THE CENTRE REPORTER.

FRED. KURTZ, Editor and Proprietor. Terms: $2.00 a Year, in Advance.

VOL. VII. CENTRE HALL, CENTRE CO., PA., THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 1874. NO. 11.

Gems.

EXPRESSION.

Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable;
A vile conceit in pompous words express'd
Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd.
—*Pope.*

RUNNING WATER.

Fast beside there trickled softly down
A gentle stream, whose murm'ring wave did play
Amongst the puny stones, and made a sound
To lull him soft asleep that by it lay.
—*Spenser.*

REST.

Be strong to bear, O Heart!
Nothing is vain;
Strive not, for life is care,
And God sends pain;
Heaven is above, and there
Rest will remain!
—*Adelaide A. Procter.*

She Always Made Home Happy.

In an old churchyard stood a stone,
Weather-marked and stained,
The hand of Time had crumbled it,
So only part remained.
Upon the one side I could just trace,
"In memory of our mother!"
An epitaph which spoke of "home"
Was chiseled on the other.

I'd gazed on monuments of fame,
High towering to the skies;
I'd seen the sculptured marble stone
Where a great hero lies;
But by this epitaph I paused,
And read it o'er and o'er,
For I had never seen inscribed
Such words as these before.

"She always made home happy!" What
A noble record left;
A legacy of memory sweet
To those she left bereft;
And what a testimony given
By those who knew her best,
Engraven on this plain, rude stone
That marked their mother's rest.

It was a humble resting place,
I know that they were poor,
But they had seen their mother sink
And patiently endure;
They had marked her cheerful spirit,
When bearing, one by one,
Her many burdens up the hill,
Till all her work was done.

So when was stilled her weary head,
Folded her hands so white;
And she was carried from the home
She'd always made so bright,
Her children raised a monument
That money could not buy,
As witness of a noble life
Whose record is on high.

A noble life; but written not
In any book of fame;
Among the list of noted ones
None ever saw her name;
For only her household knew
The victories she had won—
And only them could testify
How well her work was done.

THE JAWS OF DEATH.

"And may God have mercy on your soul!"

These—the closing words of the sentence of death which had been pronounced upon me—were the only ones I heard from the time when, by order of the officer, I stood up to receive the judgment of the law. The court-room was crowded almost beyond its capacity, and all ages, sexes and conditions of life were represented in that throng. The dock was situated so that about two-thirds of the room came within the range of my vision—the other portion, including the gallery above, I had noticed when I came in. During each and every day of my protracted trial the crowd of curiosity had been large, but now it seemed redoubled. What thoughts and emotions filled and agitated my mind for the short time I sat there on that hard and cruel seat! In all that mass of living beings there was not one who could partake of that knowledge which was restricted to me alone—the knowledge of my innocence. All, from the evidence on the trial, and the verdict of the jury, from the statements and deductions of the newspapers, from a thousand other causes which operate on a populace excited by the commission of a great crime in their midst, and whose convictions are already half made up by the arrest of *somebody*, all were sure of my guilt. From the time I had made the acquaintance of him for whose bloody deeds I was condemned to suffer, the hand of Fate had lain heavily upon me. That man—therefore a stranger—had one month ago so worked upon my frank and unsuspecting nature, had so insidiously and artfully opened my heart and crept therein, that within two hours of our meeting we were pledging and repledging our eternal friendship in bottles of wine. All this alone.

In twenty-four hours afterward I was taken to prison, there to remain until in due time I should be brought to the bar of the court to answer for the murder of a citizen. The forms of justice (I was told) must be observed, for as to my conviction there was no earthly doubt. The following report from a paper shows why such was the general opinion:

"Our usually quiet town was last night the scene of one of the most brutal murders on record. At 12 o'clock a cry of pain, followed by the report of a pistol, was heard near the southeast tollgate. The few people that were in the neighborhood hurried to the spot, and beheld prone on the ground the lifeless form of one of our wealthiest and most respected citizens, David Elburne, Esq. A pistol-shot through the head, from which the blood poured out freely, and his rifled pockets told that he had been cruelly assassinated and robbed. Search was immediately instituted for the murderer, and he was soon afterward found secreted under a shed near the scene of the dreadful deed, with an empty pistol in his hand, blood on his person, and the watch of the deceased in his pocket. His face was livid with fear when detected, and his attempted explanation of the condition in which he was found was a mass of contradictions. He had a hearing before the Justice and was committed to prison. The name of the villain is Leonard Manor. Let speedy justice be meted out to him."

