THE PENNYCOMEQUICKS

—Written for THE DISPATCH by—

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SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

CHAPTERS I. AND II.—Mrs. Sidebottom, whose maiden name was Pennycomequick, and her son Captain Pennycomequick, who had taken the name by special license, are sitting together considering ways and means. With ambitious notions and extravagant tastes she finds it difficult to live on the £400 annually, which is her income. Both she and her son are reckoning upon the possible fortune that may be theirs on the death of a wealthy relative, Jeremiah Pennycomequick (half-brother to Mrs. Sidebottom), whom they have just entertained at dinner, but who is disgusted with their overdone professions of interest in his welfare. Living with him is a niece, Salome Cusworth, one of two sisters, the elder one having left his roof to marry a French manufacturer. Mr. Pennycomequick gradually becomes drawn toward the fatherless Salome, and something of a tenderer feeling springs within his breast. A casual joke from Captain Pennycomequick with reference to Salome and himself reveals to him his heart, and, as he meets her in his own house after the Sidebottom banquet, he dare not meet her eyes.

CHAPTERS III. AND IV.—Jeremiah Pennycomequick, unable to declare his love for his niece, leaves his house at midnight, for a "composing draught of fresh night air." As he walks by the side of the canal he is alarmed by news conveyed by a man on horseback, who told him to "get back, as Holroyd Reservoir had burst." The old man enters the hut of the locksman on the embankment, the only shelter from certain death, which seems at hand.

CHAPTERS V. AND VI.—In his perilous position Jeremiah encounters the full force and volume of the flood, which bears down all obstacles, as trees, pigs, a woman's corpse with a dead child in her arms, everything impelled against the tottering walls of the hut. He is joined by another terrified man, anxious to save his life, but regretting in a half-maniacal way that he had lost his bullock, which he might have sold the day before. Jeremiah wraps round his half-naked form his own overcoat. As the hut slowly but surely crumbles away, Jeremiah reaches a tree top to which he clings. His fellow sufferer declines to leave the hut, and as the tree passes Jeremiah sees the hut dissolve like a lump of sugar in boiling water and disappear.

CHAPTER VII.—TAKING POSSESSION.

The valley of the Keld for many miles above and below Mergatroyd presented a piteous spectacle when day dawned. The water had abated, but was drained away. The fields were still submerged. Factories stood as stranded hulls amid shallow lagoons, and were inaccessible, their fires extinguished, their mechanism arrested, their stores spoiled. The houses in the "folds" were deserted, or were being cleared of their inhabitants.* From the windows of some of these houses men and women were leaning and shouting for help. They had been caught by the water, which invaded the lower story, locally called the "ha'ase," when asleep in the bedrooms overhead, and now, hungry, and cold and imprisoned, they clamored for release. Boats were scarce. Such as had been possessed by manufacturers and others had been kept by the river, and these had been broken from their moorings and carried away. Rafts were extemporized out of doors and planks; and as the water was shallow and still in the folds, they served better then keels. One old woman had got into a "peggy" tub and launched herself in it, to get stranded in the midst of a wide expanse of water, and from her vessel she screamed to be helped, and dared not venture to move lest she should upset her tub and be shot out.

Not many lives, apparently, had been lost in the parish of Mergatroyd. Mr. Pennycomequick was missing, and the man at the locks with his wife had not been seen, and their cottage was still inaccessible. But great mischief had been wrought by the water. Not only had the stores in the mills been damaged, and the machinery injured by water and grit getting into it, and boilers exploded by the shock, but also because the swirl of the torrent had disturbed the sub-soil of gravel and undermined the walls. Fissures formed with explosions like the reports of guns; one chimney that had leaned before was now so inclined and overbalanced that its fall was inevitable and was hourly expected.

All the gas jets fed from the main that descended into the valley were extinguished, and it was apparent that the rush of water had ploughed up the ground to the depths of the main, and had ruptured it. Walls that had run across the direction of the stream had been thrown over; the communication between the two sides of the valley was interrupted. It was uncertain whether the bridge was still in existence. The railway had been overflowed, and the traffic stopped. The canal banks and locks had suffered so severely that it would be useless for the barges for many months.

Tidings arrived during the day from the upper portion of the valley, and it appeared that the destruction of life and property had been greatest where the wave burst out from between the confining hills, before it had space in which to spread, and in spreading to distribute its force. Heartrending accounts came in, some true, some exaggerated, some false, but all believed.

That night of terror and ruin did not see the roll of death made up. Such catastrophes have far-reaching effects. The wet, the exposure, the shock, were sure to produce after-sickness and succeeding mortality.

With ready hospitality, the parsonage, the inns, the houses of the well-to-do, were thrown open to receive those temporarily homeless, and food, warmth and clothing were forced upon them. But such as were received felt that they could not protract their stay and burden unduly their hosts, and insisted on returning prematurely to their sodden houses, there to contract rheumatic fevers and inflammations.

