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## The Undiscovered Country.

Could we but know  
The land that ends our dark, uncertain travel,  
Where lie those happier hills and meadows  
low  
Ah! if beyond the spirit's inmost veil  
Aught of the country could we surely know,  
Who would not go?  
Might we but hear  
The hovering angels' high imagined chorus,  
Or catch betimes, with watchful eyes and clear  
One radiant vista of the realm before us—  
With one rapt moment given to see and hear,  
Ah! who would fear?  
Were we quite sure  
To find the peerless stand who left us lonely,  
Or there, by some celestial stream as pure,  
To gaze in eyes that here were love-lit only—  
This weary mortal coil, were we quite sure,  
Who would endure?

## MABEL MOORE'S STRATAGEM.

It was almost like a bit of Persian poetry, that little conservatory at Baywater, in its glow and fragrance, and soft, delicious murmur of leaves. And Mabel Moore herself looked not unlike a Persian enchantress, as she stood there leaning one hand on a marble vase, with the gold of the anemone plumes hardly brighter than her hair, and a quiver in the heavy white lids that hid her deep blue eyes. She was tall, and finely formed, with very regular features, cheeks tinged with a faint color, and an unobtrusive beauty in the pose of her slender throat and shoulders. Mabel Moore was born to be an heiress, and very gracefully she fulfilled the mission of her sunny life.

She was not alone, however, in the flower-fragrance of the twilight conservatory. Ernest Beckford was leaning against the doorpost, twisting and untwisting a long spray of jasmine with a sort of impatient rapidity. He was a tall, manly fellow, with bright auburn hair, and a face that you were involuntarily compelled to respect and like.

"Mabel," he said, almost passionately, "do you know that you are asking impossibilities?"

"Am I?"

"I cannot go to Australia without you."

"You can, Ernest, and you will."

"But, my darling, only think of it—a year's exile from you."

"Will it be any easier for me to endure, Ernest? I fancy, Mabel," he resumed, impatiently, "that you don't care for me, else you would never be so willing to let me go."

"Ernest!"

"My dearest, I know I am unjust; but—"

"Now," said Mabel, "let me understand just what you wish me to do in this matter."

"I want you to marry me the day after to-morrow, and go out to Australia with me in the ship that sails on Saturday."

"A very reasonable wish," said Mabel, laughing. "But, Ernest, you know I will never marry you while your mother refuses her sanction and approbation to the match."

"She does not know you, Mabel."

"That makes no difference. I shall never enter a family where I am not welcomed by every one of its members."

"But just consider how unreasonable you are, my own darling, and how utterly and entirely groundless are my mother's objections."

"She fancies me a hollow, heartless woman of the world, does she not? She is unwilling to trust her son's happiness in the keeping of a coquette, who knows nothing but Italian songs and French waltzes!"

"Mabel, I am sorry I ever allowed you to read that unreasonable letter."

"But I am glad, Mr. Ernest, I have too much pride and dignity to marry you unless your mother gives her free and full consent."

"Then you do not love me, Mabel."

"Do love you, Ernest Beckford, better than I like to acknowledge to myself."

"Mabel," he urged, tenderly, "let us cut this Gordian knot by the exercise of our own free will. Be come my wife; give me the right to take you with me on this long, long journey."

Mabel Moore shook her head.

"Let us wait and see what time may bring forth," she said, archly. "And now leave me; remember that the ship sails on Saturday."

"I can't possibly go in that vessel," said Ernest, "I've many things to do."

"But if you do not on Saturday you will be obliged to wait another fortnight, and your business is so important over there—"

"Yes, I know, but—"

"Well?"

"I must get that companion for my mother—she will be entirely alone. Mrs. Carter told me she knew some one who would take the situation, and I shall have to go over to Clapham to see her about it to-morrow."

"Don't let that detain you, Ernest. I think I know of a young lady who would make an excellent companion, and I will send her to Beckfordville."

"Can she read aloud, and has she patience and forbearance, and will she be as meek as Moses?"

"I am sure she will try."

"Send her, then. But, Mabel—"

"Well?"

"It strikes me you are anxious to bury me off next Saturday."