All the above, as a recital of facts, was true, but the statement that I, Leonard Manor, was the author of the crime, was untrue. But a mighty and trongly forged chain of circumstantials evidence was bound around me, which I was unable to break, and my counsel, Mr. Cook, met with his first defeat as a criminal practitioner. The only witness that could rebut the violent presumption of my guilt and disprove what had been brought against me, was not to be found; made way with, no doubt, by *him*. And there I sat alone in that dock and felt what no may can describe. Protest my innocence I might, and swear it with all the vehemence of an earnest soul; but I would be either laughed at for my audacity, or whistled down as a feigned lunatic. Oh, God! what it is to be falsely judged! To have an iron wall between your self-consciousness and the belief of the outer world! To see yourself crowded into the grave by the torrent of popular fury, and yet have that in your bosom which might roll back the tide and save you could it but reach out beyond the narrow circle in which it is confined! Oh, what is physical strength to the power of this internal sense in such an hour as this! How willingly would I have bartered the best gifts of nature if those around me could have partaken of this feeling and know what I knew. The mercy of the Almighty seemed a meaningless thing. But he could not break *His* law, even to save the life of one of His creatures from an unjust death!

The closing words of the sentence which doomed me to the scaffold awoke me from these reflections. I sank to my seat, as a sigh of relief, like the groan of some unearthly monster, went up from the multitude in the court room, followed by a subdued hum which now succeeded to the silence which had heretofore reigned. The people began to move out, speaking to each other and smiling, pleased that the end was as they wished and believed it would be. Oh, how more than ever, then, the silent and helpless savior in my bosom struggled in its bounds in one desperate effort to go out and become absorbed in the thoughts of others! But all in vain; my heart sickened, and the pall of despair was upon me, as I submitted myself to the officers who were to return me to the gaol.

The court room was in the second story of the building, and was reached from the outside by a more than ordinarily steep flight of steps of gray stone, about twenty-four in number. As I emerged from the front door at the top of these steps, a bright, piercing ray of the sun met me full in the face. Dazzled for an instant I stopped, and then stepped forward again. But I missed the step-stone, and, unable to recover myself, fell headlong down the way.

* * * * * *

I sat on a low, rough couch in the darkest, dampest dungeon of the gaol. To the cold iron gyves which shackled my legs at the ankles was attached a chain of like metal, of, perhaps, four feet in length, terminating at a ring on the bottom of the cell. My hands were free, and with them I rubbed my eyes as one who hopes thereby to make them do their duty better. I could have but a faint view of the interior of my apartment, as the only light that reached it was between the two bars of a small opening which served as a window, situated in an oblique direction from where I sat, and apparently about seven feet from the ground. A confused and shapeless idea of something awful that had happened, was happening, or would happen, weighed upon me. What it was I could not determine—even my situation, clad in a convict's garb and bound in chains, did not strike me with any kind of feeling akin to surprise—I barely noticed it—so emasculated was my mental organization and impotent of thought. It was in this stupid state I sat, when a noise broke upon my ear, coming, as it seemed, from immediately in front of me. I peered in that direction, but could see nothing, yet the noise, which was a commingling of a grating and a rumbling sound, continued. Presently it ceased, and the figure of a man began to define itself before my view. Nearer it came toward me, when—oh, heaven!—the form and feature sof *him* fell upon my gaze.

Then it was that I saw all, knew all, felt all, remembered all. A stream of memories came rushing in upon me like a torrent. That man's presence drove the clouds away and all was clear. Here I was, condemned as a felon, but before me stood the felon himself. Moved by the impulse which this sudden discovery inspired I essayed to strike the wretch, but my arm refused to obey the bidding of my will; a paralysis seemed to have seized me. An attempt to speak met with not much better success, as nothing but a whisper, scarcely audible to myself, escaped my lips. He now advanced, and, taking a seat beside me on the cot, spoke:

"Manor, you know your old friend and companion, Sangin? I found you, and am come to condole with you."

The tone with which he uttered these words, and the sarcastic smile with which he accompanied them, chilled me through. How I could have crushed him! He continued:

"Crime is a science, Manor. Its perfect practice is an art, and, like all other arts, it requires instruments. You have been a good one. I used you in my little operation against old Elburne, and it was a perfect success. You were caught with the blood of your—*my* victim, still hot upon you, the smoke of your, *my* shot, was not yet out of the pistol-chamber. I tell you, Manor, it was a grand triumph of art. It is a pity you could not live to aid in future successes of mine you're too good a glove to be thrown away—I must have more out of you before you die—by Jove, you shall live!"

Throughout this address I sat with downcast face, feeling how utterly miserable and forsaken of God I was. At the word "live," I raised my eyes and looked at him. His small, snaky eyes glistened like diamonds, and a sardonic smile played over his features.

"Yes—live," he said, "and go with me. I have cheated justice—why not serve injustice the same way, for the time at least. You are bound to be hung sometime, and I am bound to die peacefully; but we will postpone both events as long as possible. My art being perfect, my resources are, of course, inexhaustible.

Before I was aware of it he was manipulating my fetters, and in a short time he told me to rise. This second effort at moving was successful, and I walked several paces from my bed, free from the irons. In this new state my revengeful feelings, wonderful as it seems, entirely disappeared. He appeared again as a friend, and I reproached myself for ever having thought ill of him.

"We will go out as I came in," said Sangin; and divesting himself of an extra coat which he had on, he threw it over my shoulders and led me, as he expressed, "to freedom and a sphere of usefulness."

