[NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.]

THE PENNYCOMEQUICKS

—Written for THE DISPATCH by—

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CHAPTER I.—SHAKING THE TREE.

There is an aboriginal race in Borneo, of which it is said that they dispose of their aged parents and relatives in an interesting, novel and altogether aboriginal fashion.

They courteously, but withal peremptorily, require them periodically to climb trees, and when they are well up and grappling the branches, they shake the trees. If the venerable representatives of the earlier generation hold on, they are pronounced to be still green; but if they drop, they are adjudged ripe, are fallen upon and eaten, the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet being reserved as the prerogative of the heir-at-law, as the richest morsels.

We do nothing of this sort in Christendom, least of all in civilized England. God, we thank Thee that we are not as other men are, even as these Borneans, for the conversion of whom we put up prayer at the family altar, that is, the breakfast-table, or offer our mite—a veritable mite, a microscopic fraction of our income. We look in England on our aged relatives with reverence, not with greed, and if we butter them, it is not because we desire to eat them, but because they are susceptible to butter. We never calculate the number of pounds they weigh, we never look hungrily at their palms, and never put the ladder against the tree, and with hat off and professions of respect and endearment invite them to climb. The Esquimaux act very differently from the Borneans, they take their ancient relations, and put them out of their huts in the cold, and leave them to freeze or starve. What a stride humanity has made with us! We deal with our poor, meager relatives in this way? We!—as little do we turn them out in the cold as we do fall upon and eat up our plump ones, like the Borneans.

"One of the pleasures of having a rout, is the pleasure of having it over," said Tom Hood, in his poem of Miss Killmansegg and her Golden Leg, and he said truly—most truly, when that rout was one of obligation or of interest, or of obligation and interest combined, when it was not a spontaneous burst of hospitality, but a labored affair, and like a labored literary effort—heavy.

Mrs. Sidebottom, or as she was pleased to accentuate her name, Siddy-bot-TOME, sat before the fire with her silk evening skirt turned up over her knees to prevent it from becoming scorched, and with her neat little feet on the fender.

What tricks we do play with our names to deliver them from the suspicion of vulgarity. How we double the capital F's, and convert the i's into y's, so that common little Finches can strut as Fitzinches and insignificant Smiths can add a cubit to their stature as Smythes. How for distinction we canonize our final syllables, and convert Singeons into St. Johns, and Slodgers into St. Ledgers; and elevate Mungy into Mont Joye, and Gallicise our Mullens into Molleynes, take the blackness out of Death by spelling it De'Ath, and even turn a Devil into De Ville.

The candles had been blown out on the chimney piece, in the sconces on the walls, and on the piano. A savor of extinguished candles pervaded the room.

Mrs. Siddy-bot-TOME—her name is given as pronounced once again, that it may stamp itself on the memory of the reader—Mrs. Siddy-bot-TOME (the third time is final)—sat by the fire with puckered lips and brows. She was thinking. She was a lady of 50, well—very well—preserved, without a grey hair or a wrinkle, with fair skin and light eyes, and hair the color of hemp. Her eyelashes were lighter still, so light as to be almost white—the white not in fashion at the time, but about to come into fashion, of a creamy tinge.

She was not a clever woman, by no means, but a woman of broad sympathies, but a woman who generally had her own way through the force and energy of her character, and as that force was always directed in one direction, and her energy always exerted for one purpose, she accomplished more than did many far cleverer women. She rarely failed to carry her point, whatever that point was.

Whatever this point was, it was invariably one that revolved about herself, as the moon about the earth in the universe, as Papageno about Papagena, in the "Magic Flute," and as the cork attached to the cat's tail in the nursery.

If Mrs. Sidebottom had been a really clever woman, she would have concealed her ends and aims, as those who are smuggling lace or silk, coil them about them, and hide them in their umbrellas, under their cloaks, and in their bosoms. But she lacked this cleverness, or failed to admit that selfish aims were contraband, and from the smallest herb, that strives to outrun and smother those herbs that grow about it; through the robin Pecksy, that snaps the worm from its sister Flapsy; and the dog that holds the manger against the ox: to ourselves, the crown of creation and the climax of self-seeking, but we do not show it. The snail has telescopic eyes, wherewith to peer for something he may appropriate to himself; but the snail, when he thinks himself observed, withdraws his horns and conceals them behind a dimple.

Mrs. Sidebottom was either too eager or too careless, or—for charity hopeth all things—too sincere, to disguise her horns. She thrust them this way, that way; they went up to take bird's-eye views; they dived beneath, to survey matters subterranean; they went round corners, described corkscrews, to observe things from every conceivable aspect. They were thrust down throats and into pockets, and though she were of thousandfold magnifying power, like those of a fly, and, like those of a prophet, saw into futurity, and like those of the historian, explored the past.

In a lounging chair, also near the fire, but not monopolizing the middle like his mother, sat Captain Pennycomequick, the son of Mrs. Sidebottom. He wore a smoking jacket, braided with red or brown; and was engaged languidly on a cigar-case, looking for a suitable cigarette.