"Ernest," she said, in a voice that quivered a little, in spite of all her self-control, "you are misjudging me. I want you to do your duty—to go and attend to the affairs of your poor uncle, whose reason has deserted him. And more than this, I want you to learn life's lesson of patience and endurance. The sunshine will come at last, if you can only wait unrepiningly."

"Little prophetic," said Ernest, drawing her fondly towards him. "I suspect your anxiety for your poor uncle, whose reason has deserted him, is as manifold as human nature will allow. No one ought to be discouraged who is sure of your love. But, oh, my darling, how often I shall remember this sunset, and your sweet face turned towards mine!"

## A Dog Partnership Case.

The Philadelphia Bulletin says: A man came into the office of Judge X., the well known lawyer, the other day, and when the judge had time to listen to him, he said:

"Judge, my name is Scudder; I called to see you about a dog case that kinder bewilders me, and I thought maybe you might throw some light on her—might just give me the law points so's I'd know whether it was worth while suing or not."

"Well, judge, you see me and a man named Potts went into partnership on a dog. We bought him. He was a setter, and me and Potts went to him on him so as to take him out a hunting. It was never exactly settled which half of him I owned and which half belonged to Potts, but somehow I kinder formed an idea in my own mind that the hind end was Scudder's and the fore end Potts'. Consequence was that when the dog barked, I always said: 'There goes Potts' half exercising itself,' and when the dog's tail wagged, I always considered that my end was being agitated. And, of course, when one of my hind legs scratched one of Potts' ears or one of his shoulders, I was perfectly satisfied; first, because that sorter thing was good for the whole dog; and, second, because the thing would get about even when Potts' head would reach around and bite a flea off my hind legs or snap at a fly."

"Well, things went along smooth enough for a while, until one day that foolhish dog got about that I ever see. Used to chase his tail round and round until he got so giddy he couldn't bark. And you know I was skeered lest it might hurt the dog's health, and as Potts didn't seem to be willing to keep his end from circulating in pursuit of my end, I made up my mind to chop that tail off, so's to make him reform and behave. So I caused the dog to be kept up a log, and then I suddenly dropped the ax on his hind, pretty close up, and next minute he was booming around that yard, yowling like a load of wildcats. Just then Potts came in, and he let on to be mad because I'd cut off that tail. One word brought on another, and pretty soon Potts kicked that dog on me—my own half, too, mind you—and the dog bit me in the leg, but a piece out. See that?"

"Great! About about half a pound gone; 't up by that dog."

"Now, what I want to see you about, judge, is this: Can't I recover damages for assault and battery against Potts? What I chopped off belonged to me, recollect. I owned an undivided half of justice, and such things as I had a right to cut away as much of it as I had a mind to; while Potts, being sole owner of the dog's head, is responsible when he bites anybody."

"I don't know," replied the judge, musingly. "There haven't been any decisions on cases exactly like this. But what does Mr. Potts say on the subject?"

"Wh' Potts' view is that I divided the dog the wrong way. When he makes a jump, he draws a line from the middle of the nose, right along the spine, and clear to the end of the tail. That gives him one hind leg and one fore leg, and makes him joint proprietor in the tail. And he says that if I wanted to cut off half of the tail I might have one, and the wouldn't regard a notch on the foot, and that was that I wasted his property without consulting him. But that theory seems to me a little strained, and if it's legal, why I'm going to close out my half of that dog at a sacrifice sooner than hold any interest in him on any principles. Now, how do you think about it?"

"Well," said the judge, "I can hardly decide so important a question off-hand; but at the first glance my opinion is that you own the whole dog and that Potts also owns the whole dog. So when he bites you, it's his fault, and it's Potts, and the only thing you can do to obtain justice is to make the dog bite Potts also. As for the tail, when it is separated from the dog it is no longer the dog's tail, and it is not worth fighting about."

"Can't I sue Potts?" you say.

"I think not."

"Can't get damages for the meat that's been bit out of me?"

"I hardly think you can."

"Well, well, and yet you talk about American civilization, and temples of justice, and such things. All right. Let it go. I kin stand it. But if anybody ever undertake to tell me that the law protects human beings in their rights. Good morning, judge."