I have an indistinct recollection of passing through shadowy corridors, up and down steps, through narrow doors, and over walls, and a clear idea of surroundings did not possess me until I found that we were plodding through the dust of a country road, with no sign of a human habitation before us, and the town sinking out of sight in the dim distance behind us. As I looked at my companion, as we were walking along, I felt as one fascinated by one he knows to be a villain.

We proceeded in silence for some time, when Sangin called my attention to a riderless horse standing near the fence at the right of the road before us. As we approached, another object met our eyes—a well-dressed man lay on the ground before us, groaning with pain. In a faint tone he told us that, seized with a vertigo, he had fallen from his horse, and, being unable to rise, feared that he had broken some bones. Sangin directed me to sit down and support the gentleman's head upon my lap while he made an examination. When I had done this, he quickly took everything which the wounded man had upon his person, including a costly watch and a plethoric purse, and placed them in his own pockets. While we were looking in astonishment at this bold proceeding, Sangin drew from his boot a long, murderous-looking knife, and plunged it into the bosom of the helpless traveler! The blood spirted into my face, and my person seemed, almost in a twinkling, to be deluged with gore. Before I could regain my feet, Sangin, with the most unearthly yell I ever heard, leaped upon the horse and disappeared. What a situation was here—oh, cursed fate! Completely lost in a sea of bewilderment, I cannot say how long I might have stood looking alternately at the bloody corpse before me and my equally bloody self, did not the clattering hoofs behind me arouse me. I turned and saw a mob of horsemen bearing down in the direction where I stood. Leaving a few to take charge of the unfortunate wayfarer, the rest turned in the direction whence they came, first having secured me on one of the horses.

Fleet as the wind we pushed forward, until a sort of dizziness seized me, and I felt as if I was being whirled through some wild and awful dream, and yet with just enough consciousness to know that there was a basis of reality to it all.

All at once we halted on the bank of fire, which shot up a million forked tongues of lurid flame. A heavy black cloud hung all around, and the air was dense with a sulphurous odor. A dreadful mad-house noise resounded in my ears, and I thought that here was Tophet, and I was to be a victim to the insatiate Moloch. A muffled bell tolled one stroke like an echo from a tomb, on my right, and, looking up, my eyes met a black-draped gallows which reared its hideous form into the air. No time was allowed me to contemplate this new feature, even had I been so inclined, for I was instantly taken charge of by a pair of hangmen and placed on the scaffold. The rope was placed around my neck, and the stillness which took the place of the walking to and fro on the scaffold, told me that I stood there alone! I muttered a prayer, but before a dozen syllables were uttered, all that was substantial beneath me gave way, and I dropped suddenly in a direct line downward; a piercing pain ran like a dagger through my head; everything grew dark and red, and purple and white, by turns—until, after what seemed an age of agony, my feet touched something, a momentary light flashed upon me, and, in a syncope, I lost all thought and memory and feeling.

* * * * * * *

A murmur of voices crept upon my ear, and slowly and gradually I revived. I opened my eyes and found myself in the company of several people, some of whom were rubbing my hands, others administering restoratives, and all, more or less, contributing to my restoration. As my senses returned, I saw that I was in a strange room and sitting by a window. Out of that window I looked, and—great heaven!—what a spectacle met my eye! It was the yard of a prison, and pendant therein, from the cross-beam of a gallows, hung the lifeless body of Sangin! The sight at once recalled all the memories of the past; but there was a hiatus which was yet to be explained. It was done so by a kind attendant, who informed me that my fall at the court-house steps nearly deprived me of life, and did deprive me of reason—that after a brief incarceration in my cell it was thought best to place me under medication, and I was removed to the hospital department of the prison—that while there the criminality of Sangin, the author of the murder for which I had been condemned, was discovered through the appearance of my missing witness, some unguarded expressions of Sangin himself during a debauch in a neighboring village, and other circumstances which had come to light since my trial—that he was tried and condemned, and made a confession, in which he stated that he had administered a narcotic potion to me, pushed me under the shed, and then after waylaying Mr. Elburne, and taking a large amount of money from his person, had placed the watch and pistol on me, smeared me with blood, and then escaped; that he gave poison to a cabman who was cognizant of how and by whom I was placed under the shed. The cabman was my missing witness, and his recovery from the drug, although he was for some time in a state of insensibility, and on the verge of death, was the main cause of my salvation. That, following the opinion of one of the medical board attached to the prison, I was placed at the window, in the belief that the sight of my would-be destroyer in the hands of the law would have a beneficial effect. That when he mounted the scaffold I looked calmly and vacantly at him, but when the drop fell I swooned. As I revived, there were evident indications of the much-wished-for change, and when, with a clearer understanding, I looked upon the dangling body of the villain, it was complete, and reason resumed its reign. I returned to my home to recuperate my physical health, and it is in the pleasant days of convalescence that I commit to paper and give to the world this recital of my entrance into and exit from "the jaws of death."

Chang and Eng.