Mrs. Sidebottom's maiden name had been Pennycomequick, and as she despised her married name, even when accentuated past recognition, she had persuaded her son to exchange his designation, by royal license, to Pennycomequick.

But euphony was not the sole or principal motive in Mrs. Sidebottom that induced her to move her son to make this alteration. She was the daughter of a manufacturer, now some time deceased, in the large Yorkshire village or small town of Mergatroyd, in the West Riding, by his second wife. Her halfbrother by the first wife now owned the mill, was the head and propof the family, and was esteemed to be rich.

She was moderately well provided for. She had a sort of lien on the factory, and the late Mr. Sidebottom, solicitor, had left something. But what is four hundred per annum to a woman with a son in the army dependent on her, and with a soul too big for her purse, with large requirements, an ambition that could only be satisfied on a thousand a year. Would any stomach be content on half rations that had capacity for whole ones? On the fringe of the Arctic circle is a song that "Iceland is the fairest land that ever the sun beheld," but it is only sung by those who have never been elsewhere. Now, Mrs. Sidebottom had seen much more luxuriant and snugger conditions of existence than that which can be maintained on four hundred a year. For instance, her friend, Mrs. Tomkins, having six hundred, was able to keep a little carriage, and Miss Jones on a thousand, had a footman and a butler. Consequently Mrs. Sidebottom was by no means inclined to acquiesce in a boreal and glacial existence of four hundred, and say that it was the best of states that ever the sun beheld.

Mrs. Sidebottom's half-brother, Jeremiah Pennycomequick, was unmarried and aged 55. She knew his age to a day, naturally, being his sister, and she sent him congratulations on his recurrent birthday—every birthday brought her nearer to his accumulations. She knew his temperament, naturally, being his sister, and could reckon his chances of life as accurately as the clerk in the Assurance office. To impress the fact of her relationship on Jeremiah, to obtain, if possible, some influence over him, at all events to hedge out others from exercising power over his mind, Mrs. Sidebottom had lately migrated to Mergatroyd and had brought her son with her. She was the rather moved to do this, as her whole brother, Nicholas Pennycomequick, had just died. There had been no love lost between Jeremiah and Nicholas, and now that Nicholas was no more, it was possible that his son Philip might be received into favor, and acquire gradually such influence over his uncle as to prejudice him against herself and her son. To prevent this—prevent in both its actual and its original significations—Mrs. Sidebottom had pulled up her tentpegs, and had encamped at Mergatroyd.

The captain wore crimson-silk stockings and glazed pumps. He had neat little feet, like his mother. When he had lighted a cigarette, he blew a whiff of smoke, then held up one of his feet and contemplated it.

"My dear Lambert," said Mrs. Sidebottom, "I wish you could slip those red stockings of yours into your uncle's beetle-crushers."

"They would be too roomy for me," said the Captain.

"Not at all, Lamb. Your feet would expand to fill his shoes," argued his mother.

"My feet are pinched enough now—certainly" sighed Lambert Pennycomequick.

"This dinner will not have cost us nothing," mused Mrs. Sidebottom, looking dreamily into the coals. "The champagne was six-and-six a bottle, and three bottles were drunk," she also heaved a sigh.

"Almost a pound. Surely, gooseberry would have done."

"No, Lamb! it would not. It never does to be stingy in such matters. Though how we are to pay for it all——" Mrs. Sidebottom left the sentence as unsettled as the bill for the champagne was likely to remain.

"I don't see why you should not tell Uncle Jeremiah how crippled we are."

"Never," said his mother decisively. "Man's heart as naturally closes against impecunious relatives as does a tulip against rain. When you are bathing, Lamb, you never voluntarily swim within reach of an octopus. If you see one coming, with its eyes fixed on you, and its feelers extended, you strike out for dear life, which is full of these many armed hungry creatures. The waters are alive with them, great as a needy relation, and small as a begging letter. It is insufficient to know how to swim, one must know also how to kick out and keep away from octopuses. No, Jeremiah must not suppose that we want anything of him."

"It seems to me, mother," said Lambert, "that you might just as well tell him we are in difficulties and need his assistance. I am sure he sees it; he was very cold and reserved to-night."

"Not on any account. You are quite mistaken; he has not a suspicion. Let me see, the waiters were half a guinea each, and the pheasants seven shillings a pair. We could not have sixpenny grapes—it would never have done."

"I hate reckoning on dead men's shoes," said Lambert. "It is mean. Besides, Uncle Jeremiah may outlive us both."

"No, Lamb, he cannot. Consider his age; he is 55."

"And you, mother, are 50, only five years' difference."

Mrs. Sidebottom did not wince.

"You do not consider that his has been a sedentary life, which is very prejudicial to health. Besides, he has rushes of blood to the head. You saw how he became as red as a Tritoma when you made that ill-judged remark about Salome. Apoplexy is in the family. Our father died of it."