"Wait a moment, Mr. Scudder," said the judge; "you've forgotten my fee."

"If I feel! Why, you don't charge anything when I don't do you?"

"Certainly, for my advice. My fee is \$10."

"Ten dollars! ten dollars! Why, judge, that's just what I paid for my half of that dog. I haven't got fifty cents to my name. But I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll make over all my rights in that setter pup to you, and you kin go round and fight it up with Potts. If that dog bites me again, I'll sue you and Potts as sure as my name's Scudder."

Potts own the whole dog now, and Scudder suits without one.

## The Crime of Arson.

The alarming prevalence of the crime of arson, which costs the country fifty millions a year, and for which the conviction of fire underwriters have been trying to find a preventive, proceeds mainly from two motives—the malicious or revengeful motive, and the mercenary or insurance award motive. There are also cases in which the crime is perpetrated as a means of covering up some other crime. Persevering research, aided by the guidance thus furnished, ought to lead to the discovery of the offenders in a large proportion of instances. The fire underwriters have, of late, been making considerable progress in their researches in the event of any incendiary fire by which they lose money; but they have not yet been able to establish an effective system of detection in their own interest. Insurance companies are not the only parties concerned in the suppression of this crime. People whose property is uninsured, and the tenants of all houses and stores, whether insured or not, are concerned. In fact, it is a crime that affects the whole community, and one that often results in the destruction of life as well as property. The insurer may know his enemy, against whom the hand of every man should be raised, and with whom justice should always be as severe as the law will allow. A wicked young girl in Buffalo, named Caroline Fox, pleaded guilty to the charge of having set fire to an institution there known as the English Home, of which she had been an inmate, and upon the managers of which she desired to take revenge. She was sent by the court to Randall's island "until discharged by law." Two men named and were tried in Suffolk county for firing a house, the flames of which consumed three men and one woman, against whom the accused had made threats; but no insurance company was interested in their conviction, and the evidence offered was insufficient to secure it. Cases like these, with such results, would be less frequent than they are if some means were devised of securing the co-operation of the public at large with the fire underwriters in the suppression of all incendiarism, without regard to the incident of insurance.—New York Sun.

## Notes of the Fashions.

Linen parasols are much worn this season. Small reversible shawls of thread lace are counted with novelties for dressy house toiles. Cream colored muslin handkerchiefs are offered for sale. Ladies will be expected to wear some outside wrap on the street, even during the summer. Pink and blue satines, striped and plain, are offered for summer dresses. Gray and ecru blouses will again be worn this season as overdresses for black or brown skirts. Brocaded cream colored silk parasols are trimmed with cashmere lace. A cuirass, short in front, cut open at the sides and finished at the back by two long lappets, gives a new shape of corsage. The madrileno fringe is a novelty. It is composed of a network of silk, finished with several rows of tassels. There are a great variety of nauties and jackets, but the casaque and the scarf are the two favorites. A new model in overshirts has from four to six long straight breadths of material, with the lower part of each seam left open, forming square aprons and square necks. The Centennial kerchief is a three-cornered affair, made of white muslin and trimmed with Valenciennes or other lace, to wear about the neck. Whatever is "Centennial" is the fashion. Children use Centennial handkerchiefs, having the corners marked 1876 and 1876.

## A Brave Workman.

A coroner's jury at Bristol, near Bristol, England, has rendered a verdict of accidental death in the case of John Chiddy. He was foreman at a quarry close to the Great Western line, between Keynsham and Bristol, and was superintending the stacking of the stones alongside the line, when he found that a large black stone had fallen on to the metals of the down line. There was no time to be lost, for rushing toward the spot came the "Flying Dutchman" express, described by the driver, who gave evidence at the inquest, as "the fastest train in the world." One second more and a horrible tragedy would have probably occurred, but Chiddy, forgetting himself and a large family dependent on him, and thinking only of the danger of the unconscious passengers in the train, leaped on to the line as it dashed out of the Bristolington tunnel, and, seizing the block of stone in his hands, was cut to pieces as he rolled it from the rail. The witnesses for the railway company took a more cheerful view of the matter than that held by Chiddy. They "thought the life guards of the engine would have cleared the rails."

