obduracy of purpose, she realized now that the only avoidance of the threatened catastrophe was to aid him, for she did not hope to deceive him with successful treachery to his cause. She went to a window and stood silently looking out between the curtains at the dazzle and commotion in the garden, from which the throng was passing to the ballroom, while her companion sat silently contemplating probabilities that were not less brilliant in his eyes. His choler subsided slowly, and, taking Sheeba's aquiescent attitude as one of renewed co-partnership, he sought to be companionable, as they were habitually.

"Look here, my girl," he said; "we're going to win. I'm sure of it. Hurrah for the union of our children. No pouts, Sheeba. O, you'll be merry enough when we come into our fortune. No devilitry then except devilitry for fun, eh?"

She turned half around where she stood at the window, and in doing so her hands kept their hold on the heavy curtains, so that she was partially draped in them. Her face puzzled him with its forced smile, and he fancied for an instant that a light of fury gleamed in her eyes. He had a flitting conceit, too, that when she brought her hands out from the curtain they would hold a weapon, and that she was about to assassinate him. But it was not so, and he smiled at the foolishness of his fancy.

"You were with May Morris all the afternoon," he remarked. "What did she say, and what did you say?"

"She was sorry for Victor Leroyd," Sheeba answered.

"Sorry for the coward?"

"Is he a coward? Is he not a victim of foul play?"

"What put that crazy idea into your head? Did you suggest such a thing to-day?"

"I said that, possibly, the tramps had killed him."

"Nonsense. And she said ——"

"She said, 'That would be better.'"

"She has an abnormal sense of honor."

"She said that a stain upon a name was worse to its owner than death. 'You couldn't live under such a reproach, even if it were no fault of your own?' I asked of her. 'Possibly,' she replied, 'but life would be all dead to me.'"

"Take care, then, that I don't have to make her mother known to her," and the Colonel was admonitory rather than threatening. He even meant to be soothing, for he laid his hands on her head, when it drooped to the arm of the chair into which she fell, and he patted her shoulders, when they shook with her sobs. "There—there—Sheeba—don't you see that you couldn't bear to let her know that you're her mother? We must avoid that—you and I."

The dialogue was stopped by a rap at the door. The woman's cultivated power of dissimulation overcame her emotion instantly. She straightened up in her chair and cried "Come!" in an untroubled voice.

Mr. and Mrs. Pootle entered, and he was lugubrious still, besides being hot and out of breath. His black suit made his contrasting white shirt bosom look expansive to the point of bursting, and he was not a figure to be taken seriously, notwithstanding his frowning face. Mrs. Pootle was radiant.

"Well, I've been dancing with my dear old husband," she said. "He waltzes in the style of '57, and it is tryingly obsolete."

"And your pupil—Miss Morris?" the Colonel asked. "Are you a faithful chaperone?"

"She is all right," was the cheery response.

"With Winston?" and he disguised his interest in the answer by pretending to hardly listen to it.

"She is with our hero," was the reply that delighted him.

"Dancing?"

"No. As a chaperone. I was bound to observe that he seemed inclined to walk with her in the dimest corner of the garden. So I left them together."

Mr. Pootle was amazed. That his wife should be in good spirits under the uncertainty concerning his nephew was all that he could forgive, even in a bride of half his own age, but that she should, with jocularity, too, help to match the girl of that nephew's choice to another fellow was something to induce apoplectic symptoms. But his scant breath and high color were attributed to his physical exertion in his quarto-centennial waltz, and he was disregarded as he heaped himself back in an easy chair.

"Would you believe it," Mrs. Pootle continued, "May presumed to have a headache on the night of a grand Saratoga hop. She wouldn't show herself at all, if her tutor—"

"Her ex-tutor," Mr. Pootle commented, by way of aimless contradiction.

"My authority over her lasts until the end of her vacation. With you it is for life—old dear."

"And it is a test of my obedience to be here. I don't understand how you can be jolly—blest if I can. It is heartless."

"Didn't I do my duty to your nephew—our nephew—by going up to the lake yesterday alone, and making an amateur detective of myself all day long?"

"You went?" the Colonel asked in unbetrayed alarm, "what did you detect?"

"Nothing that need frighten his friends as to his safety. So I have told my husband, but he insists on being doleful just because he fears that Victor verified the proverb, 'He who fights and runs away may live to fight another day.'"

"Only he didn't fight, and he probably wouldn't fight any day," the reassured gambler exuberantly remarked.

That roused the ire of Mr. Pootle, and he stood up quickly to say: "Colonel Dallas, your son is lucky in having his courage proven. I couldn't credit it without evidence, and I won't believe cowardice of Victor without proof."

"I meant no aspersion. Forgive me;" and the offender extended his hand.

"You are to forgive him, dear," Mrs. Pootle wheedlingly commanded.

"I forgive you," and Mr. Pootle shook hands obediently.