"Well, I hate counting the years a fellow has to live. We must all hop some day."

"I trust he enjoyed himself," said Mrs. Sidebottom. "He took one of the anges-a-cheval. Did he touch the lees?"

"I think not."

"I am sorry—I mean, I am thankful, they are bad for apoplectic persons, Lamb. He pays income tax on twelve hundred."

"He does not live at the rate of five hundred."

"Not at the rate of three."

"Perhaps eventually he may leave the mill to Philip and the savings to me. I won't think of it, as it may all turn out different; but that would be best for me."

"Not best, Lamb. Both the savings and the mill should be yours."

"What should I do with the mill? You would not have me turn manufacturer?"

"No, but you could sell the business."

"This is like selling the lion's skin before the lion is killed," said the Captain, with a little impatience.

After a pause, during which Mrs. Sidebottom watched a manufactory and a bank and much treasure in the red hot coals crumble down in the gradual dissolution to ashes, she said: "Lamb! You have no occasion to be uneasy about your cousin Philip."

"I am not. I have not given him a thought."

"Jeremiah can never forgive Nicholas for withdrawing his money from the business at a moment, and almost bringing about a catastrophe. When Nicholas did that I was as angry and used as strong remonstrance as Jeremiah, but all in vain. Nicholas, when he took an idea into his head, would not be diverted from carrying it out, however absurd it was. I did not suppose that Nicholas would not be such a fool as he proved, and lose his money. He got into the hands of a plausible scoundrel."

"Schofield?"

"Yes, that was his name, Schofield; who turned his head and walked off with pretty nearly every penny he had in the world. He might have ruined himself, and would not have grumbled. What alarmed and angered me was that he jeopardized my fortune as well as that of Jeremiah. A man has a right to ruin himself if he likes, but not to risk the fortunes of others."

The Captain felt that he was not called upon to speak.

"It is as well that we are come here," pursued Mrs. Sidebottom. "Though we were comfortable at York, we could not have lived longer there at our rate, and here we can economize. The society here is not worth cultivation; it is all commercial, frightfully commercial. You can see it in the shape of their shoulders and in the cut of their coats. As for the women—But there, I won't be unkind."

"Uncle Jeremiah winced at my joke about Salome."

"Salome!" repeated his mother, and her mouth fell at the corners. "Salome!" She fidgeted in her chair. "I had not calculated on her when I came here. Really, I don't know what to do about her. You should not have made that joke. It was putting ideas into your uncle's head. It made the blood rush into his face, and that showed you had touched him. That girl is a nuisance. I wish she were married or shot. She may yet draw a stroke across our reckoning." Mrs. Sidebottom lapsed into thought, thought that gave her no pleasure. After a pause of some minutes, Captain Lambert said: "By the way, mother, what table cloth did you have on to-day? I noticed Uncle Jeremiah looking at it inquisitively."

"Naturally he would look at it, and that critically, as he is a linen manufacturer and weaves fine damasks. I hate shop."

"But—what table cloth was it?"

"The best, of course. One figured with oak leaves and acorns, and in the middle a wreath, just like those thrown over one's head by urchins for a tip, on the Drachenfels."

"Are you sure, mother?"

"I gave it out this morning."

"Would you mind looking at it? I do not think the table has been cleared yet. When I saw Uncle Jeremiah was professionally interested in it, I looked also, but saw no acorns or oak leaves."

"Of course there were oak leaves and acorns; it was our best."

"Then I must be blind."

"Fiddlesticks!" said Mrs. Sidebottom. However, she stood up and went into the dining room.

A moment later the captain heard an exclamation. Then his mother left the dining room, and he heard her ascend the stairs. Shortly after she descended, and re-entered the room with a face the color of a table cloth, or, to be more exact, of the same tone as her eyelashes.

"Well," said the Captain, languidly, "have the oak leaves and acorns disappeared in the wash?"

"Oh, Lamb! what is to be done? Jeremiah will never forgive us. He will feel this acutely—as an insult. That owl—that owl of a maid has ruined our prospects."

"What has she done?"

"And not one of the waiters, though paid half a guinea each, observed it."

"What was done?"

"She put a sheet on the table, and made up your bed with the oak leaves and acorns."

CHAPTER II.—SALOME.

I lay in bed this morning, musing on the feelings of those aged Borneans as they approached ripeness, and noticed the eyes of the rising generation fixed on them with expectancy, saw their red tongues flicker out of their mouths and stealthily lick their lips. I lay in bed considering whether my time had come to crawl up the tree, whether, perhaps, I was already hanging to one of the branches, and felt the agitation of the trunk. But the thought was uncomfortable, and I turned back to the Borneans who live very remote from us, and I considered how sensitive they must have become in old age to every glance of eye, and word let slip, and gesture of impatience observable in the rising generation. I mused over the little artifices that would be adopted by them to disguise the approach of ripeness; how, when extending their shaking hands over the fire, they would endeavor to control the muscles and disguise their tremble; how they would give to them an unreal appearance of nervous grip; how they would talk loud and deep out of their quavering pipe; and how they would fill in the creases in their brown and cheeks with tallow, and dance at every festival with an affectation long lost. And I considered further how that all these little artifices would be seen through and jeered at, and how they never for one minute would postpone the fatal day when the tree would be indicated, and the command given to ascend.

