THY KING.

Death rules the world!
'Neath one encircling pall his kingdom lies;
He knows no peer.
The loves of men, the dreams, the fears,
The aspirations, groans and tears
Cling round the bier,
The dark and silent shrine of sighs;
Death's royal throne.

Long to the youth
Seems that fixed track his destiny pursues.
Each passing day
New fields of pleasure, bowers of bliss
Brings to his eye—too soon to pass
In grief away.
Life is but fleeting; none can lose
The dread embrace of Death.

Count well thy years
And scan the score still held for thee;
Soon must it pass.
With pinions fleet the years roll by;
With swifter pace draws near that day
Whose eve, alas!
Thy closing eyes will never see,
Thy race is run!

—Percy L. Housel.

THE CRACKSMAN'S CATSPAW.

A DETECTIVE'S STORY.

Ten years ago the town of Woolford was thrown into commotion one fine morning by news of a skillfully planned burglary. It was the early part of November, and the newly elected mayor of Woolford had celebrated his accession to civic power by giving a ball at his private residence, just outside the town. He was an exceedingly wealthy man, and his wife was the fortunate possessor of a very fine set of diamonds. It was popularly understood that these were worth at least £10,000, and popular opinion in this respect was not far wrong. On the morning after the ball, however, the mayoress discovered that her diamonds were missing. Instead of locking them up when she retired to rest she had carelessly left them lying on her dressing table. When she woke the diamonds had disappeared.

Then followed a fine to do. Three or four of us, supposed to be the cleverest and sharpest officers on the force, were put in charge of the matter and told to do our best. Our best, however, resulted in ignominious defeat. We followed the old methods—suspected the servants, examined their rooms and boxes, watched their movements, and finally confessed that they must all be completely exonerated. We invented plausible theories and could put none of them into practice. In the end we concluded that the diamonds had been stolen by an experienced burglar, who must have been very well acquainted with the house, and who had succeeded in doing his work in the most accomplished fashion. After that there was no more to be done. The mayor offered a very handsome reward for the recovery of the missing jewels, and many a man's mouth watered as he read the amount promised. But as there was not even a clew to the thief the prospect of claiming the reward seemed very far away to every policeman.

As soon as I heard of the burglary I made a guess—mentally, of course—at the burglar's name. It was Jimmy Timble. I felt confident of it. I knew of no local criminal accomplished enough to carry out so daring a theft except Jimmy. And Jimmy had just come home from Portland, where he had spent nearly six years in penal servitude. That was not his first period of incarceration, nor his second. Jimmy had been a thief from boyhood, and those who knew him felt persuaded that nothing would make him give up his career of crime. It was this belief, coupled with my knowledge of Jimmy's return to Woolford, that made me suspect him of taking the diamonds.

When Jimmy was not in prison he worked as a bricklayer's "paddy," and made his home at one of the big common lodging houses in a low part of the town. Two or three days after the diamond robbery I went one evening toward this house, intending to have an interview with Jimmy and hear what he had to say for himself. By good fortune I met him just outside the door and stopped him. He regarded me calmly and with perfect equanimity. He was at all times a curious little man—dwarfish in stature, very slightly deformed, and always full of a certain quaint assurance, mixed with a sly demeanor which was amusing to everybody. My interview with Jimmy threw no light whatever on the mystery, as he pleaded ignorance of the whole affair. If Jimmy had got the diamonds he had done his work so thoroughly that a clew of any description was not yet discoverable. And it was just that want of a clew that persuaded me of Jimmy's guilt. I knew of no man who could have done the work so thoroughly.

During the next two or three days I thought matters over from all points of view, but I could find nothing to warrant me in taking steps against Jimmy Timble. I wondered if he had been associated with others in the burglary. More than once he had worked in company with his brother, Jerry Timble; but it was impossible for him to have had any help from Jerry on this occasion, for the simple reason that the unfortunate Jerry was spending twelve months in the county jail for stealing. And it appeared to me, upon considering the case still more deeply, that, it being an affair of great magnitude, Jimmy Timble would prefer to work it singlehanded.

The secret, therefore, rested with him, and there was nothing but patience to be exercised.