Twenty years ago, the author of this story wrote an account of such a disaster in a novel, the first on which he essayed his pen. Time has rolled away, and, like the flood, has buried much; and among the things it has swept off and sunk in oblivion is that book. Probably not a dozen copies of it exist. He may now be permitted to repeat what was there written, when the impression produced by the cataclasm was fresh and vivid; and let not the rare possessor of the lost novel charge him with plagiarism if he repeats something of his former description.

Near the spot where the Keld left the hills had stood a public house called the "Horse and Jockey." The full violence of the descending wave fell on it and effaced it utterly. The innkeeper's body was never found; the child's cradle, with the child in it, had gone down the stream, kept from overbalancing by the kitchen cat, and so escaped destruction. The beer casks floated ashore some miles down, were never claimed, and were tapped and drunk dry by some roughs. The sign of Horse and Jockey came to land 20 miles away, unhurt; it was the most worthless article the house had possessed. About a mile and a half above Mergatroyd was a row of new cottages, lately erected on money borrowed from a building society. They were of staring red brick, with sandstone heads to doors and windows; the flood carried away three out of the four.

In the first lived a respectable wool-picker with wife and children, all Wesleyans. He and his wife and child were swept from life in a moment, and supplied the preacher at their chapel with a topic for his next Sunday's discourse.

In the second lived a widow, who sold "spice," that is to say, sweets, together with sundry articles in the grocery line; a mighty woman, rotund and red, with a laugh and a joke for everyone; a useful woman to mothers in their troubles, and to children with the toothache, whooping cough and other maladies. Black bottle and peppermint drops, Mother Bunch's syrup, soothing powders, porous plasters, embrocations, and heal-alls various, and of various degrees of mischievousness, were her specifics, and when the doses were nasty her lemon-drops and sugar-candy were freely given to cleanse the mouth of the taste of medicine. Now, she was gone down the river, her lollipops dissolved, her medicines dispersed. Away she had gone, floundering and spluttering, till her lungs were filled with the fluid she involuntarily imbibed, and then she sank and was caught among some sunken treesnags, and her body was afterward recovered among them.

In the third cottage resided a musical shoemaker, a man with one love, and that the love of his bass viol. A wiry, solemn man, greatly in request at all concerts, able to conduct a band, or take almost any instrument himself, but loving best—a viol.

Now, he was gone, and grit had been washed into the sacred case of the cherished instrument, ruined along with its master.

In the last cottage of the row lived a drunken, good-for-nothing fellow, who did odd jobs of work; a fellow who had driven his own wife with her bairns from the house, and lived with another woman, as intemperate as himself, and with a mouth as foul as his own. This house and those within were spared.

"Well, now," said an elder to the preacher, after the sermon at Providence Chapel next Sunday, "Ah did think thou wer't boun' to justify the ways o' Providence."

"So I would if I could," answered the preacher, "but they b'aint justifiable."

Where the folds and fields were not too deep in water, lads waded, collecting various articles that had drifted no one knew whence. Some oranges lodged in a corner were greedily secured and sucked. One man ran about displaying a laced lady's boot at the end of a walking-stick, which boot had been carried into his kitchen, and was useless unless he could discover the fellow. There was much merriment in spite of disaster. Yorkshire folk must laugh whatever happens, and jokes were bandied to and fro between those who rowed or waded and those who were prisoners in their upper chambers.

The pariahs of society were alive to their opportunities, and were descending the stream, claiming everything of value that was found as being their own lost property. In many cases their claims were allowed; in others the finder of some article, rather than surrender it to a man whom he suspected, would cast it back into the water and bid him go further to recover it.

A higher type of pariah started subscriptions for the sufferers, and took many a toll on the sums accumulated for the purpose of relieving the distress.

What had become of Mr. Pennycomequick? That was the question in every mouth in Mergatroyd. Salome knew that he had left the house just after midnight to take a walk by the canal, and the watchman had seen him a little later on the towpath. Since then he had not been seen at all. It was probable that, hearing the alarm signals, he might have taken refuge somewhere; but where? That depended on where he was when the alarm was given. If he had ascended the canal he might have made his way into Mitchell's mill; that was a hope soon dispelled, for news came that he had not been seen there. If he had descended the canal it was inconceivable that he could have escaped, as there was no place of refuge to which he could have flown.

Mrs. Sidebottom had not a shadow of doubt that Jeremiah was dead. Not dead! Fiddlesticks! Of course he was dead. She acted on this conviction. She moved into her half-brother's house. It would not do, she argued, to leave it unprotected to be pillaged by those Cusworths. A death demoralized a house. It was like the fall of a General, all order, respect for property, sense of duty, ceased. Lambert should remain at home, where he had his comforts, his own room, and his clothes. There was no necessity for his moving.

"Besides," said Mrs. Sidebottom, "I could never trust a man, especially with women. Talk of men as lords of creation! Why, they are wheedled and humbugged by women with the greatest facility. If Lambert were here, the Cusworths, the maids, would sack the house under his nose, and he perceive nothing. I know how it was when I was newly married. Then, if anything went wrong among my domestics I sent Sidebottom down the kitchen stairs to them. He returned crestfallen and penitent, convinced that he had wrongfully accused them, and that he was himself, in some obscure manner, to blame."

