste, beauty, and becomingness the milliners have left us nothing to grumble at this season, for the variety of styles is so great each may please herself as to which she adopts. The all-black picture hat is still in great vogue—larger and more picturesque than ever; but the best are very light in effect. No heavy material is used, black crin, straw lacework, and wired black lace being chiefly employed for the shapes, and, owing to their softness, the brims can be crinkled into all sorts of becoming curves and bends. In nearly all new models a curtain of black lace droops over the brim all round, and in many cases floats as a pendent veil a little to one side behind. But the woman who is not tall and stately is ill-advised if she be persuaded into wearing the large picture hat; too often does it figure as an object-lesson in the use and abuse of things.

In tailor-mades there seems no novelty to be especially chronicled, except it be in sleeves, which in most cases are like the old leg of mutton sleeves, quite tight-fitting on the upper part of the arm, then gradually widening out into a shaped fulness. This is gained by goring away all gathers, so that the sleeve stands out like an inflated bag, caught in to a narrow band at the wrist, over which is a gauntlet cuff. The backs of skirts at the top seem just as plain and tight-fitting as ever; indeed, rather more so, for there was a tendency a little time back towards more fulness here. However the tailors appear to prefer the plain style, but round the feet the skirt has a very full fluted appearance, and stretches out to a considerable length all round towards the back. There is a good deal of braiding used on tailor-mades; with coarse woollen and linen laces and grass lawn embroidery.

It has long been the ambition of every woman with any pretensions to smartness to possess a black velvet gown, and it will now be more so than ever. Panne has been tried as a substitute, but it has not the dignity nor the importance of velvet. It is apt to be meek when it ought to be self-assertive. When a man unwarily sets foot upon it, it subsides into such flatness that he thinks it is only the carpet. When he treads on silk velvet he soon discovers his mistake. In fact, velvet has no rival. It is costly, but then it has a long life if properly taken care of; and even the stateliest dame takes care of her velvet gown, though hiding her carefulness beneath a careless air. The day is coming when every bride will have (if able to do her whole duty by herself) in her trousseau a black velvet gown, with two bodices, one for evening wear and one made high to the throat. The two bodices are necessary to the full usefulness of the gown, though the low one may very well be replaced by a jetted one with velvet sleeves. Just now there is usually a preponderance of black worn, and a black gown lends itself well to modifications of colour and embellishment which time and place may demand. A black taffetas frock is an investment to be recommended just now, for it will serve its smart and useful purpose both now and hereafter, and be well in advance of the fashion; mousseline taffetas is the best kind, soft and subtle and less likely to cut.

The new rosette is of pleated velvet or taffetas, made to lie flat, and sometimes has a smart button to centre it, though where millinery is concerned a knot of little flowers like daisies or violets springs from it. Milliners are now favouring trails of flowers, such as wee pink roses, which they arrange with haphazard grace upon their fur, tulle or straw toques. It is a pretty notion to trail knots of pink rambler roses and tendrils of foliage over a sable turban. A new black straw precisely copies astrachan, and must be looked at twice before one can say whether it is actually skin or not. For Leghorn, a distinct amount of patronage is already secured. Far fewer feathers are being used, and embroidered batiste for hat draperies, with long floating ends, is preferred to either lace or net. Sashes of grass lawn woven with stripes of blossomed silk are to trim the coarse hats of rustic straw that herald the spring.

Some of the daintiest ball-gowns are being made of old-world muslins and batistes of the finest description. The muslin is patterned with small, neat designs, such as were most popular in the early days of our late Queen's reign, and the fashion most adopted is the be-frilled, be-flowered bebe style.

Materials will be simpler this spring, and the soft woolly goods that have been ousted in favour of more elaborate materials are coming back to us. It is good hearing this, and the clever girl will be able to have a great variety of gowns this year if she have a sufficiency of talent to make them up herself.

