### THE COLUMBIAN, BLOOMSBURG, PA.

## A MYSTERY SOLVED.

"Oh. Max! I flung my arms round his neck and kissed him! What shall I do?

"How could you make such a mis-Inke?'

"In the dusk he looked exactly like you. Of course, the moment he spoke my horrible blunder flashed upon me. and I fled. I simply cannot face him at dinner, to-night."

"Oh, nonsense, Ray. I will see him and explain the matter. If he is so much like me, no doubt he is a very decent fellow."

This conversation took place between a charming girl and her brother, who were staying at a certain hotel in a well-known seaside recort. To this hotel I came in search of health to restore a nervous system which had been falling lately, and, indeed, had never quite recovered from a shock caused by a horrible incident which had happened to me several years ago.

I had been lured by a madman into his house under pretence of playing a game of billiards, to find myself a prisoner with an armed lunatic, who forced me to play the game for the highest possible stake-life itself. Fortunately I won; but my opponent, although he fulfilled the conditions of our game by shooting himself, with refinement of cruelty tied me in a fainting condition to the billiard table so that I might witness his death. Indeed, his vindictiveness went further than this, for he branded my leg with a hot fron, and wrote a paper in which he accused me of taking his life.

I was charged with the murder, but acquitted, as the fact of my being discovered bound, and the strange appearance of the body attired in the costume of Mephistopheles-a character the madman endeavored to assumewas sufficient to prove my side of the story. Naturally, I was anxious to solve the mystery of this most extraordinary affair.

I needed no proofs to convince me that the man was mad. But there was a method in his madness. Until I met him in a public billiard saloon, whence he took me to his house, I had never set eyes on him before. Then what was the reason for the cruel hatred he evidently felt towards me? Two clues I possessed, but as each had proved useless to the detectives, it was not likely that they would lead me to a solution of the affair.

First I discovered that in brauding my leg the wretch had traced the letters RACHE. That these letters represented the German word "revenge," I was perfectly aware; but what was I to learn from that? That the man was a German? I think not

My other clue was a note which I found, during a subsequent visit to the fatal room, hidden under the carpet. Although it bore no address, I suppose it was meant for me, as it spoke of the writer being avenged at last after a chase half-round the world of one who had stolen his money, murdered his intended wife, and attempted to murder him

On reaching the hotel another shock awaited me, though of a somewhat pleasant kind. As I entered the hall, a charming girl ran up to me, flung her

morrow. I finished the evening in Max Carstairs' room; and while we smoked

said; "let us hope it will be fine to-

he told his story. "Mark Malbrain was the man's name," he continued, "and I met him at a hydropathic establishment in the north, where my sistor and I were staying one summer seven or eight years ago. My sister was then about seventeen, and Malbrain, much to her disgust, fell wildly in love with her.

"During the evening Rachel (yes, that is her name-Ray is only a family pet name) complained to me of Malbrain's conduct. It seems he had continued to follow her round the room begging for a dance, and his manner became threatening when she firmly refused. I at once went to him and said plainly that Miss Carstairs wished to have nothing more to do with him, and, therefore, I must request him not to speak to her again.

"From the manner of his reply I gathered that he did not know Rachel was my sister, but imagined we were lovers; and I did not think it worth while to undeceive him. I decided to send Rachel home in the morning; but remained myself for a few days longer. Malbrain was furious when he heard that my sister had gone, but he said nothing to me.

"One evening after dinner we met in the billiard-room. To my surprise he challenged me to a game, suggesting that we should play for a tenpound note. I agreed, and the stakes were handed to one of the men present. We played a hundred up, and, strange to say, tied at ninety. Malbrain seemed very excited, and offered to double the stakes, throwing another ten-pound note on the table. I agreed, for I felt cool and in good form. We played on, and you may imagine the sensation when again we tied at ninety-eight! It was my turn now, and I am afraid my temper was rising, when I sarcastically asked Malbrain if he felt inclined to double again.

"'Yes!' he shouted, pale with pas-sion. 'Fifty-a hundred, if you like!' " 'One hundred pounds,' I said, taking out my cheque-book.

"It was my turn to play. I tried for a cannon, and missed. Malbrain seized his cue, trembling like the proverbial aspen leaf. He went to pocket the red, but he missed the ball entirely, giving a point to me. Of course, I won by my next stroke.

"'I hope you are satisfied,' he said, hoarsely.

" 'I am sorry,' I replied, 'If the stakes were too high: but later on you will have your revenge.'

"'Revenge!' he shouted, losing his self-control. 'I'll have my revenge! We'll play again, and you'll find the stakes still higher-too high for you!'