As no trace of the diamonds could be found we thought it well to keep a watch on two or three suspicious characters in the town, with a view to discovering the whereabouts of the valuables. It seemed to us that the thief or thieves must have planted the jewels in some safe spot and waited until the agitation had blown over before removing them. Thus it came about that Jimmy Timble's movements were watched very jealously. His goings out and his comings in were noted, and the eye of the law was constantly upon him. Whether Jimmy was aware of this or not I do not know; but if he was, he suddenly did a foolish thing—he allowed himself to be caught, one dusky February evening, in the very act of burglariously entering a dwelling house; and within an hour he was safely ensconced in the cells of the police court. There I found him next morning when I went my round. He looked at me with a half rueful, half comical expression of countenance.

"Back again, Jimmy," said I. "I thought you had turned over a new leaf."

"So did I, Mr. Burton," he answered. "But you fellows don't give us poor chaps a chance; you don't, indeed. Just because I wanted to look through the window of a house last night they run me in here. Too bad, now, ain't it, Mr. Burton?"

"It'll be another five years' penal, will this, Jimmy," said I. "What a foolish man you are! Why don't you reform and live honestly?"

He smiled knowingly at me. "Why do birds fly?" said he. "'Cos they're used to it. It's natur'—that's what it is, Mr. Burton."

So Jimmy languished in the town jail for a few weeks, having been committed for trial. Then the assizes came on at Woolford and he was brought up to stand his very doubtful chance. His trial was little more than a formality, for Jimmy had been caught in the very act of inserting his pocket crowbar in the window ledge of the house. He was found guilty and sentenced to five years' penal servitude and a certain term of police supervision.

I went to have a word or two with Jimmy in the cells, as he waited there for removal to his next abiding place. His sentence did not seem to have disturbed his equanimity, and he smiled very placidly as I greeted him.

"Well, you've done it again, Jimmy," said I. "We sha'n't see any more of you for a while."

"You're right there, Mr. Burton," he answered. "And I sha'n't see any more of you, eh? I don't care—I can do five years on my head. But I'm sorry I sha'n't be able to see Jerry. He comes out next week."

"I believe he does."

"We were always very fond of each other, me and Jerry," said Jimmy Timble. "Very fond we was. We've worked things together many a time."

"You have, and given us a good deal of trouble with your efforts."

"I dare say," answered Jimmy, imperturbable as ever; "I dare say. But I say, Mr. Burton, you might do me a favor. I've always looked on you as a friend; and when a chap's got put away for five years he naturally looks to his friends, don't he?"

"I suppose he does, Jimmy. Well, what is it you want?"

"Why, there's two or three things at the lodging house that I would like given to Jerry when he comes out. There's a knife and a watch chain, and two or three other little articles—all come by honest, Mr. Burton. Oh, and there's a book, the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' a very interesting book is that. Will you tell the lodging house folks to 'liver them up to Jerry, Mr. Burton?"

"Very well, Jimmy. Perhaps I'd better take charge of them myself, and give them to Jerry the next time I see him. I shall be sure to come across him as soon as he comes out."

"I'd take it real kind if you would," said Jimmy; "and you might tell him to keep that 'Pilgrim's Progress,' 'cos I'll finish reading it when I've done this five years."

With that we parted and Jimmy was presently whirled away in the black Maria to the town jail. We were rid of his presence for four years at any rate. He was soon removed to Portland, and there, no doubt, made himself perfectly comfortable.

I forgot all about Jimmy's parting request until a week or two later. Then, finding myself one day in the neighborhood of the lodging house which had served as Jimmy's home, I went inside and asked the deputy to hand over the convict's possessions. He did so with an air of scorn, remarking that Jimmy's belongings were not worth twopence to anybody. I thought he was right when I subsequently turned over the contents of the bundle. There was nothing there of any consequence, and I wondered very much that Jimmy Timble should have been so particular about having his little properties handed over to his brother Jerry. The "Pilgrim's Progress" was the most incongruous object turned out of the old handkerchief which held Jimmy Timble's belongings. I shook my head perplexedly as I stared at it. What was Jimmy Timble, thief, burglar, thrice convicted criminal, doing with the "Pilgrim's Progress"? And how was it that that particular work was the only book he possessed? And how did he come to possess it at all? I turned the leaves over carelessly and could see nothing unfamiliar about the book. I finally concluded that Jimmy Timble had picked it up somewhere and kept it out of curiosity, and with that I tied it up again with the rest of his possessions.