"Thank you," the other cried with a cheeriness that for once was sincere; "and now let us all cheer up under the almost certainty that Victor is safe, and under the influence of a wonderful bowl of punch that I shall make. The utensils are at hand—so are the ingredients." He touched the electric button, and a waiter responded with an alacrity in keeping with hotel attention to occupants of first floor parlors. "In the next room—Mrs. Dallas will show you—are two bottles, and a punch bowl, with a block of ice already in it." While Sheeba and the waiter fetched these things, he went on glibly: "The recipe is one of my most valued properties—it is potent as well as palatable compound—it brings happiness to its drinkers. Happiness if they deserve it, but misery if that is their just due. It is not a mysterious compound." Here he brought out from a drawer two small jugs, some lemons, a knife and a vial, which he placed along with the bottles in a semi-circle around the punch bowl. "I will explain what I do while doing it, like the sleight-of-hand men, but, also, like them, I will conceal the hocus pocus," he gesticulated very playfully, like a necromancer. "I pour in some brandy—thus—and then some curacoa—thus. I cut and squeeze the lemons—as you see—and stir the whole with an ordinary ladle. There is positively no deception in the process. Only the result is mystic. Now a touch of acetic acid on the melting ice, and the nectar is ready."

The dignified gentleman became waggish, and his mimicry of a showman's passes and flourishes was more demonstative than he usually permitted himself to be. He filled glasses from the bowl and the waiter served them. His own amount of drinking was in a ratio of ten portions to one swallowed by either of the other drinkers, and his animation increased with his swallows of the beverage, until at the end of a quarter of an hour he was merrier than either the punch or the assurance of his scheme's success would separately have made him. He beamed on Mrs. Pootle, for had she not aided him by leaving Winston and May favorably together? and at length he proposed a visit to the ballroom.

"Give your arm to Sheeba, Mr. Pootle," he said, "and I will escort your wife—if she will permit me."

The other couple went from the room sedately, but the vivacity of the Colonel was counterparted by the gaiety of Mrs. Pootle.

"Have one more glass of the punch with me," he said, detaining her after the others had gone.

"Thank you," she assented.

"It was good of you to leave those two sweethearts together."

"Here's to a happy climax to the interview between those two sweethearts!"

They clinked their glasses like boon comrades, and his manner was not more convivial than hers as she held aloft her glass before carrying it to her smiling lips.

"But if you devoutly wish that May shall be won by her wooer," she interposed, after a sip, "we should at once abandon this room to them. I happen to know they will saunter in here in about two minutes more."

"Then we will retreat."

"After arranging the scene for the wooing, let the environment be romantic." She lowered the gas, opened the upper half of the window blinds, and thus changed the light to an inpouring from the garden's illumination. "That's a very good imitation of moonlight, isn't it? Now we'll scoot."

"Still drinking to the union of May Morris ——" he began, tapping her glass again with his own.

"And our hero," she interrupted, with singular quickness and emphasis, as she drained her glass and laughed gleefully.

CHAPTER XII.

AN ESPECIAL GLASS OF PUNCH.

May Morris came to the Dallas parlor almost immediately after it had been vacated, except by the waiter, who let her in and departed as he had been told to do. May had not expected to find the room empty. She had been enjoined by Mrs. Pootle to appear there at a certain time, and to bring her companion along. She wore a white gown, soft of texture and graceful of outline, and as she stepped from the dim part of the room into the place whitely lighted from without, the sight that she unconsciously made was all that Mrs. Pootle had planned. The youthful fairness of her young face was paled a little, and its ingenuousness was crossed by unwonted lines of perplexed anxiety.

The young man from whose arm she took away the light touch of her hand on entering, was not Winston Dallas.

He was Victor Leroyd.

"You were startled when you first saw me!" he was saying.

"Yes," the girl replied.

"Mrs. Pootle insisted that I should reappear to surprise you all at the ball. She said she had the authority of an aunt, and a taste for melodrama. You did not expect me?"

"No."

Something in the tone of her monosyllables, simply as they were uttered, made him know that she was not at ease, and indirectness was something he had never before known to break her clear, open frankness of speech and action.

"You do not think it seemly to be alone here with me," was his spoken thought. She looked into his eyes as a fearless child might have done, without either coquetry or self-consciousness; and so he went on: "What is it that constrains you? Before we were good friends—almost intimates. Now, you are reticent. Is it a version? I must be told," and his insistance was accompanied by a clasp of both her hands.

She sank down on a sofa, and it was hard for him to tell whether the loosening of her hands was intentional or careless.

"The manner of your disappearance—the construction that is put upon it—what the tramp said—" and there she stopped.

"What did the tramp say?" he demanded.

She turned to him, as he seated himself beside her, and made no attempt to conceal the fact that she was watching the effect of what she said, but gazed straight into his face as she slowly said: "The fellow whom Winston captured, but who escaped afterward, said that you fled in afright, when he and his companion attacked you—that you were a coward—and they declared that you would not show yourself here shamefaced. I thought you had been killed—"

"You hoped so, rather than to know that I was a dastard?" he eagerly interrupted.