Then next, having felt my ribs and counted them, and my thews and found them shrunk and with no flesh on them, I thought of the Esquimaux, and the way in which their elders were put out of doors and exposed to die of cold; and after I had left my bed, at breakfast, throughout the day, I remained mighty touchy and keenly observant, and alarmed at every slight, and fault of deference, and disregard of habitual consideration, thinking it might be a premonition that I was being considered fit to be turned out into the cold.

Among barbarians it is customary to surfeit a victim destined to become a sacrifice. It almost seemed as if the birthday banquet given to Uncle Jeremiah by his half-sister had been given with this intent. Mythologists tell us that Pluto, the god of the nether world, and Plutus, the god of wealth, were identical divinities, variously designated according to the aspect in which viewed, whether from that of the victims offered to the god, or from that of the immolator. The god of Death to one was the god of Fortune to another.

Uncle Jeremiah Pennycomequick was not indeed shaken by his half-sister and nephew while clinging to the Tree of Life, but was apprised by them as to his ripeness, and to his calibre, and was not unaware that such was the case. Indeed, as already intimated, Mrs. Sidebottom was as incapable of concealing her motives as is Mephistopheles of concealing his hoof. She flattered herself that it was not so, and yet she wore her purposes, her ambitions, in her face.

As Jeremiah walked homeward it was with much the same consciousness that must weigh on the spirits of a bullock that has been felt and measured by a butcher.

He opened his door with a latch-key, and entered his little parlor. A light was burning there, and he saw Salome seated on a stool by the fire, engaged in needle work. The circle of light cast from above was about her, irradiating her red-gold hair. She turned and looked up at Jeremiah with a smile, and showed the cheek that had been nearest the fire glowing like a carnation.

"What—not in bed?" exclaimed the old man, half-reproachfully, and yet with a tone of pleasure in his voice.

"No, uncle; I thought you might possibly want something before retiring. Besides, you had not said good night to me, and I couldn't sleep without that."

"I want nothing, child."

"Shall I fold up my work and go?"

"No—no," he replied hesitatingly, and stood looking at the fire, then at his chair, and then, with doubt and almost fear, at her. "Salome, I should like a little talk with you. I am out of sorts, out of spirits. The Sidebottoms always irritate me. Velvet is soft, but the touch chills my blood. I want to have my nerves composed before I can sleep, and the hour is not late—not really late. I came away from the Sidebottoms as soon as I could do so with decency. Of course, it was very kind of my sister to give this dinner in my honor, on my birthday, but——" He did not finish the sentence.

The girl took his hand and pressed him to sit down in his chair. He complied without resistance, but drew away his hand from her with a gesture of uneasiness, a shrinking that somewhat surprised her.

When in his seat, he sat looking at her, with his elbows resting on the arms of his chair, and his palms folded before his breast like the hands of a monumental effigy. Salome had resumed her place and her work. As he did not speak, she presently glanced up at him and smiled with her slight sweet smile, that was not the motion of the lips, but the dimpling of the pure cheek. He did not return her smile; his eyes, though on her, did not see her and notice the inquiry in her countenance.

Jeremiah was aged that day 55, or, as Mrs. Sidebottom put it for her great comfort, in his 56th year. The dinner party at his half-sister's had been given entirely in his honor. His health had been drunk, and many good wishes for long years had been expressed with apparent heartiness and but what had been done to gratify him had been overdone in some particulars, and underdone in others—overdone in profession, underdone in sincerity; and he returned home dissatisfied and depressed.

When the peacock unfurls his fan, he does not persistently face you; if he did so, words would fail to express your admiration, but the bird twirls about on his feet, and foolishly exposes the ribbing of his plumage, so as to provoke contemptuous laughter. It is the same with selfish and with vain persons. They make a prodigious effort to impose, and then, still ruffling with expanded glories, they revolve on their pivots, and in complete unconsciousness exhibit the ignoble rear of sordid artifice and falsity and mean pretense.

Joseph Cusworth had been at first clerk and then traveler for the house of Pennycomequick, a trustworthy, intelligent and energetic man. Twenty-two years ago, after the factory had fallen under the management of Mrs. Sidebottom, advanced age of his parent and his half-brother's disinclination for business, master and man had married. Jeremiah had been suspicious and irascible in those days, and he had misinterpreted the freedom of action pursued by Cusworth as allowed him by old Pennycomequick, and dismissed him. Cusworth went to Lancashire, where he speedily found employ, and married. After a few years and more reflection through correspondence and unreliability of agents, Jeremiah had swallowed his pride and invited Cusworth to return to his employ, holding out to him the prospect of admission into partnership after a twelvemonth. Cusworth had, accordingly, returned to Mergatroyd and brought with him his wife and twin daughters. The reconciliation was complete. Cusworth proved to be the same upright, reliable man as of old, and with enlarged experience. His accession speedily made itself felt. He was one of those men who attract friends everywhere, whom everyone insensibly feels can be trusted.