The days passed by, but I saw nothing of Jerry Timble. He had left the county jail, but he did not present himself at his usual haunts in Woolford. I preserved the bundle for him and waited, knowing quite well that if he was in the town we should see him at the police office sooner or later. It was impossible for either Jimmy or Jerry Timble to keep his hands from picking and stealing. But time passed on and Jerry did not appear. I began to think that he had removed himself to some other town.

About nine months after Jimmy Timble had gone back to penal servitude I chanced to go one day into a second hand book shop, the proprietor of which was an old acquaintance of mine. Somehow our conversation drifted to the criminal classes and ere long the shopkeeper mentioned the name of Jimmy Timble. "He was a queer customer, was Jimmy," said he. "He came in here one day last time he was out of prison, and looked round him as if he wanted something. 'Now, sir,' says I, 'what can I find for you?' 'Give me an old book to read, mister,' answered Jimmy. 'We don't give books here,' says I; 'we sell 'em.' He said nothing to that, but after awhile he pulled out twopence. 'What can I have for that?' he asked. 'Here you are,' says I. 'a "Pilgrim's Progress," pictures and all, for twopence.' So he walked off with his book."

That explained Jimmy's possession of the "Pilgrim's Progress" then lying at my house. I went home and had my supper, and then sat down to have a thorough examination of the book. I was confident that there was something about that book which it would repay anybody to discover, and I was determined to solve the mystery. But though I went carefully through it page by page, once, twice, and three times, I saw nothing. There was no writing, no hieroglyphic signals, nothing to attract attention. But at the fourth time of examination I made a discovery. Underneath the first "the" on the first page there was the plain mark of a pin prick, just as if a pin had been carelessly jabbed into the paper and quickly withdrawn. The mark was very faint, but it was there. I assured myself that the pin prick had not penetrated to the second page, and then I came to the conclusion that Jimmy Timble's "Pilgrim's Progress" concealed some private message from himself to his brother Jerry.

I began what proved a long and weary task. The next pin prick I found was under the letter "j" on page 8; the next under "e" on page 11; the next under "w" on page 12. Then came pricks under letters "e" "l," "s," all on different pages, and thus I had spelt out two words, "the jewels." I took courage at that and went on. There was, no doubt, much to follow.

All that evening I worked away at my task. It was anything but easy. Sometimes the pin pricks were faint and hardly decipherable; sometimes there were several on one page; sometimes the spelling puzzled me; sometimes I seemed to lose the track altogether. But I persevered, and just as midnight struck I had solved the mystery and had written out Jimmy Timble's ingenious message to his brother Jerry:

"The jewels as I got from the mare's wife is berried underneath the lilac tree in old George Atkinson's garden in Lilywood road. Keep an eye on them and don't disturb them unless they are goin to bild on the garden. If they bild dig them up and keep them safe till I come out agen your brother James."

So there was an explanation of the mystery, or rather of two mysteries. I had been right, after all—the burglary at the mayor's residence was the work of Jimmy Timble.

I lost no time next morning in interviewing Mr. George Atkinson and in persuading him to let me dig under his lilac tree. There, sure enough, I found the missing diamonds, carefully wrapped up and put away. Jimmy had hidden them until suspicion had quite blown over and he had felt free to resume possession of them. The attempted burglary had spoiled his plans.

I saw Jimmy when he returned from Portland four years later. He smiled knowingly as he met me. "I reckon you think yourself a clever man, Mr. Inspector, don't yer?" said he. "But you'd have been made a nice catspaw of if only that fool of a Jerry had turned up in good time; wouldn't yer, now?"

I dare say Jimmy was right. But as events turned out fortune was wholly on my side in this case.

A Venerable Pedestrian.

Many wonderful things are to be found in Bucks county, Pennsylvania, but the latest is an old man of eighty-four, who can walk a mile, in less than ten minutes. Charles Walton lives with his wife in a little cottage between Bristol and Hulmeville. A bet was recently made that the old man could not walk from Hulmeville to Eden, a distance of one mile in less than fifteen minutes. There were many to witness the walk against time, and, to the surprise of all, the old man covered the distance inside of ten minutes, and without unusually exerting himself. The venerable pedestrian was born in October, 1810, in the old stone house now standing on the Simpson Grove camp meeting site. He has never tasted intoxicating liquor, but has chewed tobacco since he was ten years old. His father was an Englishman and his mother an Indian squaw. He is a broom maker, and has a great reputation for good work among the neighboring farmers.—New York Advertiser.