The Philadelphia physicians who had mad an autopsy on the bodies of the Siamese Twins made a full report to the College of Physicians and Surgeons. The following is a condensed account of the conclusions arrived at:

The supposition that the band connecting the twins was simply of a fleshy nature has been decided in the negative. It was found that a peritoneal connection did exist; that is, a reflection or extension of the peculiar membrane lining of the abdomen extended into the band, though it was not continuous. Sacs or pouches were formed by the reflection, possessing no communication between the two. The intimate visceral connection between the twins was shown by the injecting fluid, which was passed into the mesenteric vein of one and appeared in the mesenteric vein of the other. The liver of Chang occupied its normal position on the right side of his body below the diaphragm. The liver of Eng was on his left side, next to Chang, his spleen being abnormally situated on the right side of his body. The two livers had evidently at one period of the existence—possible fœtal—of the twins been virtually one gland, but had eventually become separated. This is shown by the passage of the injecting fluid from the mesenteric vein of one to that of the other. The fact of a common umbilical cord between the twins is also settled, the naval being situated in the middle of the band. During fœtal life, therefore, the circulation was conducted to the twins from the maternal system precisely as to a single individual. These facts show that a separation of the twins during life would have resulted fatally to one or both of them. The nervous intimacy through the band was extremely slight, and the individuality of the two men so strongly marked that it was not deemed advisable to examine the brains, nothing further than a comparison of the weight of the two being expected from such an operation. The extension of the ensiform cartilage or breast bone, which formed a constituent of the attachment, was a mere flexible fibro-cartilaginous substance, in which there was nothing like an appearance of an elbow-like joint, as has been reported.

The India Famine.

The famine in India is already causing great suffering. In Upper Tirhoot the inhabitants are eating wild roots. The Indian Government has arranged for the supply of 342,000 tons of rice to the distressed districts by the middle of May, at a cost of £3,000,000. The Government estimates that it will possibly have to provide for the subsistence of 2,500,000 persons—equal to ten per cent of the population of the distressed districts—for seven months. It will require for this purpose 240,000 tons of rice. The amount secured shows a reserve supply of 100,000 tons.

The Congregationalists of the far West have decided to establish their central university at Colorado Springs, Col.

Moscow.

Something About the Old Capital of Russia.

Moscow is the best colored city I know—the finest of all cities when seen in distant perspective, with her thousand and one golden domes glittering in the sun against the sky. Cairo, viewed from the citadel, and Constantinople, from the tower of Galata, are comparatively gray and colorless. Moscow, when illuminated under sunset, shines with Oriental splendor; the eye is dazzled as by a brilliant stage scene, more like enchantment than reality. Not that the color is refined or in strict harmony; often, indeed, all that can be said is that the painter has used his paint-pot generously, that yellow ochres, reds, blues, and gold are laid on thickly. But anything that may be wanting on the part of the artist is supplied by the hand of nature; time brings the harshest of pigments into tone; atmosphere casts a delicate veil over the perspective vision; distance, in short, lends enchantment. It often happens in semi-barbaric structures that what the artist intended may be commonplace and coarse, but that what he did not intend, that is, unforeseen accidents, or combinations which fall out by the happy chance of circumstance, proves most effective. Such are the panoramas which arrest the traveler's steps as the eye sweeps over the house-tops, chimneys, towers, trees, gilded and many-colored domes which stretch from foreground to horizon. There are cities which the stranger should never enter, there are buildings which the critic can scarcely dare to approach. But magnitude and multitude move the imagination.

One minaret may be mean, one dome insignificant, but the moment the unit becomes a thousand, and as soon as space sufficiently expands for atmosphere to suggest magnitude or mystery, then literal facts give place to phantoms, and poems and pictures are wrought out of ever commonest materials. Yet these many-colored domes, though they float as a thing of beauty between earth and sky, are rather bulbous in character; indeed, sometimes they thrust themselves upward and onward as excrescences. The construction, too, is rather gimcrack; in the Kremlin I examined several cupolas under repair; when the outer covering of thin metal is removed, ribs, as of an umbrella, or of a lady's crinoline, are laid bare. A make-up thus flimsy and slight admits of more easy adaptation than bricks or mortar to the many varied forms which fancy may suggest. The curves and outlines assumed are sometimes graceful, often fantastic; in some directions the eye seems to look on a number of giant gourds, in others a group of Turks' turbans may be suggested, while the smaller domes may be mistaken for pepper-boxes, decanters, or castors familiar on dinner tables. In short, the variety of forms already in existence is all but infinite, and others might readily be invented. Specially graceful is a common type, not larger in diameter than a minaret, bearing a golden dome as its crown. One pretty effect I observed within the Kremlin. The newly-wrought cupolas of highly-burnished surface serve as Claude Lorraine mirrors to reflect the moving clouds, the passing crowds, the trees and encircling landscape. It may easily be imagined how gay and glittering a city looks thus set with jewels and shining with patens of bright gold.