The deed of partnership was drawn up and engrossed, and only lacked signature, when, in going through the mill with Jeremiah, Cusworth was caught by the lappet of his coat in the machinery, drawn in, under the eye of his superior, and so frightfully mangled that he never recovered consciousness, and expired within a few hours after.

From that time Mrs. Cusworth, with the children, was taken into the manufacturer's house, where she acted as his housekeeper. There the little girls grew up, and made their way into the affections of the solitary man who encouraged them to call him uncle, though there was absolutely no relationship subsisting between them.

Jeremiah had never been married, he had never been within thought of such an event. No woman had ever made the least impression on his heart. He lived for his business, which engrossed all his thoughts; as for his affections, they would have stagnated but for the presence of the children in the house, the interest they aroused, the amusement they caused, the solicitude they occasioned, and for the thousand little fibers, their innocent hands threw about his heart, till they had caught and held it in a web of their artless weaving. He had lost his mother when he was young, his father died when he was twenty, and he had spent his life at home with his step-mother had not been cogenial. He was kept away from home at school, and then put to business at a distance, and his relations with his half-sister and half-brother had never been cordial. They had been pampered and he neglected. When, finally, he came home to assist his father, his half-sister was married, and his brother, who had taken a distate for business, was away.

One day of his life had been much like another, he had become devoted to his work, which he pursued mechanically, conscientiously, but at the same time purposelessly, for he had no one whom he loved or even cared for to whom his fortune might go and for whom, therefore, it would be a pleasure to accumulate. And as for himself, he was without ambition.

When daily he returned from the mill after the admission of the Cusworth family under his roof, the prattle and laughter of the children had refreshed him, their tender, winning ways had overmastered him and softened his hitherto callous heart. It was to him as if the sun had suddenly broke through the clouds that had overarched and chilled and obscured his life, and was warming, glorifying and vivifying his latter days.

Time passed, and the little girls grew up into young women. They were much alike in face and in color of hair and eyes and complexion; but there the likeness stopped. In character they were not twins. Their names were Salome and Janet. Janet was married. A year ago, when she was barely 19, the son of a manufacturer at Elbœuf, in Normandy, had seen, loved and made her his own.

This young man, Albert Victor Baynes, had been born and bred in France, but his father had been a manufacturer in Yorkshire till, driven to distraction by strikes at times when he had taken heavy contracts, he, like a score of others similarly situated, had migrated with his plant and business to Normandy, and opened in a foreign land a spring of wealth that copiously irrigated a wide area, and which greed and folly had banished from its proper home. About Rouen, Elbœuf and Louviers are bristling factory chimneys and busy manufactures, carried thither by Yorkshire capitalists and employers, and where they initiated, the French have followed, and have drained away our English trade.

Young Baynes had come to Yorkshire and to Mergatroyd to visit relatives, and he had at once lost his heart to Janet Cusworth. As he was the only son of a man in good business, and as "Uncle" Jeremiah was prepared to act liberally toward the daughter of Joseph Cusworth, no difficulties arose to cross the course of love and delay union. It was said that Jeremiah Pennycomequick could hardly have behaved more liberally had Janet been his daughter. But another reason urged him to generosity beside his regard for the girl. This was gratitude to Albert Victor Baynes for choosing Janet instead of his special favorite, Salome, who had chiefly wound herself about his heart. Janet was a lively, frolicsome little creature, whom it was a relaxation to watch, and whose tricks provoked laughter; but Salome was that one of the twins who had depth of character, and who, as the millfolk declared, had inherited all her father's trustworthiness, thoughtfulness and that magnetism which attracts love.

Salome continued her needlework silently, with the firelight flickering over her fair face and rich hair. Her complexion was very delicate, and perhaps the principal charm of her face consisted in the transparency not of the skin only, but of the entire face, that showed every change of thought and feeling by a corresponding dance of blood and shift of color in it—and not color only, for as a mirror takes the lightest breath and becomes clouded by it, so was it with her countenance; bright with an inner light, the slightest breath of trouble, discouragement, alarm, brought a cloud over it, dimming its usual brilliancy. "Yours is a very tell-tale face," her sister had often said to her. "Without your opening your eyes I can read all that passes in your mind."

At the time that young Baynes had stayed at Mergatroyd, Jeremiah had been uneasy. The young man hovered round the sisters, and spoke to one as much as to the other, and divided his attentions equally between them. The sisters so closely resembled each other in features, complexion and hair, as well as in height and frame, that only such as knew them could distinguish the one from the other, and the distinction consisted rather in expression than in aught else. How anyone could mistake the one for the other was a marvel to Jeremiah, who was never in doubt. But the resemblance was so close that Albert Victor Baynes hung for some time in uncertainty as to which he should take, and was only decided by the inner qualities of Janet, whose vivacity and sparkle best suited the taste of a man whose ideas of woman showed they had been formed in France.