## What we are Learning.

The two countries of the world, leaving central Africa out of account, about which least is known to outsiders, are Thibet and Corea, both of them populous, and both ruled by despots of the Oriental type. The numerous attempts made to open them up to travel and commerce have hitherto proved failures, and they remain sealed again to all the influences of our form of civilization. But mankind will presently gain entrance into Corea. By the treaty through which war has been averted, and the long standing quarrel closed, between Japan and Corea, two of the Korean ports will next year be opened to commerce with the enterprising Japanese. This is a signal triumph of Japanese diplomacy. It has gained which all the menaces and all the negotiations of British and other European agents have failed in gaining. Other governments, including the United States, will now of course demand that Corea shall put them upon an equal footing with the Japanese.

## Truthfulness to Children.

A parent, unlike a poet, is not born—he is made. There are certain things which he has at once to learn, or he will have no more influence over his child than if he were a common stranger. To gain obedience, you must first set yourself to deserve it. Whatever you promise your little one, however small the thing may seem to you, and whatever trouble it costs you, perform it. Never let the doubt once enter that innocent mind that you say what you do not mean, or will not act up to what you say. Make as few prohibitory laws as you possibly can, but once made, keep them. In what is granted, as in what is denied, compel yourself, however weary, or worried, or impatient, to administer always even-handed justice.

## Items of Interest.

The first governor of Iowa keeps a little grocery in a little town, and does a little business. Buckwheat flour will remove grease spots from carpets. A chattel mortgage will do the same thing, and remove the carpet to boot. Liverpool is to be supplied with water from Lake Windermere, at an estimated cost of \$10,000,000 for a daily supply of 10,000,000 gallons. There is an establishment at Passau on the Danube, where eggs are dried. They are said to equal fresh eggs for omelettes and for making pastry. An old edition of Morse's geography says: "Albany has four hundred dwelling houses, 2,400 inhabitants, all standing within their gable ends to the street." A shrewd old Yankee said he didn't believe that there was any downright cure for laziness in a man. "But," he added, "I've known a second wife to hurry it some." A New York doctor says that three bottles of stomach bitters ought to kill the strongest man. If they fail to do so, the doctor may know the bitters are not worth anything. Michigan has got him! The man who hasn't written to a newspaper to offer his services as Centennial correspondent lives in Michigan and can be seen for fifty cents per head. "Brother, why don't you ask the stranger to pray?" Because, "I've never observed a deacon, 'this ain't no place for practical jokes. That man's the president of a gas company." How on earth one hundred oyster cans, two hundred bottles, sixteen old baskets, ten barrels and a box full of old boots and shoes ever got into a back yard is more than any one man can cipher out. A youth of Lafayette, Ark., recently undertook to frighten a doctor by the name of Westbrock by presenting a plug of twist tobacco at his head. The doctor, thinking that it was a pistol, drew his revolver and shot the boy dead. A Franklin (Ky.) man lately took a live bee into his mouth along with some honey. He then reflected—"Cheer be or not cheer be, that is the question"—here his tongue happened to touch the hot end of the aggressive insect, and he decided negatively. Two tramps in Westchester county stopped at the house of a lone widow and one went in to beg. Very soon he came out with a bloody nose and a first-class black eye. "Well, did you get anything, Jack?" "Yes," growled the sufferer, "I've got the widow's night." Here's an argument in favor of cheese. Prof. Peck says that in this country, where cheese is least used, one physician to every five hundred persons is required. In Switzerland and countries where it is most used, only one physician is needed for every ten thousand persons. At Leipzig there is a school reader printed, now in its eighth stereotyped edition, which describes Niagara falls in one chapter. It says of the cataract that it might be supposed that it was not navigable, but that some Indians do in their canoes venture over the falls in safety. "You cannot keep me down," shouted a somewhat windy orator at a public meeting; "though I may be pressed below the waves, I rise again; you will find that I come to the surface, gentlemen." "Yes," said an old greaser in their canoes venture over the falls in safety. "You cannot keep me down," shouted a somewhat windy orator at a public meeting; "though I may be pressed below the waves, I rise again; you will find that I come to the surface, gentlemen." "Yes," said an old greaser in their canoes venture over the falls in safety. A certain servant maid was left-handed. Placing the knives and forks upon the dinner table in the same awkward fashion, her master observed that she had placed them all left-handed. "Ah, true indeed, sir, and so I have—would you be pleased to help me turn the table?" A witness on the stand said that he did not believe that any man ever got so drunk that he didn't know what he was doing. To prove what he said, "if a drunken man bothers you give him a sound licking, and no matter how many times after that he got drunk he never would bother you again." Annie Besant, the English radical heroine, has started a petition to Parliament praying that no further grants of money to or for the royal family or any member of it shall be given under any circumstances whatever. The signatures have run up into the neighborhood of 80,000, and when presented, it will be the largest petition ever sent to that body. Hens' eggs hatch in from thirteen to twenty-one days; turkeys' in from twenty-six to twenty-nine days; ducks' in twenty-eight days; Guinea fowls' in twenty-eight to twenty-nine days; pea fowls' in from twenty-eight to thirty days; geese in from thirty to thirty-two days. Fresh eggs will hatch from one or two days sooner than those two or three weeks old. Says the Nautical Gazette: Mare's tails leave scum sails; red in the east I like the least; red in the west I like the best; when the clouds spread like a feather, mariners look for fair, good weather; when the lofty hills the mist doth bear, let the mariner then for storms prepare; lead, log, lookout, and be steady, keep an eye on the glass and for changes be ready. The iron prow of the old steamer New Jersey is lying at the Pennsylvania railroad company's yard at Perth Amboy, N. J., and is to be sent to the Centennial exhibition in a few days. When she first came from England she was known as the R. H. Stevens, but was rechristened as the New Jersey. She was the first steam vessel that crossed the Atlantic, and no smaller steam vessel has crossed it up to this day. A Georgian owns a place eighteen miles south of St. Augustine, Florida, where he raises a big crop of strawberries. He drove to St. Augustine with his first lot of strawberries last Christmas—and sold them at the fancy price of \$2.50 per quart. On the fifth of January he sold his fruit at \$1 a quart. About the first of February his price was seventy-five cents. It is now twenty-five cents, and the strawberry season is over.