You may do almost anything with a velvet gown. Should it be worn a little round the hem, you can cover the faulty part with a wide band of jetted galon. Should it be too far gone for this, it may be cut away and hung over any number of kiltings and pleatings in chiffon, satin, or in lace. Do the seams wear white? Cover them with narrow bands of jet galon. Have the sleeves a weary air? Banish them and in their stead put lace and chiffon, jet and satin, or for evening wings of tulle and bands of ribbon velvet. Is the bodice fragile? It can be underpinned with stout lining, and overlaid with guipure or the invaluable jetting, or with satin tucked or stitched in the curious torturing fashion of the day.

Some of the new gowns are being buttoned or laced up the back, quite a well-remembered trait of about 20 years ago. A magnificent one, for example, of the new emerald green shade has a laced and well-boned back. It is given a bolero of very coarse wool lace, another fresh reintroduction, in greens and pale ochre shades, with sufficient black in the scheme to make for dignity, and a touch of gold tracery to add magnificence. The front is quite plain where the bolero does not meet, though it is laced across with gold; but the curious addition of a swathed sash of taffetas, worn quite above the waist line, and fastened with a big wheel-shaped rosette of silk, lifts the scheme far above ordinary ones.

The length of skirts shows no likelihood of being diminished during the summer, but instead of clinging round the feet in embarrassing folds, they stand out in well-rounded flutes on the ground, an effect which requires very skilful cutting to compass. This is the plain skirt, which must depend on its cut alone, but there are many devices for giving the desired fulness amongst the more dressy trimmed skirts. Some have a very full volant joined on under scroll trimmings or appliqué, whilst others have fan-shaped pleatings let in round the feet, the join at the top being hidden with devices of buttons and straps or vandykes of lace. Tailors are again advocating extreme flatness and close fit round the top of the skirts, both back and front, but if a reason be sought for this, it probably lies in the fact that for the result to be a success the cut must be perfect, and therefore small opportunity is offered to the amateur dressmaker. Such a skirt cannot honestly be compared with one in which the fulness springs gracefully almost immediately below the belt at the back; inverted box pleats, or a series of fine narrow pleatings pressed, but not stitched down, on either side of the opening are used to get other the difficulty which the very tightly-fitting skirt presents to many people. Skirts with a little fulness introduced somewhere, often on the hips, in the form of fine tucking or gathering, are more favoured in Paris than here. Some of the light dresses preparing for summer show the princess polonaise; the bodice and upper part of the skirt are one, the polonaise pointed in front, and sometimes only separated from the underskirt on one side, the other side joining the skirt proper at the side seam above the knees. The polonaise is usually trimmed with lace flouncings, or is embroidered on the material itself with scalloped edges, whilst the under-skirt gives opportunity for a display of many frills and flounces, thus introducing a very dressy appearance, which will doubtless be taken advantage of for garden parties.

A charming gown for a young lady is of fine etamine cloth in a soft shade of dove-grey. The skirt is put on in soft broad pleats at the waist, and falls unconfined to the feet. The bodice, which is also pleated, opens over an inner vest of embroidery, while the flat sleeves are cut to bulge out slightly at the elbow, and caught into a deep cuff at the wrist. The embroidery is of silver thread, and the whole effect is excellent.

Your loving, JENNIE.

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FRAUDS ON THE COUNTESS OF ORKNEY.

Before Mr. Justice Grantham, at the Central Criminal Court, London, Arthur Stopford Francis surrendered to his bail, and pleaded guilty to the misappropriation of trust funds belonging to the Countess of Orkney.—The prisoner was admitted a solicitor in 1879, and had carried on an extensive business in Berkeley-street until his recent bankruptcy. Then it was discovered that he had misappropriated trust money to the amount of £8,000, of which he was one of the trustees for the Countess of Orkney. He had also, it was alleged, misappropriated £500 trust money belonging to Mrs. Burrows, and £3,000 belonging to Mrs. de Jamo.—Mr. Marshall Hall said that the Earl and Countess of Orkney made no charge against the prisoner, and the Countess at the police-court said that she did not believe the prisoner intended to defraud her. He had done all he could to make restitution.—The prisoner said that he owed his position at that moment to a desire to become rich to lead a country life. He had hoped that his son would have succeeded him in his business, but he had been compelled to enlist, and was now serving his country in South Africa. His wife and family were homeless and penniless and he was there to bear his punishment like a courageous man. A man who once intended, as he had often felt inclined, to blow his brains out, wrote instead the well-known lines:—

> Life is mostly froth and bubble,
> Two things stand like stone—
> Kindness in another's trouble,
> Courage in your own.

