OUR SHORT STORY.

THE DECISION OF THE PRINCESS.

The Prime Minister was angry. Even as the Princess entered the room she saw the knitting of his brows, the hard, brutal look grow slowly over his face—just the look which generally ended in the arsenals working overtime and the troops receiving two hours' extra drill a day. But the Princess braved the coming storm. She came forward with quick steps that never faltered; her heart beat no faster than was its wont; there was no flash of nervousness in her eyes.

"You wish to see me," she said. She rested her finger tips on the polished ebony table, and drew herself up to her full height. Please be quick if it is State business. You know I go for my ride at eleven. You have two minutes left."

"Two minutes!" he laughed. "Two minutes, madam, will not suffice, unless you retract a very foolish step you have made."

"Do my people, then, claim so great a favour that I must forego the only pleasure left to a Princess in order to satisfy them?"

"Don't jest, madam, I beg." The Prime Minister adjusted his pince-nez and began to study the paper in his hand. "A national crisis has arrived—a crisis you have brought about. To be frank, we are on the verge of war."

The Princess Guilda sank into a chair and looked at the minister intently.

"What do you mean by war?" she asked. "Merely the receipt of an ultimatum, the settlement of which will cause my Prime Minister to be paragraphed in the papers, accompanied with eulogies of his diplomatic tact?"

"If you would but be serious," he exclaimed, more to himself than to her. Then he added: "Your refusal to marry Prince Ferdinand has excited friction between this country and the kingdom of Etruria, and we have this morning received what is equivalent to an ultimatum of war, which can only be redeemed by your decision to cancel your refusal. Madam, I beg——"

The Princess Guilda cut him short by rising to her feet, a flush of anger on her face. For a moment she hesitated; then she held out her hands as if in pleading.

"Think," she exclaimed; "think for one moment what it means to me. Consider my age—I am but twenty-four—and you ask me to wed a man who is old enough to be my father. You are free; your marriage was a marriage of love." (The minister remembered that he had married a theatrical "star," and bit his lip.) "Don't you know what a love match means to a woman?—the attainment of all that is dear in life, just as the wielding of power is the summit of success to you! You ask me to marry a man I do not love, a man I have never seen save through the medium of portraits in the cheap press. You tell me it is my people's desire, that it will weld two nations together and bring commercial prosperity—the commercial prosperity that is bound up in the reduction of the taxes by a penny for the rich, and means no benefit to the poor."

She sank back panting. The Prime Minister glanced at his paper and then at the girl before him. For a while he was silent. He knew that she was right; but after all, was it not the privilege of royalty to make martyrs of themselves in the cause of the people?

"It is hard," he said; "but how much harder is war! Madam, think for a moment. Suppose a foreign army clamoured at our gates, what would happen then? The prestige of a nation would vanish into mist; freedom, that God-given privilege, would no longer exist. Your people in bondage, mocking you in the street as you passed, crying out to you as the person who had sold them into slavery. Have you the courage to face this?"

The Prime Minister paused. He knew he was inflicting torment, but he felt no qualms of conscience because he was acting at duty's call. Once he wondered if he had been the Princess what would he have done. Tush! He thrust the thought aside. Duty is duty all the world over. She was the Princess, and if she had failed to fall in love with the man the world ordained she should marry, it was her fault.

"Is there no way out?" she asked. "No other course but this?"

A soft knock, and the door opened. A servant stood on the threshold.

"Madam, the horses are waiting," he said in measured tones.

"Very well," she replied; "they will not have to wait long."

She looked at the minister as the door closed. "I have no more to say. Perhaps it is because I am a woman that I am a coward in a matter like this. I refuse this marriage, and if my people are strong and brave and will remember that, though being their Princess, I am still a woman, they will answer——"

"Madam, think again," the Prime Minister broke in.

"I have thought. You know the answer. Send it."

* * * * * *

The day passed, and, as evening closed in, the Princess Guilda went to her room. She had but one desire—to be alone and think, to carve a way through the maze that encircled her, a way as easy for her people as for herself. So when shortly afterwards her French maid Elise entered, she held up her hand to dismiss her.

"I shall not want you to-night, Elise," she said. "The day has been hot and you are tired. I think I shall—shall read late."

The girl curtseyed and went to the door.

"And—Elise——" The words were almost a whisper. The Princess broke into a forced laugh and passed her hand quickly over her forehead. "It is very silly of me," she said, "but I have heard a rather curious story today. It concerns someone in my household, so I am interested, perhaps a little worried about it. A girl here, one of the servants of the State, has fallen in love. A very ordinary thing, eh, Elsie? Now those who have power over her are endeavouring to force her into a marriage with a man she does not care for. Her troubles are known to me, and I should like to help her for the best."

"Madam will doubtless assert her authority," suggested Elise. "Surely an unhappy marriage is best averted."