"I had good reason to remember these words whn I awoke one night, to find Malbrain in my room dressed in his fantastic costume of 'Mephistopheles."

" 'Come,' he said, "one of us must die to-night. Through you I lost the girl who would have been my wife. My money, too! But come to the billiardroom; we will play to-night. Did you their bran-mash. Possibly it's not en-not promise me my revenge? And the tirely mere fad, for there is one Lon-

DRIVERS SLEEP, HORSES WORK. They Carry the Mail and Make the Usual Calls Without Guidance.

Horsemen and others interested in the problem of how much a horse is capable of learning and how acute are their senses, were greatly sur-prised by an act of the two large Norman horses which are driven to one of a transfer company's wagons at Auderson's, Ind., says the Indianapolis Journal. Several nights ago the driver went to sleep, and forgot that he had the mail to deliver at the Panhandle for the Chloago-bound train. The horses became very uneasy about ten minutes before train time, and after waiting until within five minutes of train time, they started off on a run to the post-office, drawing up next to the door.

The night clerk did not notice that there was no driver, and pitched in the mall pouches hurriedly. The horses then started off on a dead run for the depot and arrived just in time for the excited bussman, who had awakened, to throw in the mail. The incident was kept quiet at the time, and as it happened at night this was an easy matter, but again the same thing happened. The driver was late, and awalting until they saw the hands of the clock on the court house were getting too near the train time, the horses started off, made not only their previous rounds, but this time made the calls at all of the hotels, where many passengers who did not notice the driver was missing got in hurriedly. They were deposited safely at the depot just in time for their train. This incident attracted a great deal of attention and admiration.

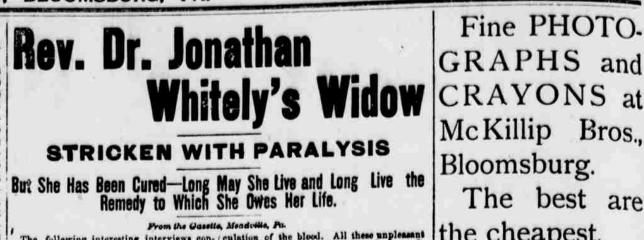
The question which arises is as to whether the horses were able to tell time by the clock, or whether it was their keen perspective qualities that had been trained down by constant service. At all events, horsemen consider the performances as being remarkable. The horses make about twenty trains a day on different roads and their performance is therefore more remarkable than if they only made one train, and only at one depot.

#### Horses Fed on Beefstenks.

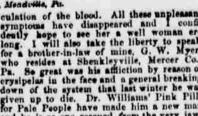
"Of all fads that fashionable people indulge in over their pets, I think the strangest idea is that of giving their horses meat as a variation to their ordinary diet," said a veterinary surgeon.

"Beef is only used. It is baked uptil quite dry and hard, then minced very fine, and given mixed with oats or meal. The animals, so far. from refusing, seem to relish the mixture, and it is thought to improve their condition and courage, but if continued too long they become vicious, and their coats deteriorate.

"A well known titled lady expends a good-sized sum altogether in meat for her numerous carriage horses and hacks. She has one mare that will greedily eat a · beefsteak unmixed with meal if minced small, and it has one per week. I know a retired army colonel, too, a famous hunting man, who frequently gives his hunters beef tea and other 'meat extracts' in stakes! You will find them high don brewery whose horses are simi-enough. Come! we will play for our larly treated, and a famous race horse that won some important events one season was given a partial diet of meat at intervals."



Infinitely to find of the Gasetta Meadowita, An.
Prom the Gasetta Meadowita, An.
The first endicacy of Dr. Williams' Prink Pills for Pale People have made and a confident of the Method is denomination. Mrs.
Mr. A. Whitely, the vidow of the late free momentation. Mrs.
Whitely spoke as follows:
"I consider it my duty to tell for publication of the Method is denomination. Mrs.
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"I consider it my duty to tell for publication of the Method is denomination. Mrs.
Wr. Williams' Pink Pills. Three years are strike the Pills for they paralysis, and lay height on the term mane, and the sense benefit if have derived from the immenses. The first box helped my manet, and it working wonders. Today it was in their cases have been fulling in bealth for some time and the treatments are to see dath."
Wr. Williams' Pink Pills for they have done me as anot easy too much in praise of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for they have done me as incered of good."
Mr. John W. Beatty, who is a contractor and bider of Meadville, of the highes respectability, says:
"Mr. John W. Beatty, who is a contractor for pale for they have done me as there for method, and they have done me as there for method, and they have done me as there for good."
Mr. John W. Beatty, who is a contractor for pale for they have done me as the set for shale to be able to asy that it have a true they have done me as there for monthe scale they have done me as there for monthe scale the state of the Method they done of the providence three water and and the scale and from they exist and the scale of the method have they have done beart free of the method is done was the for they have done beart and the scale and they there was t