Whilst Bayne was in uncertainty, or in apparent uncertainty, Jeremiah suffered. He loved both the girls, but he loved Salome infinitely better than her sister; it would be to him a wrench to part with brilliant Janet, but nothing like the wrench that would ensue were he required to separate from Salome.

Those who from childhood have been surrounded by an atmosphere of love, who have come to regard it as their natural element, such have no conception of the force with which love boils up in an old heart that has long been arid and affectionless. In the limestone Western hills there are riverless valleys, tracts of moor and mountain without a rift, dead and waterless, yet deep beneath, in secret channels, streams are flowing, and mighty vaults form subterranean reservoirs, by all who pass over the surface unsuspected. But suddenly from a cliff side, pours the long hidden water, not a spring, a rivulet, but a full grown river ready to turn millwheels and carry boats. So it is with certain human natures that have been long passionless, without the token of soft affections, the all conquering stream of love breaks from their hearts in mighty volume and unexpectedly.

There had been nothing of self-analysis in Jeremiah. The children had sprung up under his care, and year by year had seen them acquire an inch or a fraction of an inch in height, their beauty develop, their intelligences expand; imperceptibly they had stolen from infancy into childhood, and from childhood in like manner had crept unobserved into maidenhood, and then flowered into full and perfect beauty; and each stage of growth had carried them a stage further into Jeremiah's affections, and had cast another and a stronger tie about his heart. He had loved them as children, and he loved them as beautiful and intelligent girls, as belonging to his house, as essential to his happiness, as the living elements that made up to him the idea of home. The only sorrow he had—if that could be called a sorrow which was no more than a regret—was that they were not his own true nieces, or better still, his children. When Janet was taken and Salome left, he was thankful, and he put away from him for the time the fear that Salome would also take wing and leave him in the same manner as Janet had gone. How could he endure recurrence to the old gloom, and relapse into purposeless gathering of money? How could he endure life deprived of both Janet and Salome? How can a man, who has seen the sun, endure blindness? Or a man whose ears have drunk in music, bear deafness? Deafness and blindness of hearts would be his portion in that part of life when most he needed ear and eye—deafness and blindness after he had come to understand the melody of a happy home, and see the beauty of child-encircled hearth.

What must be the distress of him who has had a well furnished house to have an execution put in, and everything sold away from before his eyes, nothing left him but the bed on which to lie and gnash his teeth? How bald, how cold, how hateful the dismantled home will seem without the ornaments which have become familiar and endeared by long association, have been accustomed to see around him. The children they grew up had furnished Jeremiah's house with pleasant fancies, had hung the walls with bright remembrances, and filled every corner with tender associations. The floor was strewn with their primrose homage. The thought that as he had lost Janet, so must he some day lose Salome, rose up continually before Jeremiah, and sickened him with fear. He tried to steel himself in expectation of it. It was in the nature of things that young girls should marry. It was inevitable that a closer and stronger tie should be formed, and then that cord of reverential gratitude which now attached Salome to him would gradually, imperceptibly, yet surely, to a thread, and from a thread to a filament. In proportion as from the new bond other ties arose, so would that attaching her to him become attenuated till it became formal only.

A great pain arose in Jeremiah's heart.

And now, this evening, he looked at the girl engaged on her needlework, and observation revealed to him his eyes. Now he began that work of self-analysis, with her before him, that he had never thought of engaging in before, never dreamed would be forced upon him to engage in.

As he looked steadily at Salome, his closed palms trembled, and he separated them, put one to his lips, for they were trembling also, and then to his brow, which was wet.

Salome's soft brown eyes were lifted from her work, and rested steadily on him.

"Dear uncle," she said. "My dear—dear, uncle! You are unwell."

She drew her stool close to him, and threw her arms about him, to draw his quivering face toward her own that she might kiss it. But he started up with a groan, backed from her arms, and paced the room in agitation. He dare not receive her embrace. He dare not meet her eyes. He had read his own heart for the first time, helped thereto by a casual joke from Captain Lambert Pennycomequick at table that evening.

[To be continued next Monday.]

WHOLESALE HOUSE.
JOSEPH HORNE & CO.,
Cor. Wood and Liberty Sts.,
Importers and Jobbers of
DRY GOODS and NOTIONS.
Special offerings this week in
SILKS, PLUSHES, DRESS GOODS, SATEENS, SEERSUCKER, GINGHAMS, PRINTS, and CHEVIOTS.
For largest assortment and lowest prices call and see us.
WHOLESALE EXCLUSIVELY
fe22-r83-D

BROKERS—FINANCIAL.
De WITT DILWORTH,
BROKER IN
PETROLEUM
Oil bought and sold on margin. de27-21-D8u

WHITNEY & STEPHENSON,
57 FOURTH AVENUE.
ISSUE TRAVELERS' CREDITS
—throughout—
MESSRS. DREXEL, MORGAN & CO., NEW YORK.
PASSPORTS PROCURED.
ap28-x75

THE FREEHOLD BANK,
No. 410 Smithfield St.
CAPITAL. - - - - $200,000 00.
DISCOUNTS DAILY.
EDWARD HOUSE, Prest.
JAMES P. SPEER, Vice Prest.
JOHN F. STEEL, Cashier.
se1-k35-D

DOMESTIC MARKETS.