If his lordship would show the kindness he would show the courage.—Mr. Justice Grantham said that these frauds by solicitors were far too frequent, and must be stamped out; but he could not help thinking that had the prisoner's co-trustee done his duty, and the Countess of Orkney less implicitly trusted the prisoner, these frauds would have been impossible. He must pass a substantial sentence, and the prisoner would be sentenced to five years' penal servitude.

THRICE TRIED FOR PARRICIDE.

AT LAST ACQUITTED.

At the Roscommon Assizes, Thomas Flaherty, of Curry, near Stokestown, was indicted, for the third time, for the murder of his father on May 3rd last. At the two previous trials in Galway and Roscommon the juries disagreed. The case for the Crown, which was largely circumstantial, was that the prisoner borrowed a gun and shot his father in the stable, the motive alleged being that there was a dispute as to the ownership of the farm. For the defence it was contended that the murder was of an agrarian character, committed by some party or parties unknown because the deceased had sent a filly to graze on a boycotted farm. In addressing the jury, who had been selected from a panel of 300, the Solicitor-General referred to their duty under their oath. It was stated, he said, that their country was deteriorating. He could well understand it, and a curse would cling to the country where such a horrible crime was cloaked. He made an impassioned appeal to them to do their duty, and then no man could harm them either in this world or in the next. The jury found the prisoner not guilty and he was discharged.

NEW ZEALAND PATRIOTISM.

COLONIAL TRIBUTES TO MR. SEDDON.

Mr. Seddon was present in Dunedin the other day at a conversazione organised by the various Methodist bodies. The following resolution was carried with enthusiasm:—"On the eve of the departure of the Premier to represent New Zealand at the Coronation, this representative meeting of Methodist Churches expresses its high appreciation of the spirit in which the Premier has displayed the loyalty of the Colony to the world, congratulates him on his honourable position, and wishes him God speed." Mr. Seddon, who received an ovation, in returning thanks, said the credit and the honour belonged to the fathers and mothers who had given their sons to fight for home, flag and country. In the evening a great banquet was given in honour of the Premier by the people of Otago and Southland. The guests were representative of all parts and of every shade of political opinion, and great enthusiasm prevailed. The Mayor, in proposing Mr. Seddon's health, after some congratulatory remarks, expressed his high appreciation of the Premier's splendid services to the Empire. He referred to his long administration of the affairs of the colony, and said that they had met to honour not a political leader, but a national statesman. In conclusion, he cited various instances wherein Mr. Seddon had displayed his statesmanship. On the guest of the evening rising to return thanks, he was received with prolonged cheering. The Premier said the occasion was one when party feeling was set aside and "The Empire" was their watchword. New Zealand was respected throughout the civilised world. He disclaimed any credit for himself; the credit belonged to the people as a whole, who had so cheerfully obeyed the call of the Empire. The same unanimity of opinion prevailed as when the first contingent was dispatched, and should the necessity arise still further contingents would be given as cheerfully as in the past. The Premier strongly deprecated the attacks made by New Zealand journals on the affairs of the colony. These attacks were copied into London newspapers, and did great injury at home, thus prejudicing New Zealand's position and interest. Mr. Seddon read a telegram asking him to accept the freedom of the borough of St. Helens during his visit to England for the Coronation, to which he has replied that he will be highly honoured in accepting such a compliment from his native borough.

Mr. Carnegie has decided to found 40 more libraries in various parts of the United States.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

GOVERNMENT LICENSING BILL.

DEPUTATION TO MR. RITCHIE.