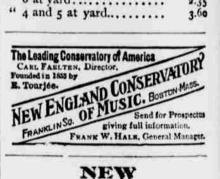


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Beef, quarter, per pound	.0
Wheat per bushel	1.0
Oats " "	-3
Rye " "	.5
wheat flour per DDL	4.8
Hay per ton12 Potatoes per bushel,	to \$1
Potatoes per bushel,	2
Turnips " " Onions " "	.2
Onions " "	1.0
Sweet potatoes per peck	.2
Tallow per 1b	.0
Shoulder " "	.0
Shoulder "" "	.0
Vinegar, per qt	.0
Dried apples per lb	.0
Dried chernes, pitted	1
Raspberries	.1
Cow Hides per lb	-3
Steer """" Calf Skin	.0
Calf Skin	.8
Sheep pelts	.7
Shelled corn per bus	- 4
Corn meal, cwt	1.5
Bran, "	.8
Chop "	.8
Middlings "	.8
Chickens per ib new	.1
" " " old	
Turkeys " "	.11
Greese "	
Ducks " "	.0
COAL.	
No. 6, delivered	2.0
" 4 and 5 "	38
" 6 at yard	



arms around my neck, kissed me, and murmured:-

"You darling, I'm so glad you've come!" In my embarrassment I said some-

thing, but the fair damsel had flown like a startled bird.

"A little thing like that makes one feel at home directly." I said to my-self with a smile. I looked forward to dinner that night with much eagerness, and longed to see the lady who distributed her kisses so rashly.

In the drawing-room, before the cons sounded my wish was gratified A man of about my own age, who hore a striking resemblance to myself, came towards me with the charming girl blushing at his ide. He explained that the kiss was intended for himself. and introduced his sister, who apologized for her mistake in the sweetest manner. I sat next to Miss Carstairs at dinner, and in course of conversa tion remarked that once before I had been mistaken for another man with nearly a fatal result to myself.

"Oh, do tell me all about it," she said.

I was about to do so when she added "But, no; please wait until after dinner; then Max can hear the story too."

We three took our coffee in the gar den that warm September night.

"Now," exclaimed Carstairs, handing me a cigarette, "Ray is dying to hear your story, so go ahead!" "Well." said I, lighting my cigarette

and thinking what a sweet name was Ray Carstairs, "although it happened several years ago, the incident still remains painfully fresh in my memory It was an adventure I had with a mad billard-player."

billiard-player."

"Max," said his sister, "doesn't that remind you of what happened at-'Yes," he replied, before she could finish the sentence, "but don't inter rupt. Please go on," he added.

In a moment it flashed upon me that the solution of the mystery lay within my grasp. This man, who so strangely resembled me, was the intended object of the madman's revenge!

As I went through the horrible details of that fearful night they listened with rapt attention.

"You are right!" exclaimed he brother, as I finished; "all you suf fered was intended for me. Now for my story, which will clear up the mys tery."

Miss Carstairs rose.

"I think I'll run off to bed, Max. I'm very tired, and it's getting late." She kissed her brother, then gave her hand to me. "Good-night," she

lives-you and I! Ha, ha! one of us shall die to-night!'

"I knew as I sprang from my bed that the man was mad! We grappled together, the candle fell from his hand, and we struggled in darkness. Down we went on the floor, and I felt the cold steel of a revolver, which exploded, and a sharp pain came in my arm. Then I heard doors opening and voices, so I held on till some of the fellows came in with lights. 'Mephistopheles' was carried off to his own room, raving and struggling. The slight wound in my arm was dressed by the doctor connected with the establishment, who also took the unforfunate lunatic under his care.

"Yes," I said, musing on the strange account I had heard. "But I wonder why he charged you with murdering Miss Carstairs? And he also repeated the accusation in the paper I found. I suppose it was some idea he had got hold of in his mad jealousy of you." "Yes," said Carstairs. "You see, he

thought we were rivals, and knew I was the cause of Ray's disappearance."

"Then there is another thing that puzzles me. Why did the madman brand my leg with the word 'Rache'?' "It is German for revenge," said Carstairs.

"Yes, but Malbrain was not a Ger man, so why should he use that lan guage?"

"Can't say. I suppose the mark have entirely gone by this time?" "Yes; but the police had them pho tographed, and I think I have got one of the photos. in my portmanteau." I found the card and handed it to Carstairs.