Eggs and Choice Creamery Butter Firm at Late Advance.

CHEESE EXPECTED SOON TO RISE.

Light Receipts of Cereals and Tone of Trade Improved.

A BRIGHTER DAY BEGINS TO DAWN

OFFICE OF PITTSBURG DISPATCH, SATURDAY, February 2, 1889.

Country Produce, Jobbing Prices.

The changed situation in butter and eggs, as compared with what we have had all the past month, will be seen by the following statement of a leading commission merchant: "For the past two or three days I have sold as much butter and eggs in one day as I had been selling in three days for several weeks before. Demand is good and prices are firm at the small advance." Cheese is bound to take a turn upward in a very few days. Pittsburg dealers would find it hard to replace their stock of high grades at present prices. Advices from Chicago show great firmness there. Good grades of Sweitzer cheese are in good demand at quotations. Low grades are hard to sell at any price. The tone of trade shows some improvement on a week ago, but there is still large room for improvement before produce markets can be called active.

BEANS—Navy from store, prime hand picked, $2 00@2 10 per bushel; medium, $2 00; Ohio and Pennsylvania do, prime and medium, $2 00@2 10; imported do, $1 90@2 00; Lima, 5½c per ℔; marrowfat, $2 75@2 80 per bushel.

BUTTER—Creamery, Elgin, 29@31c; Ohio do, 25@27c; fresh dairy packed, 20@23c; country rolls, 18@22c; Chartiers Creamery Co. butter, 29@31c.

BEESWAX—23@25c per ℔ for choice; low grade, 15@18c.

CIDER—Sand refined, $6 50@7 50, common, $5 50@4 00; crab cider, $8 00@8 50 ℙ barrel; cider vinegar, 10@12c ℙ gallon.

CHEESE—Ohio cheese, fall make, 12@12½c; New York, fall make, 12½@13c; Limburger, 11½@12½c; domestic Sweitzer cheese, 13@13½c.

DRIED PEARS—$1 45@1 50 ℙ bushel; split do, 2½@3½c ℙ ℔.

EGGS—15@16c ℙ dozen for strictly fresh.

FRUITS—Apples, $1 00 to $1 50 ℙ barrel; evaporated raspberries, 25c ℙ ℔; cranberries, $8 00 ℙ barrel; $2 40@2 50 ℙ bushel.

FEATHERS—Extra live geese, 50@60c; No. 1 do, 40@45c; mixed lots, 30@35c ℙ ℔.

HOMINY—$3 30@3 40 ℙ barrel.

HONEY—New Crop, 16@17c; buckwheat, 13@15c.

POTATOES—Potatoes, 35@40c ℙ bushel; $2 50@2 75 for Southern sweets; $3 25@3 50 for Jersey sweets.

POULTRY—Live chickens, 65@75c ℙ pair; dressed chickens, 13@15c ℙ pound; turkeys, 13@15c dressed ℙ pound; ducks, live, 80@85c ℙ pair; dressed, 13@14c ℙ pound; geese, 10@11c ℙ pound.

SEEDS—Clover, choice, 62 ℔s to bushel, $6 per bushel; clover, large English, 62 ℔s, $6 25; clover, Alsike, $8 50; clover, white, $9 00; timothy, choice, 45 ℔s, $1 85; blue grass, extra clean, 14 ℔s, $1 00; blue grass, fancy, 14 ℔s, $1 20; orchard grass, 14 ℔s, $2 00; red top, 14 ℔s, $1 00; millet, 50 ℔s, $1 25; German millet, 40 ℔s, $2 00; Hungarian grass, 48 ℔s, $2 00; lawn grass, mixture of fine grasses, 25c per ℔.

SHELLBARKS—$1 50@1 75.

TALLOW—Country, 4½@5c; city rendered, 5@5½c.

TROPICAL FRUITS—Lemons, fancy, $3 00@4 00 ℙ box; common lemons, $2 75 ℙ box; Messina oranges, $2 50@3 50 ℙ box; Florida oranges, $3 00@3 50 ℙ box; Jamaica oranges, fancy, $6 50@7 00 ℙ barrel; Malaga grapes, $5 50@7 00 ℙ keg; bananas, $2 50 firsts, $1 50@2 00; good seconds ℙ bunch; cocoanuts, $4 00@4 50 ℙ hundred; new figs, 12@14c ℙ pound; dates, 5½@6½c ℙ pound.