"But if much depended upon the match, if it were necessary for the girl to be unhappy for life in the interests of others?"

Elise was puzzled.

"I think," she said at length, "if I were this unfortunate girl, I should go away and please myself."

The girl withdrew, and the Princess sat down to think the matter out. "I should go away and please myself!" How easy for Elise, how difficult for her! Then, of a sudden, a resolve grew firmly up in her mind. Abdication! It was an ugly word, but there was no other road.

She went to her writing table and sat down. The scented mauve paper lay at hand, the array of gold pens seemed to invite her to write. Involuntarily she picked up one, and let it wander over the paper:

"It is the privilege of a woman to change her mind, and I have changed mine. What I said to you the other evening I did not mean. I was afraid. I am not strong enough to bear the responsibilities of State affairs, and so, like the coward I am, I must give way, and I place my future unreservedly in your hands."

She dropped the pen, and from the folds of her bodice produced a gold locket in which was set the portrait of a man. She knew what the receipt of her note would mean to him; almost she could see the firm lips of the portrait break into smiles.

Her mood changed. He would be talked about all over Europe, the Count who had eloped with a Princess.

She pushed the letter under the ink-stand with a feeling of disgust at her own weakness and retired to rest.

The Princess Guilda was astir early the next morning, and as she dressed she hummed to herself a little love song the Count had taught her. With the coming of the morning the doubts of the night before had vanished like a river mist before the sun. She forgot the note she had written, conscious only that her place was with her people—the people who worshipped her.

Towards evening she sent for the Prime Minister to tell him of her decision, but her messenger returned to say that he was absent from his house. She stamped her foot in impotent rage. If he had taken her at her word, even now the enemy might be massing.

She shut herself up in her room and sat beside the window overlooking the rhododendron drive. Gradually it became dark, and on the wind came the muffled clamour of the city below. Then as she listened she detected above the rumble of carriage wheels on cobbles the notes of music. It was the old violinist to whom she had accorded the privilege of playing in the palace grounds. She welcomed the notes of his violin, he avoided the classics and played fragments of the old world love songs that she loved. But to-night she was in no mood for his playing.

Suddenly, as the music became louder she sat upright and listened. The musician was playing the Count's love song—the song that he had taught her.

She caught her breath. Then, half doubtfully, she rose to her feet and peered out, fearful lest the player should see her. The violinist, his head bent low, shambled along slowly step by step in the shadow of the trees. One might have said that it was the figure of an old man as he paused and was outlined against the dark background, and yet something—something she knew not what—filled her with suspicion, and dully she began to realise that now the musician played as he had never played before, that there was life in his music. The elegance, the grace——

He looked up, and the light where the evening sun plunged through the leaves overhead lit up his face. Instantly the Princess uttered a little cry:

"Armand!"

She turned from the window, threw a jacket loosely about her shoulders and ran lightly down the stairs to the doors, and her white fingers began to fumble with the bolts.

A moment more and the cool wind smote her face, and closing the door softly behind her she sped across the grass to where the player was sheltered among the trees.

"Armand—this disguise—what does it mean?"

The words came in a whisper.

"Guilda," he exclaimed in rapid accents, "there is not a moment to lose. The city revels at the fête; to-night the roads will be crowded. Come, follow the path I take." He broke off suddenly as he saw the look that crossed her face. "Guilda—you—you are not going to draw back?" he exclaimed.

"I don't understand," she said hoarsely. "You know it is impossible. The people's trust—I cannot show the white feather now; it is impossible."

He bent over her.

"Guilda," he whispered, "to-night you abdicate only to rule again, to rule a man's heart, not a principality encompassed with the pomp and shallowness of state and the intrigue which encircles the court. There are horses waiting at the châlet; beyond the forest—at the frontier—Elise will meet us with all that you need for the journey."

"Elise?" she repeated in amazement. She knew now the reason for the Count's presence.

"She delivered your note this morning. What is there to wait for?"

She covered her face with her hands.

"Oh, how I hate myself!" she exclaimed. "To-morrow they will announce the abdication of the Princess from the cathedral steps—the Princess who was afraid of her people."

* * * * * *

They hurried onwards with the blue ridge of hills to guide them, scarcely speaking save when he dismounted and took the bridle of her horse.

"I have wondered," she said at last, "why Franz the fiddler allowed you to take his place, and why you came as a begging musician to the palace windows."

"Franz loves a good supper," he responded, "and if he has the money to buy it why should he fiddle for pence?"

But as the years pass Franz fiddles regularly beneath the palace windows. Some there take pity on the pinched face and the cloak which gets more green with every winter's snow, and throw him chance pence.

"They have no soul for music now," he says, as he replaces his instrument in the soiled plush case. "The Princess was a lover of melody, but these pigs cannot understand my playing."

COUNTESS ROBBED.