PEERLESS INDIANA.

HER SUPERIORITY OVER ENGLAND'S LATEST BATTLESHIP.

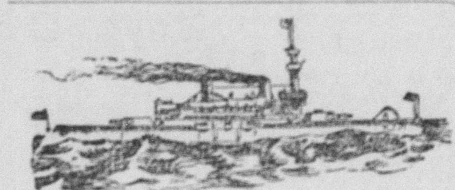
With 4,679 Tons Less Displacement the Indiana Has the Same Speed, the Same Coal Carrying Capacity and Heavier Guns Than the British Battleship.

Since December 19, when the new first class battleship, Magnificent, of the British navy, was launched at Chatham dock yard, the experts on ship building of all countries have devoted a good deal of time in commenting upon and criticising the new vessel.

They have almost, without exception, used the French ship Sardegna and the American battleship Indiana as their standards of comparison.

Even the English constructors who have spoken of the Magnificent have agreed that the enthusiastic English constructor who stated that the Magnificent was the most powerful vessel afloat, was wrong, and almost without exception they point to the Indiana, now building by Messrs. Cramp, of Philadelphia, as one superior to the Magnificent.

The Indiana is not yet afloat, but before summer she will be flying her commission pennant, and some American naval officers say that she will be worthy of the title that the Englishmen bestowed on the Magnificent—that is, the most powerful vessel afloat.



UNITED STATES BATTLESHIP INDIANA.

As a matter of fact a comparison of the respective merits of the Magnificent and the Indiana appears unjust to the latter, for the Indiana was designed and contracted for in President Harrison's administration, and the appropriation for the Magnificent was not made by parliament until 1893, and so the latter has every reason to be and is more modern than her American rival.

Leaving aside, however, the improvements of the last few years for comfort of officers and men and the little details of mechanism, and viewing the Indiana and Magnificent purely as engines of war, the Indiana is, in the opinion of ship builders, the better vessel of the two.

The Magnificent mounts four 22 inch breechloading rifles, twelve 6 inch rapid fire, sixteen 12 pound rapid fire and twelve 3 pounder rapid fire guns, or forty-four guns in all.

Out of this battery the Magnificent can fire eight guns either ahead or astern, and with these eight guns she can throw 1,659 pounds of metal.

Here the Indiana's superiority is demonstrated. Her battery consists of four 13 inch breechloading rifles, eight 8 inch breechloading rifles, four 6 inch, twenty 6 pounder rapid fire guns, making in all thirty six guns, or eight less than the Magnificent.

With these, however, she can throw 4,984 pounds of metal either ahead or astern, which is 3,325 pounds more than the English battleship can throw.

In the matter of firing abeam the Indiana's superiority is demonstrated by the fact that with twenty-four guns the Magnificent throws but 3,575 pounds; the American ship, with four guns less, throws 5,660 pounds, or 2,095 pounds more than the Englishman's pride.

BRITISH BATTLESHIP MAGNIFICENT.

It requires three minutes under battle conditions to fire one round from a 12 or 13 inch gun and the ships would be just equal on this point, but in three minutes the American could throw 5,376 pounds either ahead or astern and the English ship could only throw 4,494 pounds.

Firing abeam as fast as possible with all available guns, the Indiana could throw 12,558 pounds, while the Magnificent's score would be but 8,440 pounds.

As regards armor, the thickest part of the Magnificent's is 14 inches, and the Indiana has 18 inches of Harveyized steel at her thickest part. The steel used in both navies is practically the same, and if there is any preference it must rest with the American product, for the Harvey nickeling process is an American invention and has been longer in use on this side of the water.

A fact which should, in the opinion of steel experts, prove conclusively that American steel is the best in the world is that the Russian government, after causing an examination to be made of the steel plants of all European countries, awarded its contract for ship armor to the iron and steel works in Bethlehem, Pa.