"Yes," in perfect simplicity.

"Good. Thank you," and he pressed her hands, which she took away from him again so gently that the action seemed careless. "I did not run away from my assailants. They wounded me. Then one held me down while the other went on with the robbery—as you already know. I must have been unconscious a few minutes, for I seemed to awaken. The villain was still kneeling on me. I made a sudden resistance, which he did not expect. We wrestled desperately to our feet. We were close to the edge of a ravine. We went over together, and then fought at the bottom, but weakly, for both were jarred by the fall. Again I felt myself becoming insensible, and with all the strength left in my hands I clutched his throat. The next I knew I was abed in a boatman's house. My antagonist was in another. He was not able to get up. Then my impetuous young aunt found me yesterday, and induced me to join her here before seeing anybody else." Not an instant had May's eyes swerved from his during this account, and he finished it with: "All this, I hope, can yet be proven."

"For me it is not necessary," May said composedly.

"You are indifferent."

"Indifferent! No, no."

"You will take my uncorroborated word against anything or all that is against it?"

"I will take your word."

She quietly arose, and, as he stood facing her, the soft gleam in her uplifted eyes, and the pink tinge that was coming into her cheeks, explained to him the reason of her faith.

"You love me!" he exclaimed, taking the hands that now were unresistant. "Do you love me?"

"O, yes," she replied, as though it was strange if he did not know it.

Then she screamed, for Victor suddenly staggered, and fell, half fainting, upon the sofa. Her outcry was sufficient to bring a hallboy, who went hastily in quest of the friends, although Victor assured May, as he revived, that nothing serious was the matter with him. The knife stabs had not been deep, he declared, and it must have been the jar of his fall that had weakened him. Colonel Sam Dallas and Mr. Jonas Pootle led the arrivals, and their surprise was equal, but their other feelings were totally different.

"Victor Leroyd!" one exclaimed.

"Victor, my boy, what's the matter?" said the other.

"He was wounded in his fight with the ruffians, for a fact," said Mrs. Pootle, "and he's been hugging May—that's a surmise."

"He fought!" sneered Winston, for he and Sheeba had come in with the rest.

"Yes—he fought," Mrs. Pootle aggressively repeated.

Colonel Dallas clutched Sheeba by the wrist, as they stood just aside from the excited group, and savagely whispered: "Is this your doing?"

"I know nothing of it, as God hears me," she answered.

Victor Leroyd was giddy with the weakness which he disliked to show, and which should have prevented him from indulging Mrs. Pootle in her whimsical method of restoring him to view at the ball-a method she still insisted upon controlling him, and her order was that he should lie down on a bed in the adjoining room.

"Well, I'll do it for a few minutes," he assented.

"And we'll have a doctor," she added.

"No, no," he objected, as he unsteadily walked into the other room; "I only need a little bracing up, and I am physician enough to prescribe for myself. Give me a pencil and paper. I haven't forgotten all I used to know of medicine."

Colonel Dallas and Winston were left by themselves in the parlor.

"How do we stand now?" the father growled, walking quickly to and fro. "It wasn't you who was with the girl?"

"No. She avoided me."

"Then Mrs. Pootle fooled me, Why—I wonder. How much do they know? Only what Leroyd tells them, and will that criminate us? I don't think so. That he's alive is bad. It might be worse. Let me see, Winnie, have you an idea?"

"Not a glimmer, old man."

"Of course not."

The hall boy came from the room where Victor was surrounded by his anxious friends

"How is Mr. Leroyd?" the Colonel asked.

"Says he's only weak and nervous, sir," the boy replied. "I'm going with a prescription."

"A physician who doctors himself, don't they say? has a fool for a patient," said Winston pettishly.

"Let me see it," and the calmer father read: "Strychnia sulph. one grain; acid phosphor., dil., half an ounce; coca—' Ah! a quick tonic."

Then he told Winston, by means of gesture, so covert that the servant did not see it, to divert that spectator's attention; and the son did it by asking: "Do you think Mr. Leroyd is very ill?"

"Well, sir, it is an ugly cut he has in his shoulder."

The Colonel's thoughts were running thus, as he scanned the slip of paper: "So careless to write a prescription in pencil. Now, somebody might make a bit of mark to the capital I, which stands for one grain of strychnia, thus turning it into an L—or 50 grains of strychnia, instead of 1. The smallest dose out of that would kill in a minute."

"Did you see the wound?" Winston asked, keeping the boy's eyes away from the prescription, upon which the father was now carefully using a pencil.

"Yes. Mrs. Pootle made him show it. She said she'd got to put it in evidence, whatever she meant by that."

"Here you are," spoke up the Colonel, handing the altered prescription back to the boy; "hurry with it."

"It is about a toss-up for us," he said measuredly to Winston, when they were alone. "As it was before we couldn't lose anything whether we won or not. Now we've got to win to escape losing."