Countess Cowley is the latest victim of the railway-station jewel thief. Arriving at St. Pancras on Saturday afternoon, intending to leave for Oakham, Lady Cowley, after a carriage had been secured and her maid had placed her baggage, including the jewel case, on the seat under a rug, went up the platform with her maid to make some purchases.

On returning to the carriage the maid's first thought was to look under the rug to see if the jewel case was secure. To her consternation she discovered it had gone.

EMIGRATION AGENT FINED.

For attempting to bribe Dr. Young, a surgeon on the White Star liner Cymric, to pass diseased emigrants, Tobias Dovsky, an emigration agent, was sentenced at Liverpool on Saturday to a month's imprisonment, and to pay a fine of £50, or, in default, to serve a further term of three months.

Dovsky, it was stated, offered to give Dr. Young £25 if he passed a certain number of emigrants to America. When the vessel returned to Liverpool Dovsky brought some immigrants who were rejected by Dr. Young.

KILLED BY A KITTEN.

Mr. C. Luxmore Drew held an inquest at Hammersmith on the body of the infant daughter of a labourer named Ellwood, living in Holcome-street, Hammersmith. The child was put to sleep on a chair bedstead and its grandmother afterwards found it dead, with a little white kitten lying across its face. Death was due to asphyxia caused by the kitten covering the mouth of the child, and a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

DUST CAUSES EXPLOSION.

Mr. Joseph S. Martin, I.S.O., in his Home Office report on the explosion in the Slyving Vein incline at Norton Hill Colliery, attributes the cause of the disaster to the presence of coal dust. He urges the importance of watering "upon those who, having previously realised the danger, have shirked the trouble and expense of carrying it out."

The explosion occurred in the mine on April 9, and eight men and two boys lost their lives. These miners, with twenty others, were in the workings at the time.

In his conclusions the inspector states: "From my own inspection and inquiry, and taking into consideration the history of the mine in relation to fire damp, none ever having been seen. . . . I am convinced that dust and not firedamp was the explosive agent operated upon by the shot which was fired."

In a case before the Manx High Court, in which a man sued by a grocer claimed that he was not liable as the goods obtained by his wife were not necessaries, the Judge ruled that legally beer and stout were necessaries, but morally they were not, and gave judgment for the full amount.

NATURE NOTES.

Artificially Trained.

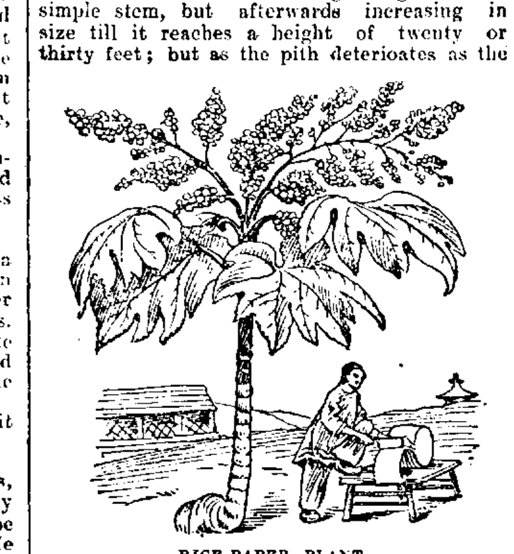
In the canary-breeding establishments of Germany only the male birds are valued, for the females never sing. The method of training the birds to sing is to put them in a room where there is an automatic whistle, which they strive to imitate. The breeder listens to the efforts of the birds, and picks out the most apt pupils, which are then placed in another room for further instruction.

Mother-love.

The hare is by universal consent regarded as one of the most timid of creatures, but there are occasions when even such a defenceless animal as this will brave the utmost danger in protecting its young. A carter at Chard was rolling some young grass when he saw a leveret sitting in front of the roller. It sat so close that he picked it up, and on its crying out an old hare came straight across the field and kept running round the man, grunting and stamping, till it seemed almost as if she would attack him. After a while he released the leveret, which at once ran away, and the old hare with it.

Paper from Pith.

Rice paper is the pith of a plant not very distantly related to our common ivy, though having a very different appearance. The rice-paper plant grows wild in great abundance on the hills in the northern parts of Formosa. It is a small tree, at first growing with a simple stem, but afterwards increasing in size till it reaches a height of twenty or thirty feet; but as the pith deteriorates as the tree becomes old, it is usually cut down before it is twelve feet high. Then the stems are cut into lengths of nine or twelve inches, and the pith, about two inches in diameter, forced out. After being dried the pith is dexterously cut by workmen, who hold against the cylinder a long, sharp knife, which is kept quite steady while being moved round and round.



RICE-PAPER PLANT.

A Turbot's Yawn.