With all of the Magnificent's forty-four guns trained seaward and fired simultaneously she would throw a weight of metal the total of which would be 4,295 pounds, while the Indiana under like conditions would throw 5,920 pounds, or 1,625 pounds more than the English ship.

Speed is still a matter of conjecture, but both vessels are designed for 17 1-4 knots, but neither one has yet demonstrated that she will fulfill the requirements in that direction. If precedent counts for anything, though, the Indiana will live up to them, for every ship built by Cramp & Sons has exceeded the contracted speed by at least a quarter of a knot.

Some constructors regard it as very remarkable that the Indiana, which has 4,679 tons less displacement than the Magnificent, should have an equal coaling capacity and a heavier battery and yet make the same speed, but this is due largely to the lightness of the machinery.

FLOWERS FOR AN ASTOR.

The Order Which Will Keep a Florist Busy for a Year.

That order which William Waldorf Astor gave a Broadway florist for a cover of lilies of the valley and violets to be put over his wife's grave, fresh every day for a year, was the largest single order for flowers ever given in New York. It means over $100 worth of flowers for the grave every day. It means the especial and laborious forcing of lilies of the valley during the eight months that they do not grow in nature. It means a trip of the florist himself to the cemetery every day, and a man, especially hired by Mr. Astor, to see that the cover, costly enough each day to make a robe for the bed of a queen, is properly placed.

There was something very Monte Cristo like about the way Mr. Astor dealt with the florist. The day before the funeral he walked into the shop and said: "How many orchids can you get on twenty-four hours' notice?" The florist, not knowing to whom he was talking, and wishing to impress his caller with the vast resources of a Broadway florist, said indifferently: "Oh, about five thousand."

"Very well," said the caller, giving his name. "Get all you can and have them at Trinity in time for the funeral. I want all you can get, twice five thousand, if it is possible."

The florist bestirred himself, bought every orchid he could hear of, but was only able to get 3,800. This meant a bill for $3,800 for orchids alone. Mr. Astor was so pleased that he gave the $38,000 order for the daily cover. His instructions were that this cover should be removed every day, no matter what its condition was, and that all the flowers in it should be destroyed. It takes about 4,000 lilies to make the cover and about the same number of violets. On the upper end of the cover, into the warp of the lilies, is woven a cross of violets and from the foot of the cover hangs a cross of violets. On each side are four points from which hang tassels of violets suspended by bows of satin ribbon.

Warfare of the Future.

"A French savant has recently figured that it takes 280 pounds of lead to kill a man in modern battle, and that for every soldier left on the field 1,300 shots were fired," said Colonel James McChesney, a retired army officer. "In the old days when men fought with sword and battle axe the fatalities were much greater. When two warriors met in hand-to-hand conflict in those heroic days they were never parted until one or the other fell dead or wounded.

"Strange as it appears, the many inventions of death-dealing machinery have greatly lessened the danger of warfare, though it is not a game to be played with impunity. Recent devices and the use of more powerful explosives are going to give birth to a system of strategy.

"The next European war of magnitude will be a sort of continuous manoeuvering on a grand scale. Calculation will do more toward winning a fight than brute force, and the aim of each side will be rather to paralyze the enemy than to kill him.

"To cut off the adversary's communications, to starve him, to disorganize his forces, to drive him to the alternative of capitulation or extermination—such will be the war of tomorrow, carried on at great distances, along an immense front. The work of victory will proceed scientifically, methodically, with the aid of steam and electricity. Heads, not weapons, will count in the main. It will be a game of living chess—and no matter what devices for taking human life may be brought into being, none can equal in sureness and fatality the blow of a sharp sword delivered at arm's length."

Indian Courtship.

Sometimes grown impatient, or confident of her willingness to meet him if only she knew of his proximity, he will contrive ingeniously to post himself so that the moonlight casts the shadow of his statuesque figure upon the side of her tepee. We saunter past just as the low lodge curtain parts and closes behind the maiden's lithe figure. The statue in the moonlight makes an eager step forward, stretches his blanket the length of his brawny arms and folds the girl into it. There is only one figure again—one shadow—but you may be sure that now it does not fall on the white slope of the lodge. We saunter more slowly and glance out of the corners of our eyes, for to take direct notice would be the height of rudeness. Etiquet hides those two in a vail like that with which the gods invested the royal lovers of Carthage. But we know that they are swaying back and forth in the dim moonlight, whispering to each other with such rubbing of faces and affectionate cooing as tells the old story in every language.