## A TERRIBLE SCALP RAISER.

What Buffalo Ben Told Some Dry Goods Clerks about Indians and Zoology.

It was in a saloon in Chicago. He was a gaunt young man, whose face had been washed for long months, and who wore his hair long behind. He was attired in a slouch hat, buckskin breeches, a red flannel shirt open at the neck, and a rough coat. He had four revolvers and a big knife in his belt. When four dry goods clerks came in in a group and ordered some beer, the first dry goods clerk said to the bar-keeper:

"Say, John, who's that fellow over yonder?"

"That," said the saloon keeper, dropping his voice to an awestruck whisper, "is the terrible Ben the Wild Trapper of the Great Plains. Ask him to drink. Perhaps he will."

The first dry goods clerk did so, and the Wild Trapper replied:

"Wall, stranger, see's it's you, I will just take a drink. As I have been Old Bill's tail say to Spotted Chief, 'Here's to us,' and he indulged a dose of whiskey."

"You are," said the first dry goods clerk, "connected with the trapper business?"

"In the scalp and gizzly line," said the second dry goods clerk.

"Your reminiscence of a personal character, I doubt not, would be exciting and interesting," said the third dry goods clerk.

"I'm a stranger than fiction. Take something!" said the fourth dry goods clerk.

"Wall, no," said the trapper; "I never drink when I'm off the war trail. It kinder makes me ugly, yer see, and I'm apt to drop my cutlery. I killed seven men that I was talking to as friendly as I'm out to be, but I sorter got riled; wall, gimme some more whiskey."

"Your hand," said one of the dry goods clerks, "has often been stained with human blood?"