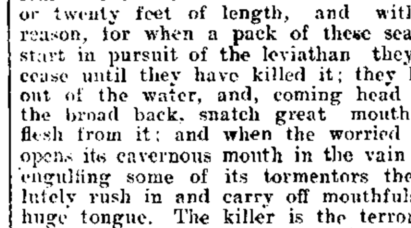
The mouth of the turbot is twisted to one side, rather as if it had belonged to a round fish which someone had accidentally trod on and squashed half flat. The yawn begins at the lips, which open as if to suck in water. Then the jaws become distended, and the yawn works through the back of its head, distending the plates of the skull, and comes out at the gills, which open, are inflated for a moment, and then with a kind of stretching shiver of its back the fish flattens out again.

Terror of the Ocean.

Most whales are peaceful in disposition, and the large Greenland, and sperm-whales particularly, are not usually disposed to be vicious; but some of the smaller whales are frequently on the war-path. This is strikingly the case with the orca, or killer, as it is sometimes called. It goes in schools like the porpoise and dolphin, but in fewer numbers, and will attack any living thing that comes in its way. Even the great Greenland whale, with its eighty feet of length, fears the active little killer with its eighteen or twenty feet of length, and with good reason, for when a pack of these sea-hounds start in pursuit of the leviathan they never cease until they have killed it; they leap far out of the water, and, coming head first on the broad back, snatch great mouthfuls of flesh from it; and when the worried monster opens its cavernous mouth in the vain hope of engulfing some of its tormentors they absolutely rush in and carry off mouthfuls of the huge tongue. The killer is the terror of the ocean, more feared by the denizens of the deep than any other creature.

The Electrical Eel.

The gymnotus or electrical eel, is rather more serpentine in form than the common eel, and frequently attains a great size. It is found in the rivers and marshes of South America. The extraordinary power of the eel was placed beyond doubt by the illustrious Faraday at Adelaide. Professor Faraday put a few small live fish under the water with the gymnotus, and the latter formed itself into a circle, enclosing the fish by joining its head to its tail, and sent a shock through the water, which instantly stunned the small fish. When the hand was held in the water whilst the charge was transmitted, a shock was felt, though not so strong as when the eel was touched at its two extremities.



THE GYMNOTUS.

The Ant Lions's Trap.

We read of the tiger traps in India—great pits dug in the ground and covered lightly with pliant bamboo. The tiger steps upon the false top, and before it can retreat is precipitated into the trap. The ant lion sets a similar trap for its victims when walking along a sandy road, look for tiny circular pits sunk below the surface and then watch. For some time the whole affair seems lifeless. Then an ant comes blundering along, and without warning topples over the edge and begins to slide down the incline. But the insect fights hard for life and seems about to make its escape, when, the sand grains heave upward at the bottom and with a jerk are hurled like a miniature catapult at the ant, knocking it over and rolling it to the bottom. The ant lion, for such it is, now seizes its prey, and after sucking its juices casts the dry body away and mends its pit against the coming of another victim.

Strange Forest Growths.

Visitors to the Faikland Isles see scattered here and there singular-shaped pieces of what appear to be weather-beaten and moss-covered boulder of rock. When they attempt to turn one of these boulders over, they discovered it was anchored by roots of great strength, and was, in fact, part of one of the native trees.

An Otter's Speed.

The speed of an otter under water is amazing, fish having no chance against him. In some places in India otters are kept by the natives to fish for them. They are tied to stakes like dogs when not working, wear plaited straw collars, and seem happy.

AFTER THE RAID.

SUFFRAGETTES BOUND OVER.

It is a matter of history that the band of Suffragettes who started from Caxton Hall not long ago in an attempt to "rush" the House of Commons, never got there. Instead, twenty-four of them were arrested. Seven were dealt with on the day following the foray, and Mr. Curtis Bennett, the Bow-street magistrate, has now bound over the other seventeen, whose names follow:

Miss L. A. Floyd, Miss E. Billing, Miss J. Coates, Mrs. Mary Leigh, Miss Amy Shallard, Miss G. M. Ansell, Mrs. Jane Grey, Miss G. Llewelyn, Miss W. Bray, Mrs. M. Brindley, Miss F. Williams, Miss G. H. Boutelle, Miss Mary Mitchell, Miss Ellen Smith, Miss Ada Flatman, Miss K. Browne, Miss Wallace Dunlop.

Most of the ladies elected to go to prison.

In sentencing the first prisoner the magistrate said: "It is absolutely impossible that such a state of things should be allowed to exist in this city. Persons cannot be allowed to band themselves together and go here and there, according to their own free will, and do illegal acts without suffering for it. It does not matter what the sex is, though to my mind it is worse for the female sex to take part in such tumultuous disturbances. One was brought up with the idea that the female sex was everything that was tender and kind and good. Unfortunately we have found lately that that course has been departed from."

VITRIOL THROWING CASE.