Mrs. Sidebottom gave orders that her brother's room should be made ready for her.

"Uncle Jeremiah's room, mother!" exclaimed Lambert, in astonishment.

"Of course," answered she. "I am not going to leave that unwatched; why, that is the focus and center of everything. What do I care if they steal the sugar, and pull some of the French plums out of the bag in the store closet? I must sit at my post, keep my hand on the strong box and the bureau."

"But suppose Uncle Jeremiah were to return?"

"He won't return. He cannot. He is drowned."

"But the body has not been recovered."

"Nor will it be; it has been washed down into the ocean."

"Rather you than I sleep in his room," said Lambert.

After a slight hesitation Mrs. Sidebottom said, in a low, confiding tone, "I have found his keys. He left them in his dress coat pocket. Now you see the necessity there is for me to be on the spot. I must have a search for the will." Then she drew a long breath, and said, "Now, Lamb, there is some chance of my heart's desire being accomplished. You will be able to drop one of your n's."

"Drop what, mother?"

"Drop one of the n's in the spelling of your name. I have never liked the double n in Pennycomequick. It will seem more distinguished to spell the name with one n."

The captain yawned and walked to the door.

"That is all one to me. I don't suppose that one n will bring me more money than two. By the way, have you written to Philip?"

"Philip!" echoed Mrs. Sidebottom. "Of course not. This is no concern of his. If he grumbles, we can say that we hoped against hope, and did not like to summon him till we were sure poor Jeremiah was no more. No, Lamb, we do not want Philip here, and if he comes he will find nothing to his advantage. Jeremiah very properly would not forgive his father, and he set us all an example, for in this nineteenth century we are all too disposed to leniency. I shall certainly not write to Philip."

"I beg your pardon," said Salome, who at this juncture appeared at the door. "Were you mentioning Mr. Philip Pennycomequick?"

"Yes, I was," answered Mrs. Sidebottom, shortly.

Salome stood in the doorway, pale, with dark hollows about her eyes, and looking worn and harassed. She had been up and about all the night and following day.

"Were you speaking about sending for Mr. Philip Pennycomequick?" she asked.

"We were mentioning him; hardly yet considering about sending for him," said Mrs. Sidebottom.

"Because," said Salome, "I have telegraphed for him. I thought he ought to be here."

CHAPTER VIII.—IN ONE COMPARTMENT.

In a second-class carriage on the Midland line sat a gentleman and a lady opposite each other. He was a tall man, and was dressed in a dark suit with a black tie. His face had that set controlled look which denotes self restraint and reserve. The lips were thin and closed, and the cast of the features was stern. The eyes, large and hazel, were the only apparently expressive features he possessed. There is nothing that so radically distinguishes those who belong to the upper and cultured classes from such as move in the lower walks of life as this restraint of the facial muscles. It is not the roughness of the hand that marks off the manual worker from the man who walks in the primrose path of ease, but the cast of face, and that is due in the latter to the constant inexorable enforcement of self-control. In the complexity of social life it is not tolerable that the face should be the index of the mind. Social intercourse demands disguise, forbids frankness, which it resents as brusquerie, and the child from infancy is taught to acquire a mastery over expression. As the delicate hand artificer has to obtain complete control over every nerve of his hand, so as to make no slurs and shakes, so also has the man admitted into the social guild to hold every muscle of his face in rigid discipline. This is specially the case with the priest and the lawyer and the doctor. Conceive what a hitch would ensue in conversation should the lady of the house allow a visitor to discern in the countenance that she was unwelcome, or for a man of taste to allow his contempt to transpire when shown by an amateur his artistic failures, or for the host to wince when an incautious guest has exposed the family skeleton! It is said that the late Lady Beaconsfield endured her finger to be jammed in the carriage door without wince or cry, and continued listening, or pretending to listen, to her husband's conversation while driving to the house. All members of the cultured classes are simply trained to smile and not change color, to listen, perhaps to sing, when pinched and crushed and trodden on and in torture. Would a priest be endured in his parish if he did not receive every insult with a smile, or a barrister gain his cause if he suffered his face to proclaim his belief in its justice, or a doctor keep his patients if his countenance revealed what he thought of their complaints?

If we turn over the Holbein collection of portraits of the Count of Henry VIII. we see among princes and nobles the same faces that we find now in farmhouses and factories. The Wars of the Roses had dissolved all restraints, and men of the first Tudor reigns were the undisciplined children of an age of domestic anarchy. But it was otherwise later. The portraits of Van Dyck and Lely show us gentlemen and ladies of perfect dignity and self-restraint.