"Stranger, she heve. The first time you came up and see me at my wickup in Montana—second lodge on the right beyond the Yellowstone river, and be sure you turn to the left up by the big boulders three hundred miles this side—ask any Indian, and tell him yer want to see Buffler Ben, and he'll show yer the road plain straight. I'll show yer Old Bull's Eye, my rifle. She's old Kaintuck stock (discussive barrel) and is sixteen feet long, and whenever I wipe out a white man I make a notch on the footstock, and there's notches all the way up one side and nine feet down the other. I went up to see your graveyards at Cavalry and Greeceland. They're a good deal like my private graveyards, more posies and flowers, and I suppose they don't take any notice of the footstock, but three months ago I turned loose in a barroom down to Lafayette, Arkansas, and the coroner was kept busy for three days after attending to seven inquests. And this was just because a durn skunk stuck up at the bar and improved his mind with my conversation, and never asked me if I would take—"

Here one of the dry goods clerks caught Buffler Ben's eye, and he stammered out an invitation to fill her up again. Mr. Buffler Ben irrigated himself, and replied to a question concerning his solution of the Indian question, said:

"Injuns! Wall, no; I never keep count of the reds I wipe out. I used to when I was young and sort of vain, but I grew out'n it. It looked too much like a notch on the footstock, and the trouble to lift the bar of the last 150 or 200 Indians I've killed. Before that I was kinder particular that way, and took so many scalps that I bust the 'Trisco chignon market, and seventeen dealers in false hair went into bankruptcy. Injins is poor trash. Gimme a whole tribe of 'em, and I'll wipe 'em out as fast as I can load my revolver and put it to my shoulder."

Here he paused again and was promptly refreshed. Then he continued:

"Tell you, boys, if you want to see the chief of the reds you kin go to the only thing agin the country is the buffaloes. They hatch there, and when they take to flight it's awful to see them in clouds so thick you can't see the sun, and when they light they claw on garden, and eat corn, and potatoes, and telegraph poles. But there's gold in the Black Hills. I've seen it myself. When you get down to the bed-rock you strike \$50 and \$20 pieces, and you wash out scrips and dollars in the streams, and up in the rocks are granite, iron, and coal, and scap and nickels. No nuggets as I know of, though I did hear at Shyan of one worth \$165,000."

Thus, with anecdote and information, Buffler Ben whiled away the time. When the four dry goods clerks had settled for the drinks, their bill amounting to \$6.85, he had them an affectionate farewell, and made them promise to call at his tepee if ever they were up in Montana. When they had gone out, the barkeeper paid him his twenty-cent commission on the drinks sold for fifteen cents, and the clerk in the theater in Boston, who while the actors were dressing for a performance of the opera of "Hamlet," and was discovered before the public were admitted. The flames spread rapidly. The outlets of the building were so narrow that the exit of the members of the chorus, and the supernumeraries was cut off, and the poor people crowded the windows, many leaping from them upon bedding piled below by the inhabitants. One chorus singer was visible for an hour in an upper window beyond the reach of help. Four soldiers were killed and fifteen wounded in endeavoring to save lives. About fifty persons were badly injured and taken to the hospital. A leading singer, Mme. Pzyz, entered the burning building in search of her husband and perished in the flames. Her body has not been found.

## Fire in a Theater.

The London Standard's Paris correspondent says that the fire in the theater in Boston broke out while the actors were dressing for a performance of the opera of "Hamlet," and was discovered before the public were admitted. The flames spread rapidly. The outlets of the building were so narrow that the exit of the members of the chorus, and the supernumeraries was cut off, and the poor people crowded the windows, many leaping from them upon bedding piled below by the inhabitants. One chorus singer was visible for an hour in an upper window beyond the reach of help. Four soldiers were killed and fifteen wounded in endeavoring to save lives. About fifty persons were badly injured and taken to the hospital. A leading singer, Mme. Pzyz, entered the burning building in search of her husband and perished in the flames. Her body has not been found.

## The Story of the Madman.

President Grant, in conversation with a gentleman in Washington, told the story of the madman who has recently given such romantic testimony before the committee on expenditures in the Interior department. The President says that he was conscious of the fact that he was being shadowed, that he could never leave the White House without finding this maniac turn upon him at some street corner and lower upon him with his raving eyes. This espionage became intolerable, and the President one day stopped the man and told him that it must cease or he would have him arrested. It did not cease, and the President, in his walks, carried a cane.