"What did you do to the prescription?"

"I put a blunder into it. Amateur Doctor Leroyd sends for a tonic, and he gets a deadly dose of it."

"But, Governor—"

"It is safe for us. I'll swear the forgery can't be detected and it couldn't be fixed on us, anyhow. Leroyd will simply be killed by his own mistake. Now, a brief stroll in the garden would make us look unconcerned."

They were absent ten minutes, which seemed to them an hour, and on their return to the parlor they found the entire party there. Victor Leroyd sat in an armchair, and Mrs. Pootle was bustling around him.

"O, Colonel Dallas," she cried, "may I introduce an acquaintance?"

"Why, yes," he replied.

"Come in," she called, opening a door.

The man who slouched in was Tom, the smaller and meaner of the two vagabonds. He was worse off in appearance than before, too, because one arm was in a sling and his face was discolored by bruises.

"This is Tom Mullen," said Mrs. Pootle, with a jaunty air of graciousness. "He was one of the two precious scoundrels whom Victor encountered up the lake. You gentlemen met him there, I believe. Make a bow, Tom. Awfully dull here at Saratoga yesterday—so I thought I would hunt up Tom. I told you that in my search for Victor I discovered nothing that should alarm his friends as to his safety. The fact is that we found him safe back in a shanty, but hardly sound, though he was no worse off than Tom, whom he had hurt in a most unfriendly manner. Tom had a sure passage to State prison, apparently, but I urged that his little falling out with Victor—or falling over—might be amicably settled. Eh, Tom?

"Yessem," said Tom.

"Tom isn't a vindictive fellow. It is true that he and his worthy comrade, Jim, attempted to murder Victor, but that was quite in the way of business. Socially, Tom is urbanity itself. What?"

"Yessem," said Tom.

"And when he was told that a misconception had arisen—that Victor had been placed in a painfully false attitude—he kindly preferred to come along with us and tell the truth, rather than to go to prison."

"The trouble is we can't believe him," said the Colonel.

"Not when his testimony is corroborated by Victor," roared Mr. Pottle, whose face was now beaming round and smooth upon his wife, after the temporary eclipse: "O, I think we may. Now, Tom, tell us about it."

Tom spoke in his hitch-and-go-two-words style, but Mrs. Pottle had practically learned his peculiar language, by several hours of conversation, and she was able to interpret him as follows:

"There ain't much to tell. Jim and I got a sight of the young lady's pocketbook, and we went back for it when we thought she was left alone. We ran against the young gentleman—"

"Which young gentleman?" Mr. Pootle asked. "That's the important point."

Tom pointed to Victor: "Why, that young gentleman, and we undestook to do him up. We thought we'd finished him, but he wouldn't stay down, and in a tussle we went over the cliff."

"That is all you know of it—er—Tom," said the Colonel, very blandly. "That was before Winston arrived and encountered Jim. We have done you an injury, Victor, and we are sorry for it."

"Do not distress yourself," said Victor, not taking the proffered hand.

"We apologize—we all apologize," and Winston echoed his father's bid for peace.

Tom disappeared, but it was observed that two strangers received him in the hallway and seemed to be careful of him.

"Come, ladies and gentlemen," and now the Colonel was at his best in urbane deportment, "there is punch in the bowl yet. Let us drown all recollection of this slight unpleasantness. Here, boy."

The boy was the one who had gone out with the prescription, and he handed a small packet to Victor, before obeying the order to pass the punch.

"Put your medicine into some of my punch," said the host. "Sheeba—please," and as he filled a glass he whispered in her ear: "See that he takes his dose."

In a flash Sheeba knew that the vial which Victor took from the packet contained poison. It was more than a surmise. It was a certainty in her mind. She had been so intimately associated with him in subtle and adroit duplicity, and had so often seen him play his tricks with cards, that instinctively she located his crime in this instance. She knew that somehow Victor's prescription had become deadly. But she carried the glass to Victor, who poured a part of the vial's contents into it, as it stood on a table by his side.

"He must make himself take his own medicine," said Mrs. Pootle.

"Yes," said Sheeba, with a meaning for her husband's ears alone, "we must be sure that he swallows his dose."

"There should be no mistake about it," he responded.

Nor was there any. Sheeba knew by experience how bold a cheat may be played without detection if it be done quickly and neatly. She substituted her own glass for the drugged one as they stood side by side, and Victor drank some of the clear punch while she touched her lips to the rim of the murderous glass.

"Victor," the Colonel asked, "I trust that the flavor of the punch wasn't spoiled?"

Victor did not concern himself to reply, but his uncle responded: "To a happy lover all drinks are nectar, I guess."

"How does your's taste?" his roguish wife inquired.

"First-rate, and nigh a month after marriage, too, while Victor's is probably a month or so before."

"Victor and May. Is it so?" said Sheeba, setting down the poisoned glass, and impulsively going close to her daughter.

"Uncle Jonas is perhaps too conclusive in his announcement," Victor replied, "but I think we shall not contradict him altogether."