What is also remarkable is that each age in the past seems to have had its typical cast of countenance and form of expression. The cavaliers of Charles I have their special characteristics that distinguish them as much from the courtiers of Elizabeth as from those of Charles II. With Queen Anne another phase of portraiture set in, because the faces were different, and again in the Hanoverian period how unlike were the gentlemen of the Regency from those of the first Georges! Difference in dress does not explain this difference of face. The men and women in each epoch had their distinct mode of thought, fashion in morals and manners, and the face accommodated itself to these.

And at the present day that which cleaves class from class is the mode of thought in each, the rule of association that governs intercourse in their several planes; and these affect the character of face in each, so that the classes are distinguished by their countenances as they were by ages in the past.

When collier Jack calls bargee Jim a blackguard, Jim replies with a curse on the collier's eyes, which he damns to perdition. But if collier Jack says the same thing to gentleman Percy, the latter raises his hat, bows, and passes on.

Education, if complete, does not merely sharpen the intellect and refine the manners, but it gives such a complete polish that affronts do not dint or adhere; they glide off instead, leaving no perceptible trace of impact. To the outward appearance, Christianity and culture produce an identical result, but only in outward appearance, for the former teaches the control of the emotions, whereas the latter merely forbids their expression.

The face of the gentleman who sat opposite this lady in the carriage was an intelligent, even clever face, but was somewhat hard. He looked at his companion once when he entered the carriage, hesitating whether to enter, and then glanced round to see whether there was another passenger in the compartment before he took a seat. There was at the time an elderly gentleman in the carriage, and this decided him to set his valise and rugs on the seat, and finally to take his place in the corner. If he had not seen that elderly man, with the repugnance single gentlemen so generally entertain against being shut in with a lady unattended, especially if young and pretty, he would have gone elsewhere. Where the carcase is there will the vultures gather. This is inevitable; but no sane dromedary will voluntarily cast himself into a cage with vultures.

The old gentleman left after a couple of stages, and then, for the rest of the journey, these two were inclosed together. As the man left, Philip looked out after him, with intent to descend, remove his baggage and enter the next compartment, before or behind; but saw that one was full of sailor boys romping, and the other with a family that numbered among it a wailing baby. He therefore drew back, with discontent at heart, and all his quills ready to bristle at the smallest attempt of the lady to draw him into conversation.

The train was hardly in movement before that attempt was made.

"You are quite welcome to use my footwarmer," she said.

"Thank you, my feet are not cold," was the ungracious reply.

"I have had it changed twice since I left town," she pursued, "so that it is quite hot. The porters have been remarkably civil, and the guard looks in occasionally to see that I am comfortable."

"In expectation of a tip," thought the gentleman, but he said nothing.

"The French are believed to be the politest people in the world," continued the lady, not yet discouraged, "but I must say that the English railway porter is far in advance of the French one. On a foreign line you are treated as a vagabond, on the English as a guest."

Still he said nothing. The lady cast an almost appealing glance at him. She had traveled a long way for a great many hours, and was weary of her own company. She longed for a little conversation.

"I cannot read in the train," she said plaintively, "it makes me giddy, and—I started yesterday from home."

"In-deed," said he in dislocated syllables. He quite understood that a hint had been conveyed to him, but he was an armadillo against hints.

The pretty young lady had not opened the conversation, if that can be called conversation which is only one-sided, without having observed the young man's face and satisfied herself that there was no more impropriety in her talking to one of so staid an air than if he had been a clergyman.

"What a bear this man is," she thought.

He on his side said to himself, "A forward missie! I wish I were in a smoking carriage, though I detest the smell of tobacco."

Pretty—uncommonly pretty the little lady was, with perfectly made clothes. The fit of the gown and the style of the bonnet proclaimed French make. She had lovely golden-red hair, large brown eyes, and a face of transparent clearness, with two somewhat hectic fire spots in her cheeks. Her charming little mouth was now quivering with pitiful vexation.

A quarter of an hour elapsed without another word being spoken, and the gentleman was satisfied that his companion had accepted the rebuff he had administered, when she broke forth again with a remark.

"Oh, sir! excuse my seeming rudeness, but—you have been reading the newspaper, and I am on pins and needles to hear the news from France. It is true that I have just crossed the Channel from that dear and suffering—but heroic country. I am, however, very ignorant of the news. Unfortunately our journals are not implicitly to be relied on. The French are such a patriotic people that they cannot bring themselves to write and print a word that tells of humiliation and loss to their country. It is very natural, very noble—but inconvenient. That superb Faidherbe—I do trust he has succeeded in crushing the enemy."

"He has been utterly routed."

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" the little lady was plunged into real distress. "This news was kept from me. That was why I was hurried away. I wanted to bring my nieces with me, the Demoiselles Labarte, but they clung to their mother and would not leave her. It was magnificent." Then, after a sigh, "Now, surely England will intervene."

The gentleman shook his head.

"It is cruel. Surely one sister should fly to the assistance of the other."

"The English nation is sister to the German."

"Oh, how can you say so? William the Conqueror came from France."

"From Normandy, which was not at the time and for long after considered a part of France."