The madman still continued to haunt the White House grounds and the society, and was finally taken to the asylum. He had been there but a short time, when his friends here told the authorities that they would take him to his home in Ireland, if he should be released. The request was immediately granted, and he was sent to Ireland. He did not remain there long.

## Snakes in Missouri.

The sons of Mr. Jason Smith, who lives a dozen miles from Fayette, Mo., in the Monticello township, in exploring a ravine near his house, discovered a snake den, in which there were 174 blacksnakes all knotted together, one garter snake, two house snakes and two moccasins. When the snakes were first dug out they were torpid, but the sun soon enlivened the masses of blacksnakes, and the farmers who had gathered to see the sight were forced to use hoes, hatchets, axes, etc., to put an end to them.

Another snake story comes from Mr. Lee Wright, a farmer, who lives a few miles east of Fayette. Last fall he hired a man to clean out a well which had not been used for some time. He had lowered the man to the bottom of the well in a tub, and was turning away when he heard a piercing yell. Looking into the well he saw a multitude of snakes along the rocky walls reaching out their long heads. The man from below could see their glistening eyes. He screamed and raved, and flopped around in the tub, and asked to be drawn up. Mr. Wright began to turn the windlass, and the man was pulled up through the middle of the protruding snake heads. In his excitement he shook the rope, which swayed the tub to and fro, so that he was thrown uncomfortably near the reptiles. When he jumped out he was covered with cold perspiration, and his body trembled like a leaf. He spread the story of his adventure, and no one could be hired to clean the well. Mr. Wright concluded to remove the rock and fill it up, and when the work was begun the snakes began to show themselves. Before ten feet of rock had been removed seventy-four blacksnakes, from two to six feet long, were killed, but the well caved in, and the rest were buried.

## More than a Year Had Crept over the Daily Current of Life at Beckfordville.

The trees were bare and leafless, the snow lay white and deep in all the hollows and dimples by the roadside, and a sharp December wind was sweeping along the Thames, as the sun glowed with momentary redness, ere it sunk down out of sight.

"How soon it grows dark!" said Mrs. Beckford, with a little sigh. "That's right, Edith—draw the curtains; now we're comfortable."

Comfortable, indeed, they were, with the shaded lamp glowing softly on the table, and the bright fire on the hearth, while Mrs. Beckford's spectacle glasses shone like twin orbs of flame, and her knitting needles rattled responsively.

Edith was sitting opposite to her, fashioning narrow white ribbon into bows for the old lady's new winter caps. She looked wonderfully pretty in a dress of sober blue merino, with a blue ribbon tangled somewhere in the braids of her burnished hair, while the delicate color on her cheek was like the inside of a pink shell.

"What that you were saying a while ago about going back to London, my dear?" said the old lady, suddenly turning round to Edith. "I just want you to understand that you can't go. I can't spare you."

She put one arm round Edith's neck, and drew the round cheek down on her lap.

"Do you really love me, Mrs. Beckford?" asked the girl, earnestly.

"Love you, darling? I could no more go without you than I could without the sunshine. It seems as though you belong to me. I don't know what you've done to steal my old heart away, I'm sure," went on Mrs. Beckford, musingly; "but you remind me somehow of the little daughter I once lost. You won't leave me, will you?"

There was something almost pathetic in her pleading voice, as she foreshadowed her withered lips to the pure forehead of the beautiful girl.

"You'll stay and be a daughter to me in my old age, Edith? What should I do without you always? Oh, I am so glad you have learned to love me—more glad than I can tell you. But, Mrs. Beckford—"

"Dearest Mrs. Beckford," whispered Edith, with the happy crimson dyeing her cheeks, "I'll never leave you; I will stay with you always. Oh, I am so glad you have learned to love me—more glad than I can tell you. But, Mrs. Beckford—"

"Well, dear?"

"There's something I want to tell you—something I have kept back from you," faltered Edith, with her fingers nervously twisting themselves around the old lady's slender, wrinkled hand.

"Mrs. Beckford, I am—"

"But Mrs. Beckford had started to her feet, with a low, half-suppressed cry.

"Hush! I did not hear his footsteps! It was something more than the wind