May blushed and said nothing.

"Has Miss Morris been permitted to engage herself to Victor Leroyd?" the Colonel loudly asked, with an air of almost judicial authority. "Was there nobody with power to prevent it?"

"Haven't we cleared up Victor's record yet?" Mrs. Pootle retorted. "Well, we'll call another witness, and she went to the door. "Jim Grimes!" Upon which Jim and Tom both responded.

"I don't think I need to introduce Mr. James Grimes to you, Colonel. Jim has concluded to stay out of prison with his friend. They are, so to say, members of our party."

"He is a liar. Whatever he says, it is a lie."

"Hear him first, Colonel," Mr. Pootle expostulated. "You are too hasty."

Colonel Sam Dallas was bewildered for the first time in his career as an adventurer. He had momentarily expected Victor to be stricken by the instantaneous poison, and the failure of the thing to work was to him inexplicable. Winston saw his loss of self-control, and sought to restore him by saying:

"Don't be excited, governor. Cool yourself. This can all be explained without such a row. As a preliminary—Victor didn't empty his glass—drink together like gentlemen."

But there was no more business for the Colonel. Concluding that Sheeba had fooled him, and determined to punish her, whatever else happened, he said: "With my friends I will drink—yes. But as for you, Sheeba, I shall tell them what you are, and why you have interested yourself in May Morris."

Sheeba stood at the side of the table on which the punch bowl rested, while her husband was behind it. The poisoned glass was in her hand. He had filled one for himself just before speaking, and for an instant he left it resting beside the bowl. With a gesture of her left hand—a melodramatic fling—she had directed all eyes away from her right hand, with which she changed the glasses. It was a feat which she had learned from his cleverness at legerdemain.

"I will tell my own story," she cried in a desperate desire to keep one secret safe from the revelation. "I am an adventuress—a criminal—an irredeemably wicked woman. I thought that for one short summer I might associate with virtue again, and no disaster come of it. I was a fool. The man you know as Colonel Dallas ——"

"He cannot let a confessed convict speak for him. He drinks your good health, all. Victor, pray join me," and Colonel Dallas, with a grandiose sweep of the arm lifted the glass of death. He drank it dry, and then began again: "This woman and May Morris ——"

"I was not done—let me finish," Sheeba broke in on him, and she furtively watched to see him affected by the poison. "I was after May's fortune—I confess it. But I have failed. I will try no more. She shall never on earth see or hear of me. I will go away."

"Sheeba is ——" the Colonel began again.

In that unfinished sentence he was silenced. A sickly pallor spread over his face, a convulsive quiver of pain shook him, and he fell to the floor. After a few speechless seconds, Colonel Sam Dallas was dead.

THE END.

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"The Buried River," a Weird Romance, by Joaquin Miller, will appear in Next Sunday's issue of The Dispatch.

Startling News from the West.

From the St. Joseph (Mo.) Daily Herald of January 15, 1889.

IS CLEVELAND TO MARRY?

Troy (N. Y.) Dispatch.]

The report that President Cleveland will soon become a benedict is again revived. This time the news was given publicity in this city. A young lady, a member of one of the first families, has quite an acquaintance in Buffalo, and returned a few days days ago from a visit to that city. Yesterday she received a letter from a lady friend in Buffalo, the writer being on especially intimate terms with Miss France C. Folsom, whose name has frequently been raised as that of the probable bride of President Cleveland. The letter states that Miss Folsom has informed a few of her dearest friends that she and the President are engaged to be married. While the date fixed for the wedding is not disclosed, it is understood that the great event will occur during the present year.

How to Forget Sorrow.

British and Colonial Druggist.]

A druggist recently received a visit from a lantern-jawed, hollow-eyed man, who asked in cadaverous tones if he could give him any remedy that would drive away a nightmare-like care that was preying upon his health. The man of drugs nodded, and compounded a mixture of quinine, wormwood, rhubarb and Epsom salts, with a dash of castor oil, and offered it to the despairing patient, who apathetically gulped it down. History avers that for six months he could think of anything except new schemes for getting the taste out of his mouth.

Didn't Know He Had Said It.

Cambridge Daily.]

In a speech Wendell Phillips once made use of the following illustration: "Expect the authorities of Boston to enforce the law! I should as soon put a peck of potatoes on the top of the ground and read to them an essay from "Flint on Agriculture," and expect a crop." The gentleman who tells the story afterward approached him, and said, "Mr. Phillips, I am curious to know whether that was impromptu or stupid?" "Did I say that?" he replied. "Well, I not only did not prepare it beforehand, but I did not even know I had said it until you reminded me."

A Startling Illusion.

Rockaway Beeche (meeting Hoffman in the Howes as he comes down the avenue)—Why, how are you, ole fel?

—I'm just going out country for a day or two.

—*Puck.*

A WOMAN'S OFFENSE.

A Decidedly Lively Tilt Over the Education of Our Dear Boys.