Sentence of five years' penal servitude was passed on Mabel Truelove at Berks Assizes at Reading for throwing vitriol over Miss Rogerson, the matron of Reading Prison, and a Reading lady named Mrs. Cushan.

On Sunday evening prisoner, at the conclusion of a service in St. James' Roman Catholic Church, walked up to Miss Rogerson and dashed a cupful of vitriol into the matron's face. So violently was the acid thrown that Mrs. Cushan, standing near by received a quantity on her hands and face, and the liquid splashed back into the face of the prisoner.

Miss Rogerson, in evidence, said she had never annoyed prisoner. The matron denied the suggestion, made by prisoner, that witness had tried to strangle her whilst an inmate at Reading Prison.

The prosecuting counsel said Truelove was known in nearly every prison in the country. She had been convicted on no fewer than 127 occasions for different offences.

Evidence was given that prisoner had followed wardresses about, and had molested and threatened them. As a result the wardresses went in fear of the woman, who had, in some instances, threatened to throw vitriol over them.

Losing sight of the fact that Private Jennings, of the 1st North Staffordshire Regiment, had been granted an extension of leave, the military authorities had him arrested as a deserter, but the Stafford magistrates, satisfied that a mistake had been made, ordered his discharge.

That School Cake.
No trouble for the cook.
No difficulty in baking.
No leavings at the table.
No wonder, when
"Paisley Flour"
—the sure raising powder—was used.
7d., 3½d., and 1d. packets from your grocer. The penny packet contains enough to raise 1lb. flour, hence its economy.
Brown & Polson make it.

GERMAN ROYAL WEDDING.

In the Castle Chapel at Berlin the Kaiser's fourth son, Prince August Wilhelm, was married to his cousin, Princess Alexandra Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg, in the presence of the Emperor and Empress, the other members of the Imperial family, and eight hundred guests, including members of several of the reigning houses of the Federal States. King Edward was represented by the British Ambassador, Sir Frank Lascelles.

The civil ceremony had taken place previously in the private apartments. The bride was attired in a dress of white silk trimmed with old lace, and with a long train richly embroidered in silver. She wore a diamond necklace.

In the evening there was the traditional torch dance, an old marriage custom of the House of Hohenzollern, the young couple, the Emperor and Empress, and the principal personages present walking down the ball-room preceded by ten lackeys bearing tall candles. Another old custom, in accordance with which the bride distributes pieces of her garter, was observed.

Later in the evening the newly-married couple left for the hunting-box of Hubertusstock, where the honeymoon will be spent.

The princess, who is twenty-one, and only a few months younger than her husband, is the younger sister of the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and niece of the German Empress.

KNOCKED DOWN BY KAISER'S CAR.

An unfortunate accident occurred after the conclusion of the celebrations. While the Emperor's motor-car was returning to the Palace from the Stettin Railway Station, where his Majesty had seen the young couple off on their honeymoon, an old woman fell under the car as it was slowly crossing Unter den Linden. His Majesty immediately gave orders for the injured woman to be taken to the University Hospital close by, whither Prince Eitel Fritz assisted in carrying her. She was found to have sustained concussion of the brain.

FALSE PRETENCES CHARGE.

A remarkable story was told by the police when Charles Ronald Graham, a young man with many aliases, whose address was given as Queen's-road, Peckham, was charged at Windsor with obtaining food at a shop by means of false pretences. He had represented, they said, that he was a builder's manager, and had come to inspect a house.

Asked by the detective officer who arrested him to account for some papers which were in his possession, he said he went to see the manager of the London and South Western Bank at Clapham Junction to give some information with regard to the recent bank fraud. The manager lent him his frock coat, in which the papers referred to were found, and a silk hat, in order that he might go to the Hotel Russell with a view to pointing out a man he suspected. Graham never returned the silk hat and frock coat.

Detective-sergeant Watts, of the Metropolitan Police, said he knew prisoner as Albert Cooper Graham, who had previously been convicted in several other names.

Prisoner was committed to the Quarter Sessions.

The financial statement in connection with the historical pageant at Pevensey shows that there is a total deficit of £9[illegible]. The expenditure was kept down to £6,638, but the receipts were less than had been expected.

John Helton, aged 35, on whom an inquest was held at Poplar, died from pneumonia accelerated by starvation. He had vainly tramped the country in search of work, and had lived on crusts of bread for months.

AMERICAN SMILES.

"Do you give your wife an allowance, or does she ask you for money when she wants it?" "Both."

* * *

Cook: "My dog took first prize at the cat show." Hook: "How was that?" Cook: "He took the cat."

* * *

She: "Frankly, now if you had to choose between me and a million, what would you do?" He: "I'd take the million. Then you would be easy."

* * *

Miss Antique: "Just think of the nerve of that impecunious fellow to propose to me." Miss Caustique: "Nerve? Why, it was absolute recklessness."