Then the gentleman, feeling he had been inveigled into saying more than he intended, looked out of the window.

Presently he heard a sob. The girl was crying. He took no notice of her trouble. He had made up his mind that she was a coquette, and he was steeled against her various tricks to attract attention and enlist sympathy. He would neither smile when she laughed nor drop his mouth when she wept. His lips closed somewhat tighter, and his brows contracted slightly. He had noticed throughout the journey the petty attempts made by this girl to draw notice to herself—the shifting of her shawls, the opening and shutting of her valise, the plaintive sighs, the tapping of the impatient feet on the footwarmer. Though he had studiously kept his eyes turned from her, nothing she had done had escaped him, and all went to confirm the prejudice with which he was inclined to regard her from the moment of his entering the carriage. He rose from his place and moved to the further end of the compartment.

"I beg your pardon," said the young lady, "I trust I have not disturbed you. You must excuse me, I am unhappy."

"Quite so, and I would not for the world trespass on your grief."

"I have a husband fighting under the Tricouleur, and I am very anxious about him."

The gentleman made a slight acknowledgment with his head, which said unmistakably that he invited no further confidences.

This she accepted, and turned her face to look out of the opposite window.

At that moment the brake was put on, and sent a thrill through the carriage. Presently the train stopped. The face of the guard appeared at the window, and the little lady at once lowered the glass.

"How are you getting on, miss?"

"Very well, I thank you; but you must not call me miss; I am a married woman. I have left my husband in France fighting like a lion, and I am sent away because the Prussians are robbing and burning and murdering wherever they go. I know a lady near Nogent from whose chateau they carried off an ormulu clock." How unnecessary it was for her to enter into these details to the guard, thought the gentleman. He could not understand how a poor little heart full of trouble would long to pour itself out; how that certain natures can no more exist without sympathy than can plants without water.

"Don't you think, guard, that the English Government ought to interfere?"

"Well, ma'am, that depends on how it would affect traffic—on the Midland. Where are you going, if I may ask?"

"Mergatroyd."

"There has been a flood, and the embankment of the railway has been washed away. For a day there has not been any passing over the lines, and now we are ordered to go along uncommon leisurely."

"But oh! guard, there is, I trust, no danger."

"No, ma'am, none in the least; I'll take care that you come by no hurt. The worst that can happen is that we shall be delayed, and perhaps not be able to proceed the whole way in the same train. But rely on me, ma'am, I'll see to you."

"Oh, guard, would you—would you mind? I have here a little bottle of nice Saint Julien, and I have not been able to touch it myself. Would you mind taking it? Also, here—here, under the bottle."

She slipped some money into his hand.

The guard's red face beamed broad and benignant. He slipped the money into his waistcoat pocket, the bottle he stowed away elsewhere; then thrusting his head inside, he said confidentially: "Never fear. I'll make it all right for you, ma'am."

When the lady, who was none other than Janet, the twin sister of Salome, mentioned Mergatroyd as her destination, the eyebrows of her fellow passenger were slightly lifted. He was looking out of the opposite window to that at which she conversed with the guard. Now he knew that he would not be rid of his companion for the rest of the journey, for he also was on his way to Mergatroyd. There was but a single subject of comfort to him, that the distance to Mergatroyd was no longer great, and the time taken over it, in spite of the hint of the guard, which he discounted, could not be great either.

The short November day had closed in; and the remainder of the journey would be taken in the park. The lamps had not yet been lighted in the carriage. To the west he could see through the window the brown light of the set day, the last rays of a wintry sun arrested by factory smoke. The gentleman was uneasy. If the dromedary will not voluntarily enter the cage of the vulture, he will not remain in it in darkness with her without tremors.

"When do you think, sir, that I shall reach Mergatroyd?" asked the young lady.

"That is a question impossible for me to answer," replied the gentleman. "As you heard from your friend," he emphasized this word and threw sarcasm into his expression, "the guard, there are conditions, about which I know nothing, which will interfere with the punctuality of the train."

Then he fumbled in his pocket, drew forth an orange-colored envelope, from this took a scrap of pink paper, and by the expiring evening light read the telegraphic message in large pencil marks.

"Your uncle lost. Come at once. Salome."

Salome!—who was Salome?

He replaced the paper in the envelope, which was addressed Philip Pennycomequick, care Messrs. Pinch & Squeeze, Solicitors, Nottingham.

The message was a brief one—too brief to be intelligible.

Lost—how was Mr. Jeremiah Pennycomequick lost?

When the train drew up at a small station the young man returned to the down side, by the lady, let down the glass and called the guard.

"Here! what did you say about the flood? I have been it mentioned in the paper, but I did not understand that it had been at Mergatroyd."

"It has been in the Keld valley."

"And Mergatroyd is in that valley?"

"Where else would you have it, sir?"

"But—according to my paper the great damage was done at Holme bridge."

"Well, so it was; the Holme bridge is above Mergatroyd."