WHAT THEY LEARN AT SCHOOL.

The Teachings of Some Educators and Pastors Leading To

CONTEMPT FOR PARENTAL AUTHORITY

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.]

READERS are seldom kind enough to furnish comments, so much in line with present topics, as an editor who has fallen upon my correspondent Newton, and Newton's immediate answer. The editorial is cutting upon Newton's defects as a mother. She "has become imbued with the idea that her child is different from other boys." She is taken to be "an ultra sentimentalist, of weak and vacillating characteristics," who "regarded him as an exotic from some distant star, to be shielded as far as possible from other children and brought up, as became a boy so diffegent from other boys that had been or ever would be. Of course, his first trait was selfishness of the coarsest type. This little prince was fed on his mother's expressions of his own superiority. His selfishness, his utter disregard for the rights or the comforts of others, thanks to his hothouse training, made an unpleasant companion of him. Then, later on, this very ordinary boy, too good to mingle with other children, almost too precious to breathe upon, could brutally treat his mother at very little provocation. The young brute had been set up as a little god of the household. The feverishness of babyhood was allowed to run unchecked into the hot temper of a man. A man without the esthetic ideas of raising children, which troubled this woman, would have used a gad on the young whelp every time his temper manifested itself. It is difficult to see anything now other than a spoiled child in him. In her fear of the disorders which beset her cultured ancestors, the mother overlooked the fact that the supposed tendencies of heredity may be subdued by the manipulation of a shingle. A boy who roams the fields all the time he is not on a stool at his mother's feet, cannot rub shoulders with other boys in the way to make him manly. And the feeblest apology for the vices of any man or boy is the common one of heredity," etc.

FANCIED IDEAS.

There is such a thing as an idea running away with one, and the idea which runs away with this writer, I must say, is not apparent in "Newton's" first letter. The spite and bitterness against a fancied idea, the utter reverse of character and case as really drawn, are so characteristic of feminine tilts with the pen that one hazards little in assigning this slashing bright editorial "to the woman editor of the *News*. To seize upon one point and construct characters and situations to fit according to the bent of one's own mind, smacks of that charming feminine intuition which finds itself at the top of a question ahead of everything else—and quite as often has ignominiously to come down and jump on another side for footing. Most readers will see in "Newton's" letter only the unambitious, thoughtful mother, anxious to preserve her son from brain disease on one hand, and the vices, rivalry and greed on the other. Heredity, which is the red rag to the *News* editor, is referred to in the slightest way, not in the least as an apology for anything the child became, but a cause of physical disorder. Heredity can no more be disregarded in nervous children, tending to inflammation of the brain or the spine, than the fact of hereditray consumption in a patient with weak lungs. Heredity is small apology for evils, but it is a warning, and predisposing cause no parent can afford to ignore. But we may let "Newton" speak for herself.

I never guessed how distorted a clear case could become in other minds, which shade and fill up outlines from their own experience. That my lively, merry lad who roams the fields, not alone, but with half the boys in the neighborhood, after school—who was smartly slippered and shingled for disobedience as the *News* man could wish, who was rather popular than otherwise with old and young, and rubbed shoulders with other boys only too readily, should figure as a peevish, selfish brat, "who will add to selfishness all the petty vices and mean characteristics" as the *News* predicts, is a handful! That I regarded him as costly Venetian glass as a "rare exotic from some distant star," and "fed him with expressions of his own superiority," considered him too good to mingle with other children, and had æsthetic ideas of bringing him up, is a most amusing picture of what is not the case—know that I am a prosaic among my neighbors for more than common strictness of discipline, and the most downright plainness of ideas and practice. I plead guilty to being very fond of my own child—since when has that become a crime?—but there are mothers whose love is as clear-eyed as it is intense. She gave their lives to root out the faults of their children, and have a jealous sense for their defects. I doubt not the *News* man can find me in fault for this, just as well as the other thing.

NOT A MOTHER'S FAULT.

No, the fault was not in any weak, worshiping mother. It was that entering school the boy was introduced to an artificial system of ideas, false students, rabid, petty ambitions, and was systematically taught to undervalue all other opinions and rules. I am not the only one to complain that the influences of society to-day set at naught home views and authority. One of the brightest women on the Boston press had the same experience, finding her delicate precocious boy pressed at school, till his health began to give way, and all her protests were sneered at or ignored. Being a woman of resource, she took the boy from school and had a battle royal with teachers to do so. "You are a fool. You will ruin your boy," they said in so many words—her offense being that when her watchful eye saw the boy ailing, she would have him stay at home and be cared for, let classes get ahead of him as they would. She felt for her son what Stevenson says of himself, "I am sorry that I have no Greek, but I should be sorrier if I were dead." All the same, the child feels the clash between two influences, each of which he is taught to respect, and as the fresher one is more felt, the parent goes to the wall in his esteem.