* * *

Porpoise: "What is the whale blowing about?" Dogfish: "Oh, he got so many notices for his feat in swallowing Jonah he's been blowing ever since."

* * *

"It takes a baby mos' two years to learn to talk," said Uncle Eben, "an' den it takes de res' of its lifetime to learn to keep f'um talkin' too much."

* * *

"I started to tell my wife about a woman who made her own fall gown." "Well?" "She capped my story with one about a man who made a million dollars."

* * *

Weary Walker: "I see five hundred more men has been t'rown out of work." Tired Traveller: "Gee! Dere's gettin' to be too much competition in our business!"

* * *

"If you want plenty of good plums," remarked the practical horticulturist, "you have to graft." "Exactly," agreed the practical politician, "so you do."

* * *

Tom: "I ate some of the cake she made just to make myself solid." Dick: "Did you succeed?" Tom: "I couldn't feel any more solid if I had eaten concrete or building stone."

* * *

Politician: "Congratulate me, my dear, I've won the nomination." His Wife (in surprise): "Honestly?" Politician: "Now what in thunder did you want to bring up that point for?"

* * *

"Politeness costs nothing," said the man of ready-made wisdom. "I guess," answered Mr. Cumrox, "that you never had any experiences with these café waiters who regulate their politeness by the size of the tip."

* * *

"Every bit of food on this table," said the serving lady to Lamson, as he sat down to eat at the church supper, "was cooked by your wife." "Oh, I don't mind," rejoined Lamson faintly; "I'm not a bit hungry, anyway!"

* * *

Caller (trying to be complimentary): "I notice one interesting peculiarity about your little boy. He is ambidextrous." Mrs. Struckoyle (with a frosty gleam in her eye): "Not at all, Mrs. Highsome. His legs are just as straight as anybody's."

* * *

"Leaving, eh? At the height of the season, too! What are you going to do?" the mistress snarled. "I ain't a-goin' to do nothin', mum," the cook answered complacently. "Karma, the new fortune teller down to the pier, read my palm last night, and it turns out I'm to marry money before the full o' the moon."

* * *

Professor Stone: "To the geologist a thousand years or so are not counted as any time at all." Man in the Audience: "Great Scott! And to think I made a temporary loan of ten dollars to a man who holds such views!"

* * *

"The physically unfit should be removed," declared the new thinker of old thoughts. "I'm glad to hear you say so," responded the gentleman chauffeur. "It will make me feel easier in my mind when running over a decrepit pedestrian."

* * *

Mrs. Newlywed: "Fred, dear, I have done you a great injustice." Mr. Newlywed: "In what way?" Mrs. Newlywed: "Well, I suspected you without reason. I asked several of your friends that you go to the club with if you knew how to play poker, and every one of them thought a minute and said you didn't."

* * *

They were discussing the relative position of various countries as musical centres. Germany seemed to have the most votaries, much to the evident displeasure of one excitable Italian, who wished his own country to carry off the palm. "Italy is turning out the most musicians, and has always turned out the most," he cried. "Ach!" exclaimed a German present, "can you plame dem?"

* * *

An Irish maid in the service of a Washington family recently sought permission of her mistress to take an afternoon off for the purpose of consulting a dentist. Upon her return the mistress said, "Well, Rosalie, did you have the tooth filled?" "I did, mum." "And what did the dentist fill it with—gold or amalgam?" "I don't know just what it was, mum; but from the way I feel, I should think it was with thunder and loightning, mum."

* * *

An Englishman was recently invited by a New Yorker to accompany him on a hunting trip on Long Island. "Large or small game?" laconically asked the Briton, who has hunted in every quarter of the globe. "You don't expect to find lions and tigers on Long Island, do you?" queried the New Yorker. "Hardly," responded the Briton with a laugh, "but I like a spice of danger in my hunting." "If that's the case," answered the other, with a grin, "I'm your man, all right. The last time I went out I shot my brother-in-law in the leg!"

* * *

"Long introductions when a man has a speech to make are a bore," said former Senator John C. Spooner. "I have had all kinds, but the most satisfactory one in my career was that of a German Mayor of a small town in my State, Wisconsin. I was to make a political address, and the opera house was crowded. When it came time to begin the Mayor got up. 'Mine friends,' he said, 'I haf asked been to introduce Senator Spooner, who is to make a speech, yes. Vell, I haf dit so, und he vill now do so.'"

* * *

Early one morning, many years ago, a burglar was running at the top of his speed along a New York thoroughfare, pursued by a lady who vociferated "Stop thief!" A milkman intercepted the fugitive, who promptly exclaimed, "For Heaven's sake, let me go. It's my wife, and she'll just about kill me." The milkman was a married man himself, and he allowed the malefactor to escape.

* * *

"Of course," said the optimist, "if a man gets into the habit of hunting trouble he's sure to find it." "Yes," replied the pessimist, "and if he's so lazy that he always tries to avoid it, it will find him. So what's the difference?"