Philip Pennycomequick drew up the glass again. Now he understood. He had never been to Mergatroyd in his life, and knew nothing about its situation. He had skimmed the account of the flood in his paper, but had given most of his attention to the narrative of the war in France. It had not occurred to him to connect the "loss" of his uncle with the inundation. He had supposed the word "loss" was an euphemism for "going off his head." Elderly gentlemen do not get lost in England, least of all in one of its most densely populated districts, as if they were in the backwoods or prairies of America.

But, who sent him the telegram? He had no relative of the name of Salome. His aunt, Mrs. Sidebottom, who was now a resident, as he knew, at Mergatroyd, was named Louisa, and she was the person who, he supposed, would have wired to him if anything serious had occurred requiring his presence.

His companion was going to Mergatroyd, and probably knew people there. If he asked her whether she was aware of a person of the peculiar Christian name of Salome at that place it was possible she might inform him. But he was too reserved and proud to ask. He would not afford this flighty piece of goods an excuse for opening conversation with him. In half an hour he would be at his destination, and would then have his perplexity cleared.

The train proceeded leisurely. Philip's feet were now very cold, and he would have been grateful for the warmer, but could not now ask permission to use what he had formerly rejected.

As the train proceeded the engine whistled.

There were men working on the line at intervals coal fires were blazing and smoking in braziers. The train further slackened speed, Philip Pennycomequick could see that there was much water covering the country. The train had now entered the Valley of the Keld, and was ascending it.

What a nuisance it would be were he stopped, and obliged to tarry for some hours till the road was repaired, tarry in cold and darkness, without a lamp in his carriage, caged in with that pretty, coquettish, dangerous minx, and with no third party present to serve as his protector.

The train came to a standstill. The young lady was uneasy. She lowered the glass and leaned out; and looked along the line at the flaming fires, the half-illumined navvies, the steam trailing away and mingling with the smoke, the fog that gathered over the inundated fields. A raw wind blew in at the open window.

Then up came the guard, sharply turned the handle and threw open the door. "Everyone get out. The train can go no further."

All the passengers were obliged to descend, dragging with them their rugs and bags, their cloaks, umbrellas, novels, buns and oranges—all the piles of impedimenta with which travelers encumber themselves on a journey, trusting to the prompt assistance of mercenary porters.

But on this night, away from any station, there were no porters. The descent from the carriage was difficult and dangerous. It was like clambering down a ladder of which some of the rungs were broken. It was rendered doubly difficult by the darkness in which it had to be effected, and the difficulty was quadrupled by the passengers having to scramble down burdened with their effects. It was not accordingly performed in silence, but with screams from women who lost their footing, and curses and abuses launched against the Midland from the men.

Mr. Philip was obliged by common humanity to assist the young lady out of the carriage, and to collect and help to carry her manifold goods; for the civil guard was too deeply engaged to attend to her. He had received his fee, and was, therefore, naturally lavishing his attentions on others, in an expectant mood.

Mr. Philip Pennycomequick somewhat ungraciously advised the companion forced on his protection to follow him. He engaged to see her across the dangerous piece of road and return for those of her wraps and parcels which he and she were together unable to transport to the train awaiting them beyond the faulty portion of the line.

The walk was most uncomfortable. It was properly not a walk but a continuous stumble. To step in the dark from sleeper to sleeper was not easy, and the flicker of the coal fires dazzled and confused rather than assisted the sight. The wind, moreover, carried the dense smoke in volumes across the line, suddenly enveloping and half stifling, but wholly blinding for the moment the unhappy, bewildered flounderers who passed through it. In front glared the two red lights of an engine that waited with carriages to receive the dislodged passengers.

"You must take my arm," said Mr. Philip to his companion. "This is really dreadful. One old lady has, I believe, dislocated her ankle. I hope she will make a claim on the company."

"Oh, dear. And Salome!—what will she say?"

"Salome?"

"Yes—my sister, my twin sister."

When Philip Pennycomequick did finally reach his destination, it was with a mind than prejudged Salome, and was prejudiced against her.

{To be continued next Monday.}

*For the enlightenment of the uninitiated it will be as well to describe a Fold. About some mills are yards, and the inclosing walls of these yards form the backs of cottages facing inward on the mill, which are occupied by operatives working in the factory.

A BUSINESS REVIEW.

The Trade of the Past Week Devoid of Striking Features.

PRODUCE AND CEREAL MARKETS

Overstocked With Stuff, and Sellers at the Mercy of Buyers.

WESTPHALIA HAMS IN PITTSBURG.

OFFICE OF PITTSBURG DISPATCH, SATURDAY, February 23, 1889.

The trade features of the week show nothing marked. Certainly there have appeared no indications of a revival. The week winding up with a holiday and the tightest weather of the season, has made a record for business transactions, if anything worse than the few quiet weeks which preceded it. In the line of cereals, receipts have been larger than for a month past, and sales lighter at the Grain Exchange on call. Operators in grain and hay who speak cheerfully of the situation are few. Trade gives few signs of life. Sellers are at the mercy of buyers on account of the over-dose of stuff. Oats appear to be the weakest factor of cereal markets, and good milling wheat the strongest. While all else has been gravitating toward lower prices the past week, wheat and flour tend upward. There has been a more active movement in fancy patent flour the past week than at any time since the collapse of the wheat corner in the fall. Produce dealers report an improvement for February over January in the egg and butter trade.