HAS TRAVELED FAR.

Notable Work by a New York Detective.

Detective Sergeant Phil Riley, of the New York force, has a record to be proud of. It was Riley who was sent to Costa Rica to run down and bring back Weeks, the famous embezzler, concerning whom so much was said in the papers about a year ago. Weeks ruined a score of confiding victims by his operations and got away with hundreds of thousands of dollars, and then fled, with his wife to Costa Rica. Another remarkable case took Riley to Chile, where he worked for eleven months running to earth a young man who had been the confidential bookkeeper of a New York law firm and had stolen $24,000. During his long stay there, before he succeeded in unmeshing the fellow, Riley learned to speak Spanish with some fluency. In the thirty-one years during which he has been in the detective work in New York Riley has made numerous trips to Europe after criminals—three times to London, twice to Copenhagen and once each to Dublin, Glasgow and Edinburgh, besides visiting every State in the Union.

One of the most famous cases in which Detective Riley was concerned was that of Ruloff, the Daniel Webster of New York criminals, says a writer in the Cincinnati Enquirer. It is now twenty years since he was executed, but his case is famous in the police annals of the metropolis. After he was executed it was found that his brain weighed two ounces more than that of Daniel Webster. Ruloff was the organizer of as dangerous a gang of criminals as ever infested the metropolis. He had his agents in many places where one would hardly look for them, and was apprised of opportunities for theft in the most direct and certain manner. He had a long career. The case which led to his conviction and execution was the robbery of a large dry goods house in Binghamton, N. Y. Ruloff had an agent in Claflin's big store in New York, and through him learned of the shipment of $5,000 worth of fine silks to Binghamton. He at once planned to steal them. With two men he reached Binghamton the day the goods were delivered there and laid the plans to rob the store that night. Entrance was effected and Ruloff remained on the outside to guard and assist in getting away with the plunder when it had once been secured. It happened a clerk slept in the store and was awakened by the two agents of Ruloff as they effected their entrance. He made a game fight and succeeded in cutting both the burglars seriously before they gave him a mortal wound and escaped to the outside. There Ruloff quickly discovered that both the men were badly injured and could not escape. They were compelled to cross the river as the quickest way to avoid pursuit, and a boat had been provided beforehand. They embarked, but before the other shore was reached Ruloff had thrown both of his confederates overboard and drowned them. The case excited an immense amount of attention, and the metropolitan detective force was put to work upon it. They finally traced Ruloff to earth and fastened the crime upon him by a well-woven and complete net of circumstantial evidence. Other proof was obtained to confirm this, and the arch conspirator was finally convicted and hanged for the triple murder he had been directly guilty of. Doubtless if the truth were known, he was responsible for a score or more other murders, for which no one was ever apprehended.

Death of a Famous Lion.

A familiar figure has disappeared from the zoological gardens. On Saturday morning the lion known as Duke breathed his last. Though he had lived for nineteen years in Regent's park, whither he had been brought as a mere cub, he was never such a favorite as the elephants and camels who daily bear the loads of juvenile riders patiently, if not with entire acquiescence. Still, he was an eminent and—from a distance—highly respected character. He had been photographed and sketched and painted times out of number, and had even enjoyed what a great many portraits do not obtain—the distinction of being hung on the line in the annual exhibition of the Royal academy. He was not exactly an amiable celebrity. He and his brother, who died two years ago, were brought from the Nubian desert in 1875, when the pair were about twelve months old. At that date he could have remembered almost nothing of his native haunts, and all his lifetime he has seen little save crowds of spectators. Still, to the last he exhibited little affection for any one except his old keeper, and, unlike lions generally—many of which breed in captivity—he displayed no inclination to forsake a bachelor life.

"London's Black Month."

It is common in continental Europe to speak of December as "London's Black Month," or "the Dark Month of the British Isles," and, on that account, December, the month of merry Christmas, is the month in which the world's metropolis receives the fewest visitors. The records made at Greenwich observatory, which is a British institution and would not purposely malign the climate, is authority for the statement that for the past fourteen years London's December has had an average of nineteen perfectly sunless days and an average total of only twenty hours of sunshine for the entire month.