* * *

An instance of exclusiveness maintained under difficulties is reported from the ladies' cabin of a liner. All were sick except one lady and a cat, which wandered uneasily about. The lady ventured to stroke the cat, remarking, "Poor pussy." The cat was inclined to respond, and elevated its tail, in token of goodwill, when from a neighbouring berth came in choking tones the words, "Excuse me, that is a private cat!"

A WORD TO THE WISE
CROZINE BLACKING
Pleases People Who are Pa
ticular, for boots polished with Cr
keep soft, stay black, and
well ALWAYS, besides
cleanly to wear.
CROZINE is the popular liquid
—absolutely free from acids—ea
applied—imparting a correct bl
polish of unequalled durability,
improves leather, and is not
affected by dampness, and will
smut nor soil the clothing.
At Boot Shops the world over.
The Genuine is Hauthaway's.
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HEADS OR TAILS?

MR. JOHN BURNS' STORY.

During the discussion in Committee of House of Commons upon the Housing and Planning Bill, Mr. Cowan moved an amend to the clause providing for the clos dwelling houses which were unfit for h habitation — that the expression "dw house" should be held to include any ro which any person passed the night.

Mr. Burns said he regretted that he not accept the amendment, because of the treme impracticability of enforcing the law, told the Committee that during the manœuvres two years ago an officer and self were left with the choice of sleeping coal-cellar or a passage. They tossed fo "I won," said Mr. Burns, "and I gave hi cellar." The officer took the coal-hole, a slept in the passage. Would it not be a that the owner of the house, for the three or four hours' hospitality to two people, should be proceeded against?

OCTOGENARIAN GETS TEN YE

John Williams, aged nearly 86 years, oldest prisoner who had been tried at the Kent Quarter Sessions within living me pleaded not guilty at Maidstone to a cha horse stealing at Beckenham.

According to the evidence, prisoner was with the horse not far from the field wh had been turned out, and when charged stealing it he said, "Had you been a minute you would have lost me." In his p was a hammer, with which it was sugg that he intended to disable the animal, in that he might disarm the suspicion of the slaughterer to whom he would have sold

The jury, having found the prisoner gu Lord Cranbrook said Williams was a wicked old man. He had been eight ti prison for stealing horses in this way. getting the animals in his possession, doubt knocked them almost to pieces hammer, and then took them to the kna

Williams was sentenced to ten years servitude.

CHURCH RATE APPEA

An interesting case was heard at the ton Sessions. It was an appeal by M Colin Smith, and the other proprietors Wharf, Tooley-street, against the par the rector's rate for the parish of St.

Mr. Charles, for the appellants, said an Act passed in the reign of Geo power was given for the levying of a rate duce £600 a year for the maintenance port of a rector for this parish. The Act showed that it was intended that the should live in the parish, and as a matter a rectory was provided.

Canon Bristowe, the rector, resided at Lewisham, and the rectory, said Mr. C had been let as a counting house for year.

Mr. G. Elliott, for the respondent, sa point raised was irrelevant.

It was agreed that the rate should be without prejudice, pending a decision higher court.

Mr. William Campbell, the new Court of Session Judge—the first Catholic appointed to the Scottish B the Reformation—was installed in Edinburgh as Lord Skerrington. It was that some ultra-Protestants would raise test, but the ceremony passed off hitch.

Marie Pellegrin, a cook, at Nice, has £1,000 in a lottery. Unlike other refuses to leave her situation, even circumstances, and the only luxury is to be allowed to employ a kitchen ma

"Death from heart failure due to smoking" was the verdict returned at quest held at Newcastle-on-Tyne Edward Alexander, aged twenty, who stated, smoked as many as fifty cigare

"NO BETTER FOOD."
Dr. Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E., &c.
FRY'S PURE CONCENTRATED COCO

WOMAN HELPS POLICE

At Newington Sessions, John Smith, a shoemaker, pleaded guilty to inflicting bodily harm on Police-constable Re Joseph Waldron, aged 28, carpenter, guilty to assaulting Police-constable Moir.

The assault took place when the were about to arrest the men. Moir was to the ground, and Reid received several kicks. Neither was able to summon assi but a young woman, a Miss Dorothy forced her way through the crowd and Moir's whistle. Other constables arrive the prisoners were overpowered.

Mr. Wallace (the chairman) commende constables and Miss Travers for their p

Smith was sentenced to twenty-three m hard labour, and Waldron to eight mon

The funeral of Sir Elliott Lees took pl Lytchett Minster, Poole, and was influ attended. There were numerous re only from Dorset, but Birkenhead and places represented by the deceased in ment.

Owing to the want of sufficient rain at raltar, only six-weeks' supply of water for the use of the town. The Sanitary Co sioners have been obliged to make arrange to furnish the shipping with water Algeciras.