Views of a Jobber.

A leading jobber in these lines said to-day that his sales were larger for Thursday and Friday than for any two days this month.

There is an unlooked-for quietness in cheese. With a stock unusually light and the time fully here when the ante-Lenten activity should set in, jobbers have been disappointed over the quietness which still prevails. Said a representative of the principal jobbing firm of the city: "Our trade was never as good as all last summer and fall. November was one of the best months we ever had. December showed a falling off but our sales were $5,000 and upward, more than the average for that month of the year.

January showed a fall below the average as December was above it, and the present month has done little better. Taking the two closing months of the old year with their great activity, and they have been almost offset by the two opening months of this year."

"How do you account for recent quietness in the cheese trade?" was asked.

"It is not easy to account for these extreme fluctuations in demand for such a staple article as cheese. In my view, the bad country roads has had not a little to do with light demand. The country and village stores have been visited much less than in ordinary winters by the farmer. He has not been getting satisfactory prices for his products because of the great abundance of everything. Having little extra cash, and roads being wretched everywhere, the farmer has stayed more at home than usual and lived on his own products, to the loss of tradesmen."

Fruits and Vegetables.

In the line of fruits and vegetables the trade situation has not materially changed from a week ago. Some dealers report a better demand and firmer prices for choice apples, as those which were stocked up for the winter have for the most part either rotted or been pushed on to markets at nominal prices. The loss by rot has been equal to one third, and when it is taken into consideration that apples bring no better prices than at the time of ingathering of fruits, it is plain that they have have not been a good commodity for the speculator this season. Some who entered heavily in this line said to-day to THE DISPATCH representative that they would only be too glad to come out even, but had little hopes of doing so.

At a Liberty street commission house the writer was permitted a day or two ago to have his first sight of Westphalia hams. This article of commerce has been introduced for the first time this winter in any considerable quantity to the Pittsburg public. The Westphalia ham is used in its raw state as chipped beef in some of our fancy restaurants, and sells at 25½c per pound. The one jobber who handles it reports that a good trade has sprung up in the past few months.

A Monster Smokehouse.

In connection with this new article of commerce, we append a characteristic note from Carlyle's "Life of Frederick the Great" concerning Westphalia, as it was a couple of centuries ago. Carlyle quotes from an old-time book of travels:

"No inns there except of the naturally savage sort. A man is very happy if he finds clean straw to sleep on. He must be content to have the cows, swine and poultry for his fellow-lodgers, and to go in at the same passage that the smoke comes out at, for there's no other vent for it but the door, which makes foreigners commonly say that the people of Westphalia enter their houses by the chimney. This is the reason why their beef and hams are so finely prepared and ripened, for the fireplace being backward, the smoke must spread over all the house before it gets to the door, which makes everything within of a russet or sable color, not excepting the hands and faces of the meaner sort."

MARKETS BY WIRE.

May Wheat Lower and July Higher—Corn Steady and Unchanged—Oats Easier—Hay Products Firm, With Prices Moving Upward.

CHICAGO—Wheat ruled quiet. There was a noticeable lack of outside orders, and local trading was also of a restricted character. The market opened up stronger and prices were 1@1½c higher than the closing figures Thursday, influenced by the change to severe cold weather, but the advance was met with pretty fair offerings, under which the market became weak, and after numerous small fluctuations gradually touched a lower point with each reaction, until a decline of 1½c was scored on the top prices of the day, and closed about ¼c lower for May than the closing figures Thursday and ½c higher for July. There was nothing specially in outside news to influence the market.

Transactions in corn were chiefly confined to room operators. The market opened at Thursday's closing figures and gradually declined ¼c, reacted ½@¾c, and ruled steady, closing about the same as Thursday.

Oats were dull and easier. Prices for May receded ⅛@¼c and closed quiet.

A quiet and firm feeling prevailed in hog products and prices averaged higher in the leading articles. Prices were advanced early in the day owing to fair buying on the part of "shorts," but the improvement was not supported and about the middle of the session the advance was lost. Later, prices rallied to the outside, but settled back again to medium figures and closed quiet.

The leading futures ranged as follows:

WHEAT—No. 2 March, $1 08⅝@1 08¾@1 06⅝@1 06¾. May, $1 10¼@1 10⅜@1 09¼@1 09⅜; July, $1 08⅝@1 05⅜@1 04⅝@1 04¾.

CORN—No. 2, March, 34⅝@34½c; April, 35¼@35¼c; May, 35⅜@35⅜@35⅛@35½c.

OATS—No. 2, March, 25¼; May, 27¼@27½c; June, 27c.