At the mother's meetings of a prominent Boston society the complaint is frequently made that teachers in the public school teach the children contempt for their parents authority. One father and mother desired that a child should not draw maps evenings, as it tired the eyes and made late study till long after 9. The teacher's answer was to the child: "No matter. This school directs the maps must be drawn, and you have got to do it!" Or, a parent disapproves of some popular object for which contributions are urged, and sharp publishers and mission venders are learning to make regular Jeviers upon the quickly raised enthusiasm of children. No matter what the object, to buy a picture of Longfellow for an Indian school or to send Christmas cards to Samoa, in Sunday school or public school, the parent who dissents from the popular craze may be sure the child feels keenly the legible sneer on the faces of teachers and mates.

TAUGHT IN SCHOOLS.

A great deal is taught in the public schools to-day not put down in the list of subjects. For instance, one faithful mother warned her boy against carelessness of others' property, wound up with the usual glance at carelessness leading to dishonesty, with the county jail in prospective. "Huh!" says the boy in serious scorn, "that's nothing. Billy Farren, in our class, was in jail three months for stealing, and we asked him how he liked it, and he told us all about it. Said he was comfortable, hadn't anything to do, and he got in with the warden, so he got good grub. A fellow needn't mind that!" The first strong lesson my boy had in school was the punishment of a very passionate, willful lad, the son of a many millioned family, who yet sent their son to public school. The lad didn't take it kindly, and the younger boys and girls went home telling, with shocked faces, how "Whitten d——d Miss Clark and Mr. Price, the principal, and swore awful all round." Next, I should say they all took swearing lessons, for the army in Flanders could hardly outdo the volubility of the public school boys in our town, from three feet high and upward at hard swearing. What is to be done. I spoke to the pastor of the parish, begging him to use his influence against that vice with the boys, and what do you think was the answer I had. "Mrs. ——, I don't know how to believe this! I see those boys, and they are so uniformly well bred, I can't think they could be guilty of such grossness." This gentleman could by implication believe without trouble that a woman of whom he knew no ill could raise a false report, and a mother bring a false accusation against her own son, before he could credit the prevalence of the most common vice among juniors. I implored the boys' Sunday-school teacher to use her influence, with equal results. The boys were so charming at the tea parties and treats that she could only believe any lapses of conduct forced them by parental opposition. And when pastor and teachers both knew I disapproved and forbade my son's attendance at a boys' club, preparation for which absorbed every hour not given to the pressing duties of school, he was not only admitted by them but welcomed, and elected to the best offices in it.

THE BOYS' CLUB.

You may smile, but the boys' club, to the boys, has honors as fiercely contested as seats in Congress, and it is by such seemingly insignificant things that boys are encouraged in wilfulness. Add to this constant opposing influence, the outspoken protests of neighbors against anything like control or discipline, and you will not wonder that children imbibe disrespect to parents, or that a mere varnish of good manners is counted enough for society, and hung up with a boy's hat when he comes home. I have been all my life a church-goer, and was a Sunday scholar, and I have solemnly to say that never, from pulpit or teacher, was there one word spoken to lead children to think that regard for parents was creditable and just, or to reach moderation in their ambitions for place and pleasure. I learned much Syriac geography, and much about Jewish customs, much of moral generalizing that went over the heads of all who heard, but the nearest duties of life were wholly ignored, or treated in a pompous way which left no impress.

And this poor teaching I have in 40 years heard but twice! With the influence of the world, the pulpit, the school against quiet, temperate lives, crushing the conscience which does not care to outstep others, but to measure its duty by its own ability, how shall the parent single handed keep his children to the same happy course they are meant to follow? There is a time, with boys at least, when they are too big for the slipper and shingle administration. They show fight when punishment is offered. The mother cannot conquer them: the father, absent most of the time, can hardly judge cases by report, and very likely declares, as one man I know did, "I cannot punish the boy in cold blood!" General sentiment at such an age weighs more with our people than mere punishment, and general sentiment tends awry how except to right methods and aims. I do not know of a single school where truth telling, obedience to authority and deference to the wishes of parents have the slightest control. I don't know one where discipline worth the name is enforced. If boys behave not quite intolerably, they are got along with, if they exceed the mark they are expelled. Expulsion saves trouble in the school, but it does not save the boy. God help us! We parents cannot expel our children from our hearts if we would. And so I ask how we can keep their freshness of mind and body unspoiled, instead of seeing them the meager, precocious, snappish type common to-day. In a school of 100 pupils I do not see a dozen wholesome, healthy-looking children. Anæmic, spotted faces, undersized, rickety or dumpy figures are the rule, even in well-to-do families.

NEWTON.

WHAT ARE THE SCHOOLS DOING?