The colors, too, are scarcely less varied than the forms; besides gold, there is silver, often blue and green and red; sometimes also a green ground is set with gold stars; inscriptions in letters of gold may likewise be seen as friezes around towers. So much, indeed, is Moscow a city of colors, that the walls even of ordinary dwellings are illumined brightly with red and yellow, and the roofs are green. The climax is, of course, reached by the Kremlin, which dominates over the city lying beneath as a church, a palace, and a citadel. This stronghold, the acropolis of Moscow, is flanked by massive and picturesque towers, surmounted by rough, steep roofs, marked and colored like the scales of serpents; also over gateways and at angles are many other towers, which group with domes and pointed pinnacles and golden crosses into ever-varying panoramas as the spectator makes the circuit of the walls, or as the man, traveling from east to west, alternates light and shade; the scale is sufficiently extended to gain a rangeful play of atmospheric effect. One of the towers, that of the "Spasski" gate, was erected by an Englishman, Christopher Galloway, in 1625. The "Troitski" tower was also built by him. While the basements are heavy and gloomy, after the Oriental fashion, the upper stories, or sky outlines in infinite fantasy, play with cloudland and seem to hold themselves aloof from earth as to become creatures of the elements. The Kremlin should be seen by sunset, twilight, and moonlight.

Clothing the Limbs of Little Girls.

A sensible mother, writing of children's clothing, says: I see many children whose lower limbs are quite too much exposed for health or comfort. It is not infrequent to meet little girls with dresses up to the knees and but one pair of perhaps cambric drawers open at the bottom, and perhaps cotton stockings. Any grown person, or boy, would freeze if clad thus. No wonder that so many, when they arrive at the age of womanhood, have no constitutions, and are good for little but fashionable invalids, whose chief business through life is to supply the doctor with good fees. Every child should wear a pair of under-drawers made of Canton flannel (or, better still, of wool) buttoned to the waist of the chemise, cut as small as the leg at the bottom and left open a little way and extending down under the stockings to the top of the high shoe; over these a pair, cut moderately full, buttoning just below the knee. The band is pretty finished with a narrow ruffle or a bit of embroidery. I know many think they do not look as well as when made open at the bottom, but they are certainly much more comfortable and sensible.

Bad Manners.

Many people who consider themselves very well bred distinguish themselves in public places solely by their bad manners. These people are conspicuous at lectures and concerts, the theatre and opera, and even at church. The crowding in and pushing out, without regard to the rights, comfort or even safety of others, stepping on dresses and crushing hats and toes, sometimes approach barbarity. Sometimes the finest strains of an exquisite piece of music are lost in the chatter of a pair of girls, or the loud chattering of what might otherwise have been mistaken for a young lady and gentleman. Often the climax of a lecture is destroyed by the going out of people who advertise their ignorance and bad breeding in that way. Sometimes the pleasure of a dozen people, during the most touching part of a performance, is dissipated by the restlessness of a fruit-eating couple near them, who forget they are not at home. And this is one of the ills for which no cure has yet been found, and must be borne patiently by a suffering public.

The Franking Privilege.

Contrary to the expectation of a large majority of the U. S. House of Representatives, the bill providing for the free distribution of public documents and seeds, and for the free circulation of newspapers within the counties where published, was defeated by a vote of 129 yeas to 131 nays. It was confidently predicted by the Representatives who had closely watched the debate that the bill without substantial amendment would pass by a majority of twenty. This belief was held on both sides of the House. Had a vote been called upon the bill shortly after it was brought before the House there is no doubt that it would have passed, but there has been so much delay that Representatives discovered from private letters and the press that there was danger that in many localities the passage of the bill would create as much dissatisfaction as an absolute restoration of the franking privilege. Representatives were, consequently, deterred from voting according to their personal desires or convictions, so the correspondent of the N. Y. *Times* asserts. Another cause operated to defeat the bill. There were many who desired to vote for the section providing for the free circulation of newspapers within the counties of their publication who would not vote for the sections providing for the free distribution of public documents; but as the committee would not permit any division of the vote, these members preferred that the bill should be defeated, hoping, perhaps, hereafter to be able to legislate in favor of their country newspapers.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Postmaster-General has not been able to make any definite calculation of the changes of expenses incident to the abolition of the franking privilege, the statement was made that the expenditures had been increased millions on that account. Ellis H. Roberts, of New York, at the first opportunity, moved that the whole subject lie upon the table. This motion was defeated by a vote of 118 yeas to 140 nays. The amendment accepted by the committee, which proposed to give the Postmaster-General discretion at any time to delay for thirty days the transmission of free public documents, as the necessities of the service might require, was defeated by an overwhelming majority, it being the general conviction that such discretion might be used for political purposes by any Administration of the Government at times when party excitement runs high. For the amendment of Mr. R. S. Hale, of New York, which was in the nature of a substitute for the bill, and which proposed an absolute restoration of the franking privilege, there were only forty-nine votes given. These forty-nine votes were about equally distributed between Republicans and Democrats. The defeat of the bill is, says the *Times* correspondent, without doubt, due to Gen. Butler, who thought that if it were defeated a demand would be made for the passage of a bill for the complete restoration of the privileges of the frank, for which he has a new bill drawn. He passed around among the forty-nine who voted for Mr. Hale's amendment, and impressed some of them with his view on the results of the defeat of the pending bill, and without doubt changed votes enough which would have been given for the bill to secure its defeat.