New Se

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TWO GAMBLERS

BY

ITH STEWART DREW

uthor of "On Dangerous Ground," "Only Actress," "For Somebody's Sake."

SYNOPSIS.

LMENT I.—The story opens in the Paris , where Gerald and the Doctor meet Val dsome, reckless-living man, a friend of Ge m much good is still left. Gerald and famous gambling saloon of M. Bellaire, step-daughter, Coral Devereux, is the attr A gambler of seventeen, she is reckle l, though unsullied. Val falls in love wi e only likes him.

LMENT II.—Progress of Vivian's suit. He t marriage, which Coral refuses. He aw r.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOCTOR WANTS TO KNOW.

orning, early in that week, Dr. Haslet n on Gerald Leicester in the latter's the course of chat, it came up quite speak of where he, the doctor, had nday; how he had enjoyed Lamou t and had seen Vivian there with lady, who did not seem to have on. Did Gerald know who she was

, yes," answered Gerald quietly. e he had promised to take her t t. She is Coralie Devereux, M. Bel aughter."

s?" said the doctor.

Gerald told him in substance all he ha at their first meeting, and somethi ings had gone since, adding Vivian's g opinion of Bellaires' real motive d care of Coral.

haven't a doubt that he is perfectly r e doctor drily, "after what you to position and bringing up of the gi I saw one proof on Sunday evening. God help her in such a sea of temp o safeguard, from what you tell me, n intrinsic recoil from sin and shame ignorance at present that she has a —that is, practically. Whatsoever w or acumen her cruel experience her of those about her, no slip of seve r really have knowledge of herself. G is when that knowledge comes full d waking or, worse, if she be sud ed to it by some all too reckless hand ll stand bewildered in direst dang ion."

how how you mean and what you g of, doctor, but you remember," generously eager to defend his f you yourself said of him, and trul e than ever sure that Val is not a s bad as he seems and thinks. Of co never answer for oneself or other r older; but still—well, I can't ink he is deliberately bent on misc ear boy, you staunch fellow! I erthing, one way or the other," said dy. "Naturally, as intended, that traction to you all, and most of you a ves and her too, I suppose, by atten forth. I daresay there are many me t the *salle* much worse, more ac d and depraved, than our handsome f that reason he is far more likely care to win her, to be successful."

Jove! though, I'm not so sure of t rald bluntly, with a half laugh, rec it wager that had passed. "She g mixture, that same Coralie. In he uite as cynical as he is. She know e fellows are in our different deg ugh of follies and wildness."

The older man shook his head a littl ll well, at any rate we can't help it, ay be, and the question is problema

The younger man remembered what between himself and Vivian, and question was not so problematical; wd doctor had his own suspicions. enough, that very afternoon he me n the Café Italien, and they shook h er asking how Dr. Hasleton had enj ert, adding easily, with a smile: as to my young charge, I think sh seventh heaven—M. Bellaires' , you know, for I suppose you have from Gerald"—he was tolerably or had asked Gerald all about Co s he hates classic music like pois great pleasure of taking the child. too, isn't she?"

rkably so," said the physician, a by the easy, almost nonchalant ma Gerald, I saw him yesterday. He y finishing up some pictures befor home, he told me, to London, about

; and he is making his way, too, tist, most deservedly, for he is cl ks, although he has some means." warmly. "It was when he was stu that I first knew him."

ed the conversation to arts and tr the doctor at parting yet more impr singular charm of the man, and p that he was what he was, when s y, he might have been so diffe sibly still be, even at the eleventh not yet utterly hardened; it too late for hope at only two-and-th big-hearted Dr. Hasleton.

CHAPTER VI.

AMONGST THE BREAKERS.

, it goes without saying, took the tage of the *carte-blanche* accorded t e Bellaires, making no overt sig to play the *rôle* of wooer, but as yet himself up to the delicious new ent the present fancy, the fire within g, but only too ready to leap g flames. There was even added cap the novelty of there being no answ to his stirred as yet, sentiently if a would be the pleasurable excite it and drawing it to himself, at his t in his haughty confidence; th was anything so definite as though time. He was content to bask drea chequered sunshine and shades of a sweet unrest that took him ou in some measure when this young girl was at his will; to whom he a tender, indulgent familiarity, as years to him; with whom he kne been liked and favoured of all those made no secret of it to him either he would misjudge and take advan frankness; or—more probably—re he did or not, superbly confident tha care of herself. So she could, doub certain level. Beyond, the ground "Dangerous" in many a place most beautiful. For all Coral's ter experience of life—as she knew it; precocious knowledge of the world's human nature's worst phases was but a me to; the only teaching that is r wide experience. Truly had Vivian "You cannot put thirty years' exper teen." Her searing life and surr indeed, given a bitter and pain