It is impossible to feel that the public schools to-day are doing their duty by the children, either for health or principles. Those most important things it sacrifices to mere cram, rivalry and parade. Yet the schools never can take such hold of the people as when pupils return home with an added grace or two as well as competition prizes, and the careful parent finds his work assisted, not thwarted by the influence of the teacher. The schools bring all sorts of children in contact, as "Newton's" letter shows, the millionaire's son rubbing shoulders with the paddywhack from the tenements. And some sort of moral disinfecting would be no more amiss to mind and manners than some intellegent consideration for the health of the hundreds of pupils in care. The parents are an imperfect set, I own, and have faults enough to keep us modest, but our interest in the children is the strongest they will ever know. It is sleepless and anxious for them when teachers and pastors are comfortably obtuse to perils ahead. They do not have to nurse sickly, over-wrought pupils, or to stand between fractious, immature lads trying to do man's work, and their certain failure. As "Newton" says all the pastor has to do is to drop unruly boys from Sunday school classes, and the teachers can expel them from the public schools and wash her hand of them. But we—parents—cannot leave them so. We must mend the fractures unthinking hands have made, endure all things from children who seem created without souls, and watch and contrive desperate remedies to bring them to the sense—of truth and fair living. One of the best writers of to-day says plainly on this subject, "the test of training is what a man can do, rather than what he knows. Has he good judgment? Is he a man of common sense? Has he power of adaptation? Can he organize? Can the young man lend a hand at home?"

"Are our boys getting any sort of training answering to this? Or is it not the German idea of book matter on top, and reputations waiting to be made?" Reputations, mind, not achievements. And is it not persistent that all the great teachers, who left their mark upon time through their pupils were men dominated by the moral idea, and giving the fullest scope in their teaching? Arnold and Farrar in England, Jacob Abbott and Horace Mann in this country, were men of another order from the prominent pushing teachers of to-day, and their pupils were different.

SHIRLEY DARE.

TO SELECT POULTRY.

A Maine Dealer Gives Some Valuable Points About Choosing Birds.

Lewiston Journal.]

"Pick me out a good one," said the matron in the Lewiston market, Thursday, as she wondered which chicken was the best. "To select poultry," said the dealer," you should always pick dry-picked or unscalded poultry. Fresh poultry should have moist and limber feet and legs, and those birds are the best that have small bones, short legs and clean, white flesh. It is an old adage in the business that the black-legged chicken is best for roast and the yellow or white-legged is best to boil. Beware of slimy or black-looking poultry. It is old. To judge of the age press the breast bone at the point toward the latter end of the body. If young, it will be soft and pliable. Breeds with long legs and big bones are not as fine as those that are full-breasted and plump. A hen turkey is better than a the Tom. The legs should be black and smooth. The windpipe of a young goose or duck should be soft, while in older birds it is hard. If the feet of the duck or goose are red and stiff, the bird is old. You can take these directions for what they are worth. Look out for black poultry and poultry where the skin is rubbed off. Sometimes New York merchants soak passe birds in alum water. It doesn't improve them. The odor of fowl is worth much as a guide. Bad poultry is a dangerous thing. It is not a help to the digestion or to the trade.

At Death's Door.

Boston Budget.]

Physician (arousing a tramp one morning from a nap on his doorstep)—Here, what is the matter with you? Can't you move more lively?

Tramp—I'm feeling pretty bad, boss, and can't be expected to move in a hurry.

P.—What's the matter?

T.—I've been at death's door all night.

An Interpolation on the Tennessee Mountains.

Rev. Mr. Lukeson—I's bery glad, mah hearers, dat mah disco'se on d' puss'n'l characteristicks ob d' debbil has sech a good 'fect on d' congergashion.—*Judge.*

HOW A HORSE MOVES.

Captain Charles King on the Various Gaits of Saddle Horses.

FOUR AMERICAN ARTIFICIAL GAITS

The Fox Trot, the Rack, the Single Foot and the Running Walk.

SPEED ATTAINABLE IN EACH CASE

[WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.]

IN the spring of 1869, while stationed in the city of Cincinnati on recruiting service, the writer was invited to join a riding party. Just at this time riding parties of the young people in society was very much in vogue. Assembling at the home of some one of their number, they would set forth in the afternoon; ride out to some pleasant spot either in Kentucky, across the Ohio, or in the beautiful environs of the city itself; take supper there, have an informal dance and return by moonlight.

Joining the party with the best mount to be found at the stable to which he was advised to go, the writer found some 20 young men and maidens on very trim-looking Kentucky saddle horses; and very soon, with a discreet chaperone in the lead, we filed away to the ferry and were soon clattering through the streets of Newport and out on the broad, winding highway beyond. Once there, the leaders took a rapid gait, and the writer being near the rear of the column, had his first opportunity of watching horsemen and horsewomanship as then practiced in the Queen City. Up to that day he had never ridden any gait but what are termed the natural gaits of the horse—the walk, trot, gallop or the easy, graceful modification of the latter, known in the East as the canter and on the frontier as the "lope." In each of these—especially the trot—there is a certain amount of physical and muscular exercise. Not much, perhaps, in the walk, but a little at any rate.

NATURAL GAITS.

The writer had ridden some steed or other from the time he was 7 years old, when