A Pie-Biting Match.

The people in New Mexico originate some curious societies. In Mesilla and Las Cruces, they have—or it is said they have—what are known as the "Pie-Biters," composed of persons passionately fond of pies. So strong has the rivalry grown between the two societies, that a challenge resulted, and the contest is reported to have been as follows:

"The pies were to be mince, and one inch thick, Mesilla to bite first, and no bite to count unless it reached the centre of the pie. Mesilla piled up nine pies, and shut down on them without an effort. Las Cruces elevated the top of his head and closed his jaws over eleven. (Great enthusiasm among his friends). Mesilla then came to the scratch, or bite, manfully, and flopped his lip over a dozen successfully. (Odds offered on Mesilla). Las Cruces, at this point said: 'Well, it is time to stop this nonsense; hand me fifteen.' They were given him; he smiled, laid the back of his head on his shoulders, and came down on the bundle of pies like an alligator on a mouthful of flies. But his teeth did not come together. He struggled and jerked, but it was no use. Three of his teeth broke, and his hold gave way. On examining, a dog-collar was found in the centre pie, and Las Cruces had got his teeth tangled in the buckle. Jack Martin, the referee, decided in favor of Mesilla, on the ground that everything was fair in a mince-pie."

Buying Mirrors.

The total disregard of many of our people to the fitness of things is in no respect so clearly manifested as in the purchase of mirrors. One kind is true in its reflection, the two others are exaggerative. Of the exaggerative one unduly expands the figure, and the other unduly elongates it. Hundreds of mirrors are bought every day without reference to this fact. You will find short, squatty people with mirrors that make them look still shorter and more squatty; and thin, gaunt people with looking-glasses that pare them down fully one-half. And thus, through carelessness and indifference the seeds of dissatisfaction and distrust are sown, and many happy homes are broken up, to scatter their broken-hearted contents upon the world. People with square, expansive faces should select elongating mirrors, and those who are long and thin-faced should get those which will expand them. Self-opinion is stronger than anything else, and when our own glass assures us that we look well, it is nothing whatever what other people may think. You know that yourself.

Some Weather Signs.

"M. Quad" enumerates the following in "Our Fireside Friend," as among the most reliable weather signs:

If the pear trees blossom before the 20th of March, and you notice the cows and horses rubbing themselves against the meeting-house door, and the top rail of the fence casts two separate shadows, it argues well for the coming wheat crop.

If the clouds all move one way during November, and big girls go barefoot, and tin-peddlers are numerous, and your wife wants a new pair of shoes, and plum trees grow the most branches on the west side, the new year will be prolific of thunder-storms and lightning-rod agents.

If pumpkins are frost-bitten before they turn yellow, and house-rent goes up, and catnip tea has a bitter taste, and saw-logs show an inclination to roll up-hill, the potato rot is sure to follow.

If there are high winds in February, followed by warm rains, and cattle refuse to lick salt, and red-headed girls are conspicuous, July will be a cool month.

It is said the best means to curb a fast young man is to "bridal" him.

Sam's Feast.

Sarah's stories were wonderful things. To be sure, they were apt to be a little startling, and generally ended by scaring her listeners half out of their wits; but that only made them more delightfully exciting.

By the time the children got a hint of the coming treat, they crowded around, and Sarah began:

"Now, all you young uns must sit 'mazin' still if I'm gwine to tell a story."

Sarah's virtue as a story-teller was in her face and manner. She was very black, with large rolling eyes, a very long face, a monstrous mouth, great white teeth, and long thin hands, which had an uncanny white look on the inside, as though the color were coming off.

Perhaps you don't think hands have much to do with story telling, but they had with Sarah's, I can tell you.

Quieting her audience with threats of "claring 'em all out the house," she began in a low, solemn voice:

"Onct upon a time, 'way down in Ole Kentuck', there lived a M A N! He was a-w-f-u-l rich, and had heaps an' heaps o' nice things in his dark cellar. Bottles an' bottles o' wine, bar'ls an' bar'ls o' cider, an' lots an' lots o' hams, bar'ls an' bar'ls o' bacon, an' bins an' bins o' apples, an' jars an' jars o' sweetmeats, an' boxes an' boxes o' raisins, an' O! piles o' good things to eat, in that dark cellar."

Sarah paused to see the effect. Rush smacked his lips, and the eyes of the whole Johnson family rolled in ecstacy at the delightful picture.