MESS PORK, per bbl.—March, $11 17½; May, $11 32½@11 40@11 22½@11 32½; June, $11 40@11 32½@11 40.

LARD, per 100 lbs.—March, $6 80@6 77½@6 77½; May, $6 90@6 92½@6 85@6 90; June, 6 92½@6 95@6 90@6 95.

SHORT RIBS, per 100 lbs.—March, $5 90@5 82½@5 90; May, $6 05@6 10@6 00@6 07½; June, $6 07½@6 15@6 07½@6 12½.

Cash quotations were as follows: Flour firm and unchanged; No. 2 spring wheat, $1 06@1 06½c; No. 3 spring wheat, 99@97c. No. 2 red, $1 06@1 06½; No. 2 corn, 34½c; No. 2 oats, 25½c. No. 2 rye, 48½c; No. 2 barley, nominal. No. 1 flaxseed, $1 56. Mess pork, per barrel, $11 15@11 20. Lard, per 100 lbs, $6 75@6 77½. Short ribs sides (loose), $5 85@5 95; dry salted shoulders (boxed), $5 25@5 37½; short clear sides (boxed), $6 12½@6 25½. Sugars, cut loaf, unchanged. Receipts—Flour, 16,000 barrels; wheat, 50,000 bushels; corn, 190,000 bushels; oats, 161,000 bushels; rye, 6,000 bushels; barley, 106,000 bushels. Shipments—Flour, 17,000, barrels; wheat, 46,000 bushels; corn, 282,000 bushels; oats, 161,000 bushels; rye, 6,000 bushels; barley, 69,000 bushels.

On the Produce Exchange to-day the butter market was steady and unchanged. Eggs steady at 13c.

NEW YORK—Flour strong and quiet. Wheat—Spot firmer with a fair milling demand; options ⅛@¼c higher and firmer. Barley quiet at 75@85c. Corn—Spot firmer and moderately active; options ½@¾c lower. Oats—Spot dull and steady; options neglected. Hay steady and quiet; shipping, 65@70c; good to choice, 80c. Coffee—Options opened firm at 15@20 points up; closed steady at 15@20 points above Thursday; sales, 46,000 bags, including February, at 16.25c; March, 16.40@16.45c; April, 16.55@16.60c; May, 16.35@16.45c; June, 16.50@16.60c; July, 16.55@16.60c; August, 16.70@16.75c; September, 16.85@16.95c; October, 16.85@17.00c; November, 16.90c; December, 16.90@17.00c. Spot Rio stronger and quiet; fair cargoes, 17½c. Sugar—Raw strong; fair refining, 4 13-16c; centrifugals, 96° test, 5 9-16c; refined steady and quiet. Molasses—Foreign firm; New Orleans dull. Rice steady and quiet; domestic, 4½@6½c; Japan, 4½c. Cottonseed oil steadier; crude, prime, 40c; yellow, 48c. Tallow quiet and steady; city, 6⅛c. Rosin quiet and firm; strained, common to good, $1 05@1 12½. Turpentine steady. Eggs firmer; Western, 14½@15½c; receipts, 5,655 packages. Pork firm; old mess, $12 00; new mess, $12 50@12 75; extra prime, $12 00@12 25. Cutmeats quiet; pickled shoulders, 5⅝@5¾c; do hams, 9½@10c. Middles firm; short clear, $6 40. Lard stronger and dull; sales western steam, $7 20; city, $6 80; March, $7 19; April, $7 19; May, $7 20; June, $7 21; July, $7 23; August, $7 25; September, $7 28. Butter weak and quiet; Western dairy, 13@20c; do creamery, 16@28c; Elgins, 30@31c. Cheese quiet and easy; Western, 10½@11½c.

ST. LOUIS—Flour quiet and unchanged. Wheat better. Cold weather and advances at all other points caused higher opening, but there was more for sale than was wanted, and the price eased off at once: subsequently the feeling was unsettled and trading light, weakening again late, but closing ½@¾c above Thursday; No. 2 red cash, 97½c asked; May, 99½c @$1 00¼c, closing at 99¾c; July, 88⅝@87c, closing at 88⅝@88½c; August closing at 86c nominal. Corn firm; No. 2 mixed, cash, 27½c; March, 27½c, closing at 27½c; April, 29¾c; May, 30⅝@30½c, closing at 30½c asked; June, 31½c; July, 32½c; August, 33c, closing at 32½c bid. Oats quiet; No. 2 cash, 25c; May, 27⅜@27½c. Rye, 42c bid. Barley—Nothing doing. Flaxseed, $1 50. Provisions firmer.

CINCINNATI—Flour easy. Wheat weaker; No. 2 red, 97c; receipts, 1,500 bushels; shipments, 500 bushels. Corn barely steady; No. 2 mixed, 33c. Oats easy; No. 2 mixed, 23c. Rye quiet; No. 2, 53c. Pork quiet at $11 50. Lard stronger at $6 65. Bulkmeats and bacon stronger. Butter steady. Eggs, supply abundant at