"It is funny," he said, laughing, "to notice how beautifully the printing is done-all except the full-stop, which is a bit too high up. By Jove! it must have been painful, though."

"I never felt it at the time-I was it a faint, I suppose."

"Ab, I have it!" cried Carstairs "That full-stop explains it. Of course the word he meant to trace was 'Rachel,' only for some reason he didn't finish the 'l.' Ha, ha, ha! How Ray will laugh at you when she hears of your being tatooed with her name." So my last thought that night was of charming Ray Carstairs. And how could it be otherwise?-her name on my body, her image in my soul, and her kiss on my lips! As for the kiss I felt I could not honorably keep what was not intended for me. But I was soon able to return it, for, ere

another month had passed, Ray Car stairs promised to be my wife.

### She Was Very Practical.

"It was a difficult matter to make up my mind which to accept," said the girl with a practical mind. "I understand that both are very bright."

19.4

"Yes; they're inventors."

"There is something noble in that profession. I cannot think without the profoundest admiration of these men who harness that giant force of nature to do the bidding of the human will."

"Yes. That sentiment applies to William. He's at work on a flying machine and a new kind of electric engine. But one can't buy moquette carpets and dining room chairs with fine theories, you know."

"Aren't you going to marry William ?"

"No. I accepted John. He's going to be a rich man. He has an invention under way for fastening on suspender buttons so they can't come off."-Nebraska State Journal.

#### Flower Farms.

The delightful habor of flower farming is steadily on the increase among the people of the Scilly Isles, the astonishing quantity of 41 tons of cut blossoms, chiefly narcissus, being sent over to England weekly during the winter season. The farms, which employ many hands and much capital, are excessively interesting, and the sight of them in February or March is worth even the risk of a rough voyage. Literally millions of white and yellow blossoms, michly fragrant, nestle between tall bedges of euonymus and veronica, and form a fragrant picture-exquisite as it is unique,-Philadelphia Inquirer.

#### Pat's Vernelty.

An Irish gentleman had a splendidlooking cow, but she kicked so much that it took a very long time and often was nearly impossible to milk her: so he sent her to a fair to be sold, and told his herdsman to be sure not to sell her without letting the buyer know her faults. He brought home a large price which he had obtained for it. His master was surprised, and said, "Are you sure you told all about her?" "Bedad, I did. sir!" said the herdeman. "The man asked me whother she was a good milker. 'Begorra, sir,' says I, 'ir's what you'd be tired milking ber?"



for charitable work. "A Feathery Debut," by Lalage D. er is not wholly a creator. The thing which he produces was in some de-Morgan, is a charming account of a gree begun by nature. His task is to family of thrushes, whose domicile originate in one spot, but to preserve was in the writer's garden. Natural in another, to suppress here, and to history is further represented by "A Year of Batterflies," by Frank H. alter there. Yet rearrangement and elimination are artistic processes as Sweet.

Fanny Bullock Workman describes "Spanish Plains and Sierras;" R. G. Robinson writes of "A Yankee Farmer in Florida;" and John Murdoch has some words on "Fireplaces of Snow.'

"College Athletics" are vindicated and the sculptor, just as the poet who by Albert Tyler, one of the American victors in the Olympian games at Athens in 1896, Francis M. Butler turns a true tale into a work of art writes of "Teacup Times," and Edward S. VanZile resurrects "New York's

First Poet," namely, Jacob Steindam, whose works appeared in 1659 and 1661.

The sugar-coating on Ayer's Pills

therefore nature usually gets the not only makes them easy to take, credit for almost the whole of the but preserves their medicinal integrity landscape gardener's work, just as to an indefinite period. It dissolves she does for almost the whole of the immediatly after reaching the stomstory teller's when his tale is known ach and thus permits the full effect of the physic to be speedily realized.

# DINING ROOMS.

A LARGE and well furnished dining room has been opened by HARRY AURAND, on the second floor of his HARRY AURAND, res. taurant. Meals will be served at the regular dining hours for 25c. and they can also be obtained at any time. The table will be sup-plied with the delicacies of the season and he service will be first-class.

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The poetry of the number is by Julien Gordon, Carrie Blake Morgan, results which look as though, with very little assistance, nature might and Grace F. Pennypacker. larly gentle and human mood. And

But every one does not remember these facts. The triumph of landscape gardening-ot the naturalistic as distinguished from the formal branch of gardening art-is to create

truly as invention itself, and in each

and every case the result-the finish-

ed work of art as a whole-is moved,

is artificial, is a created thing. Thus

the artist in gardening stands as an

artist with the painter, the architect

ranks as high as the poet who invents

have produced them in some particu-

to be " founded upon fact."

his theme.