"But he was a-w-f-u-l stingy! Not a speck of all these yer goodies would he guv to a-n-y body. Lor! he al'lus kep' the key in his own pocket, an' if he wanted ham for dinner, he went down in that yer d-a-r-k cellar, an' cut a slice, nuff for hisself. An' if he wanted wine, he jes went down an' fotched a bottle, an' al'lus locked the do' arter him, an' n-e-v-e-r guv Sam the fustest speck!"

"Well, now," Sarah went, on rolling her eyes, "that ar Sam was a po' nigga—the only nigga the stingy man had; an' he was that stingy he never half fed him no way. He guv him a leetle cornmeal fur hoe cakes, an' onct in a g-r-e-a-t while a leetle teeny bit uv a slice o' bacon. So Sam got thinner an' thinner, till he was near a shadder, an' his fingers were l-o-n-g and b-o-n-y."

And Sarah held up hers and clawed them in the air, till the children could almost see Sam and his bony hands.

"Well, one day this bad man had to go 'way off to the big city, an' he hadn't got nobody to leave in the house but jes Sam. So he done measured out jes so much corn-meal, an' he said: 'Now, Sam, I shall be gone away three days, and that'll have to last ye till I get back. I'll warrant ye'd like to jes eat it every scrap the fust day, an' ax fur mo'—it's jes like ye; but not a snojen do you get till I come back, fur I've locked everything up. An' if I find anything out o' order when I come back, I'll—I'll—wallop you; see if I don't!!'

"With that so d-r-e-f-f-u-l threat, the cruel Mah'sr went off, an' left Sam all alone. Well, Sam went to clearin' up the house, an' when he went to hang up his Mah'sr's everyday close—fur in course he wore his Sunday ones to go to town—he hars somethin' hit agin the wall, an' he thought to hisself, 'I'll see what that ar is. Mebbe Mah'sr's done left a penny in his pocket. Oh, golly! won't I buy a bun!' An' he put his hand in the pocket, an' *what do you s'pose he found?*

"THE CELLAR KEY!!!"

Sarah, looking wildly at her listeners, said these thrilling words in an awful whisper, with a roll of the eyes and a dropping of the jaws, that made it still more horrible.

"'Oh, Lor'! here's the key!' said Sam to hisself, 'what s-h-a-l-l I do?' An' then he thought awhile. But, sakes! chillen, 'pears like the Debil is al'us waitin' fur chances, an' so he popped into Sam's head to jes go an' *look* at the good things. 'I won't touch ary bit,' said Sam, 'fur ole Mah'sr 'd find out if one apple stem's gone—but I'll look.' That was the fust wrong step, ch.illen. Ye know how hard it is to defrain, if ye look at the things ye oughten ter. Well, this yer onreverent nigga c-r-e-p-t down stairs an' unlocked the do', and p-e-e-p-e-d in—trem'lin, fit to drop. He mos' spected to see ole Mah'sr behind a bar'l. But it was as s-t-i-l-l as the grave, so he c-r-e-p-t in. There hung the l-o-n-g rows o' hams—so juicy an' sweet; and Sam went up an' thought to hisself, 'Now, I'll jes smell o' one.' So he smelled of it, an' it was so nice seems like he couldn't help jes touch it with his finger an' clap his finger in his mouf, an' then he did it agin. Ye know, chillen, how the old Debil stan's side o' ye an' helps ye on. Arter Sam had tasted onct or twice, he seen a t-e-e-n-y bit of a ham, way off in the fur corner, an' he said to hisself, 'I don't b'lieve ole Mah'sr 'll ever miss that ar one—'tain't much 'count no way!' An' chillen, he was that hungry he couldn't help it, I do b'lieve. He snatched that ham, an' he eat an' eat an' eat till he couldn't stuff another mouful, an' hid the rest behind a bar'l. Then he went on an' went on till he come to the apples—bins an' bins o' b-e-a-u-t-i-f-u-l red apples! And he smelt of 'em, an' then he eat an' eat an' eat till he couldn't stuff another mouful. Then he went on an' went on till he came to the shelf o' sweetmeats, an' he looked at 'em an' smelt of 'em, and finally he snatched a jar, tore off the cover, an' eat an' eat an' eat till he couldn't stuff another mouful.

"An' then he couldn't eat any more sure nuff, an' he went out an' lock the do'. But he never had so much to eat in his life, an' 'pears like he was stuffed so full he sort o' lost his reasons. He went out an' laid down on a bench in the sun, an' he said to hisself, 'Lor'! aint it nice to have nuff to eat fur onct; there's poor Jim, I don't s'pose he ever had nuff in his life.' An' then a w-e-r-y wicked idea come into his head. So byem by he got up an' went over to Jim's—he lived next do'—an' he tole him soon 's it was night to come over, an' he tole him to fotch Sally. Sally was the house gal, an' Sam liked her. An' then he went to Tom's and tole him to come too; and finally, chillen, he 'vited quite a 'spectable company. Then he went home, an' he went into the woodshed an' fotched in big sticks o' wood, an' he made up a most won'erful fire, an' swept out the big kitchen clean an' nice, tho' he wasn't extra neat now, Sam wasn't. 'Bout ten o'clock his company 'gan to come, the ladies all dressed up fine in some of their missis' things—low neck an' short sleeves, an' ribbins an' white gloves. O, go way! yer don't see no sich things up har! An' the gemmen! Lor', chillen, if ye could see the fine long-tailed blue coats, with buttons shinin' like marygolds, ye'd laff fit to split y'r sides.