VEGETABLES—Celery, 40@60c doz. bunches; cabbages, $3 00@4 00 ℙ 100; onions, 50c ℙ bushel; Spanish onions, 75@90c ℙ crate; turnips, 30@40c ℙ bushel.

Groceries.

GREEN COFFEE — Fancy Rio, 20½@21½c; choice Rio, 19@20c; prime Rio, 19c; fair Rio, 17½@18½c; old Government Java, 26½c; Mara-caibo, 21½@22½c; Mocha, 26@31c; Santos, 18½@22c; Caracas coffee, 19½@21c; peaberry, Rio, 20@21½c; Laguayra, 20½@21½c.

ROASTED (in papers)—Standard brands, 22½c; high grades, 24½@26½c; old Government Java, bulk, 31@32c; Maracaibo, 26@27c; Santos, 21½@22½c; peaberry, 25½c; choice Rio, 24c; prime Rio, 21½c; good Rio, 21c; ordinary, 20c.

SPICES (whole)—Cloves, 21@25c; allspice, 9c; cassia, 8@9c; pepper, 19c; nutmeg, 70@80c.

PETROLEUM (jobbers' prices)—110° test, 7¼c; Ohio, 120°, 8½c; headlight, 150°, 9c; water white, 10½c; globe, 15c; elaine, 15c; carnadine, 11½c; royaline, 14c.

SYRUPS—Corn syrups, 23@25c; choice sugar syrup, 35@38c; prime sugar syrup, 30@35c; strictly prime, 33@35c.

N. O. MOLASSES—Fancy, old, 48c; choice, 45c; mixed, 40@42c; new crop, 33@50c.

SODA—Bi-carb in kegs, 3½@4c; bi-carb in ¼s, 5½c; bi-carb, assorted packages, 5½@6c; salsoda in kegs, 1½c; do granulated, 2c.

CANDLES—Star, full weight, 9½c; stearine, per set, 8½c; paraffine, 11½@12c.

RICE—Head, Carolina, 7@7½c; choice, 6¾@7c; prime, 5½@6¼c; Louisiana, 5@6½c.

STARCH—Pearl, 2¾c; cornstarch, 5½@7c; gloss starch, 6½@7c.

FOREIGN FRUITS—Layer raisins, $2 65; London layers, $3 10; California London layers, $2 50; Muscatels, $2 25; California Muscatels, $2 35; Valencia, new, 6¼@7c; Ondara Valencia, 7½@7½c; sultanas, 7½c; currants, new, 4½@5c; Turkey prunes, new, 4½@4¾c; French prunes, 8½@13c; Salonica prunes, in 2-lb packages, 8½c; cocoanuts, per 100, $6 00; almonds, Tarr., per ℔, 20c; do Ivica, 19c; do shelled, 40c; walnuts, nat., 12½@15c; Sicily filberts, 12c; Smyrna figs, 12½@16c; new dates, 5½@6c; Brazil nuts, 10c; pecans, 11@15c; citron, per ℔, 21@22c; lemon peel per ℔, 13@14c; orange peel, 12½c.

DRIED FRUITS—Apples, sliced, per ℔, 8c; apples, evaporated, 6¾@7½c; apricots, California, evaporated, 15@18c; peaches, evaporated, pared, 22@23c; peaches, California, evaporated, unpared, 12½@13½c; cherries, pitted, 21@22c; cherries, unpitted, 5@6c; raspberries, evaporated, 24@24½c; blackberries, 7½@8c; huckleberries, 10@12c.

SUGARS—Cubes, 7¾c; powdered, 7¾c; granulated, 7¼c; confectioners' A, 7c; standard A, 7c; soft whites, 6¼@6½c; yellow, choice, 6⅛@6½c; yellow, good, 6¼@6¼c; yellow, fair, 6⅛c; yellow, dark, 5¾c.

PICKLES—Medium, bbls (1,200), $4 75; mediums, half bbls (600), $2 85.

SALT—No. 1 ℙ bbl, 95c; No. 1 ex, ℙ bbl, $1 05; dairy, ℙ bbl, $1 20; coarse crystal, ℙ bbl, $1 20; Higgin's Eureka, 4 bbl ℙ sack, $2 80; Higgin's Eureka, 16-14 ℔ packets, $3 00.

CANNED GOODS—Standard Peaches, $1 50@1 60; 2ds, $1 30@1 35; extra peaches, $1 35@1 90; pie peaches, 90c; finest corn, $1 30@1 50; Hfd. Co. corn, 90@90c; red cherries, 90c@$1 00; lima beans, $1 10; soaked do, 55c; string do do, 75@85c; marrowfat peas, $1 10@1 15; soaked peas, 70@75c; pineapples, $1 40@1 50; Bahama do, $2 75; damson plums, 95c; green gages, $1 25; egg plums, $2 80; California pears, $2 50; do green gages, $2 00; do egg plums, $2 00; extra white cherries, $2 90; red cherries, 2 ℔s, 90