At the Home Office the other day Mr. Ritchie received a deputation from the Off-Licensing Association, who desired to urge the abolition of Clause 8 of the Government Licensing Bill, which gives discretionary powers to the Justices over wine and spirit licences, and would create a class of monopoly in trade.—Mr. Ritchie, in reply, said there had been in late years a distinct advance in public opinion with regard to Temperance, and there was a demand that some attempt should be made by the Government for dealing—not in an extreme way—with the question. The representations which had been made were important, and ought to receive attention. So far as their particular trade was concerned there was no ground for the general accusations that had been made as to the way in which it was conducted. A good deal of what had been said was on the assumption that if these licences were placed under the magistrates there would at once be a great sweeping away of the grocers. He did not anticipate anything of the kind, for he believed that these licences in a very large degree met a public want. The Government were bound to have regard to the fact that the representative of the off-grocers' licences on the Royal Commission signed the report which recommended what had now been proposed to Parliament, and without reservation. There was an impression—to some extent supported by evidence—that drunkenness amongst women, which had undoubtedly increased, was connected in some way or other with the facilities which were given to women for drinking. He quoted statistics showing that drunkenness among women had increased, and mentioned that in 15 years the number of deaths from intemperance among women had doubled. He admitted, however, that in regard to the latter fact they had to take into consideration that the cause of death had been more correctly diagnosed. In his opinion the time had arrived which was foreshadowed in the report of the Lords' Committee in 1879, that there had been a great multiplication of the facilities in existence for drinking. He could not see how a large vested interest would be created when it was clear that it was to be under the complete control of the magistrates either to give or to withhold. It was certainly not Temperance organisation which the Government had in their mind when they drew up their proposals. The demand for legislation went far beyond and covered a wider area than so-called Temperance reform organisations. Representations had come from county councils and other similar bodies in all parts of the country. He believed there was absolute unanimity that they should ask Parliament to give the magistrates the power now proposed in the Bill, and he could not hold any hope that the clause would be withdrawn.

BREACH OF PROMISE CASES.

At the Under Sheriff's Court, held at Brighton, Caroline Isabel Aubrey, of Portslade, Sussex, sued Walter Ellis Fearn, also of Portslade, for damages for breach of promise of marriage and seduction. There was no defence. The plaintiff said she entered the service of the defendant's mother last July, and defendant at once commenced to take notice of her. He asked her to marry him after she had been at the house a week. Defendant, who was a teacher of music and photographer, told her he wanted her to assist in a business he was going to buy, and she accepted his promise of marriage on July 25. Under that promise he seduced her. She subsequently learned that he was a married man. The Under Sheriff characterised the defendant's conduct as wicked and heartless, and the jury awarded plaintiff £50 damages. The plaintiff is 19, and the defendant between 40 and 50.

At Leeds Assizes, Ellen Taylor claimed damages from John Haigh for breach of promise of marriage. Defendant, a caretaker at the Huddersfield Masonic Hall, became engaged to plaintiff 10 years ago. They were on most affectionate terms. Joining the Imperial Yeomanry defendant went out to South Africa, and became a sergeant-major. Loving letters passed, and he sent her some ostrich feathers. On his return there was great merry-making, and all went well for a time. Eventually defendant, it is alleged, showed a disposition to break off the engagement, and plaintiff sent a message to him, but he declined to see her. On January 13 this year he married a widow. He alleged that while he was in South Africa the plaintiff kept company with a friend of his, and it transpired that the plaintiff gave the ostrich feathers to her sister, which caused great offence to Haigh's relatives. The jury gave the plaintiff £25 damages.

STRANGE OCCURRENCE ON A STEAMER.

The following telegram has been received at Perpignan (France) from Barcelona:—"On the arrival here of the French mail steamer Catania she was immediately boarded by the judicial authorities, who took the depositions of the captain concerning some incidents which occurred during her voyage from Buenos Ayres to Cape Verde. It appeared from the captain's statement that the steamer had sustained some damage which delayed her progress, and that the passengers, wearied by the slowness of the voyage, strongly protested to the captain and threatened to mutiny. They refused to continue the voyage on the Catania, prevented the loading of coal, and threw overboard the sailors who were engaged in taking in a fresh supply." The passengers landed at St. Vincent, and were taken on to Barcelona by the Italian steamship Perseo.

Mr. Herbert Glastone, M.P., in acknowledging the receipt of a resolution passed by the Northwich Division of the Liberal Association, thus writes to Mr. William Handley, of Runcorn: "I see no reason why all the leaders of the Liberal party, past and present, should not combine for the purpose of pressing forward the various important measures on which they are practically agreed."

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