"Arter the company was all there, an' talked a little 'bout the weather an' sich topics o' conversation, he axed 'em 'Wouldn't they like a little refreshment?' They was very polite, an' said, 'No, thank ye,' an' 'I'd ruther be 'xcused.' But he went to the cellar, an' he took'd out g-r-e-a-t plates o' apples, an' g-r-e-a-t pitchers o' cider, an' Tom helped him; an' they fotched out Ole Mah'sr's tum'lers, an' he filled 'em all up; an' he fotched out a w-h-o-l-e- jar o' sweetmeats, and a g-r-e-a-t dish o' honey, an' pickles—oh, Lor'! such heaps o' things! An' all the time Sam said, so polite, 'Ladies an' gemmen, hep you'self, there's mo' in Mah'sr's cellar!'

"An' they did hep theirselves, an they eat an' eat till they couldn't stuff another mouful. An' while they was all stuffin', an' Sam was gwine round with a bottle o' wine in each hand, sayin' so polite, 'Ladies and gemmen, hep you'self, there's mo' in Mah'sr's cellar,' he happened to look up!

"THERE WAS HIS MAH'SR!"

As Sarah said this she gave a horrible yell, and sprang forward, clutching in the air, as though to seize them; and her spell-bound listeners screamed, and some of them fell over backwards.

Delighted with the effect of her tragedy, she waited till they gathered themselves up, with awe-struck faces, to listen to the end.

She lowered her voice to a ghostly whisper.

"The Mah'sr sprang to get Sam, but Sam let out a screech nuff to raise the dead; an' clared out thro' the do' 's tho' the debil was arter him. The rest of the company slunk out 'thout axin' to be 'xcused, an' was in bed every soul of 'em in two minutes, an' snorin' fit to raise the roof. Sam's mah'sr run till he got done tired out, an' then he dragged hisself home."

Sarah stopped. After waiting a few minutes, Rush asked, in a scared sort of a voice, what became of Sam.

Sarah rolled her eyes, shook her head, dropped her jaw, and said, slowly—"He n-e-v-e-r was heard of agin."

"Run away?" suggested Rush.

"S'pose so. Mebby up norf this very day, f'r all I know." And Sarah turned to her work.

Marriage by Contract.

An interesting case of alleged conspiracy is on trial in the courts of Pittsburgh, the incidents being of quite a romantic nature. The prosecutrix is Regina Steiner and the defendants her husband and a large number of his relatives. Mrs. Steiner is a large, handsome middle-aged woman, a native of Alsace. She appeared in court in the richest and costliest of toilets, and with a profusion of elegant jewelry. It appears that in 1869 a wealthy merchant named Gottfried Jacque made her acquaintance. They lived together for over two years, when Mr. Jacque concluded to marry some one else, and after broaching the question over he had hired Julian Steiner to marry her, agreeing to settle upon her an annuity of $1,200 in gold for the support of herself and children. Steiner came to America and remained for a while in New York, but ultimately went to Pittsburgh, where he finally settled. After the lapse of about nine months he returned to Paris, married Regina, in pursuance of the previous arrangements between himself and Jacque, with whom she had been living, and brought her to America, together with two children, of whom the wealthy merchant was father. In the meanwhile the merchant had settled on Regina an annuity of 6,000 frances; but, before the year had expired after their arrival in Pittsburgh, the husband, with the other defendants, commenced a series of systematic abuses on the wife. They tried to force her into Dixmont Insane Asylum, and in other various ways to rid themselves of their presence. For a considerable time it seems her husband appropriated her money to his own purposes, and with it purchased some property—that was not recorded, however—and he conveyed it to Adam Weigand, a relative, evidently for the purpose of getting rid of the difficulties occasioned.

The defendants deny any conspiracy for the sake of obtaining the annuity. The paper provides that the two must marry, and the inference is that the money belongs equally to the husband and wife.

Fashion Notes.

It is whispered that the spring season will bring many changes in ladies' dress. The milliners and dressmakers seem determined to take revenge upon the forced economy of "panic times."

We hear that the graceful polonaise is now really doomed to extinction. Its admirers will not, however, part with it readily.

The polonaise is to be replaced by a corsage having long points in front and a pleated busque at the back, accompanied by a rather ugly shaped overskirt. The overskirt is to be open in front, pleated at the back in full straight pleats, and without the usual pouf.

The new style of walking skirt is to be worn rather short which, considering the state of our streets, is very fortunate. It is flounced up the front, each flounce being finished by a bow or buckle, and one very wide flounce at the back.

Ugliness has never so abounded in calico patterns as at present. Many of these resemble the blue and white check aprons worn by butchers. Others are printed in plaid