

wife, then, he argued, and he had faith that her love would be strong enough to bind her to him. Her father could not take her from him, and he should be sure of her. And he gave them to understand that he was rich, and being a stranger in the State, no one was able to contradict him, and his accepting a clerkship in a store was cited as a proof of his energy and industry, and a bright example for other young men of wealth to follow. Well, what do you suppose this fellow did at last?"

"I—I don't know," she stammered, confused by his steady gaze.

"No, and you would never guess.—When the wedding-day was fixed, and this beautiful girl already to bestow herself upon him, he left the country and fled like a second Cain."

"Fled!" she gasped, turning deadly pale, and trembling from head to foot.

He looked a little surprised at her emotion, but resumed:

"Yes, he fled out of the country, and staid three years, and people believed that in some inexplicable way he dropped out of existence. He justified himself for taking this strange step, on the ground that it was better than deceiving them until the girl was his wife, and it was too late for her to escape the disgrace he knew they would call it. He was too weak to face the anger of her father and brother, and so he took this coward's way. Well, after three years he came back, for the face of this girl haunted him perpetually, and perhaps he had some sort of vague hope that fate might yet bring them together. He employed a man, a stranger to himself, to travel through the Eastern States and inquire concerning this family. The man returned with the news that the young lady had lately married a man twice her years, but possessed of great wealth. And so the dream faded, and he set himself to the acquirement of wealth, and succeeded, but still through all the long years there was a tenderness in his heart for this woman, and no other could ever take the place she had once occupied, and he fancied none other ever could. But one day he met a woman whom he loved instantly.—He did not know it himself, but he did. He saw her day after day and the truth at last dawned upon him that with all a man's most passionate love he loved this woman. But he resolved never to deceive, in the slightest thing, another woman whom he loved. She should know all his past weakness and duplicity, as well as the fact of his previous attachment. There, the story is told; do you think if he came to this woman and told her his love in a few bold, honest words, that she could forgive and overlook his past errors, provided she loved him?"

"I think she could—yes," she replied, softly, a faint bloom stealing into her cheeks.

"Could you do it, Mrs. Dinsmore?" bending over her till his breath swept her cheek, and looking eagerly into the downcast face.

"Yes, Lancelot, I think I could," she replied, lifting her eyes suddenly to his face.

"My God! Letty!" he gasped, dropping her hand, and turning deadly white.

Mrs. Dinsmore had no water, no volatile salts and something must be done to restore him immediately. She adopted a novel remedy; she put one little soft hand about his neck and kissed him on the lips! I am happy to record the complete success of the experiment. Mr. Montford revived with astonishing suddenness, apparently strongly impressed with the truth of the old adage, that "one good turn deserves another," though certainly he could not have thought the pretty, blushing face held against his breast either cold or unconscious.

"You have not known me all this time, love?" he asked, a moment after, "in spite of my changed name, too?"

"No; I only knew by the story, but I have been startled sometimes by some chance expression or tone, and—I loved you for them."

"My sweet Letty!"

"But Lancelot," she said, gently, "I should never have given you up. It was very hard for me to bear, and life had little charm for me then. My father urged me to marry Mr. Dinsmore, and I finally consented, because I believed you dead, and I had little choice among men."

"It is a wonder I was not killed for I slipped from a freight car while the train was almost at full speed. I think I was at that time, and for weeks afterwards, nearly, if not quite insane. And Letty, darling, I am not quite sure I am in my right mind now," he added, smiling.

"Nor I either," she retorted, trying to free herself from his arms.

"Ah well," he laughed, "it's a pleas-

ant delirium, and I hope it will last forever. Suppose, though, you try the remedy which restored me just now," he added, wickedly.

"But of course she did not."

A Singular Story.

A YOUNG man working on the farm of Gen. Davis, in West Virginia, tells the following remarkable story. We give it in his own words, as near as we can recollect it:

"I was plowing on Gen. Davis' farm in 1856," he said, "unconscious of being on insecure ground, when suddenly the earth seemed to fall beneath me. I saw the horses descending, but was too frightened to let go the plow handles. The pitch of the horses with the earth gave my fall an impetus, and somehow I caught the name of one of them in my fall, and so held on instinctively. What I thought when falling I can hardly tell. At any rate, I did some rapid thinking. When I landed I fell on the horse whose mane I had hold of, and although the horse was instantly killed I was merely stunned and confused. On recovering myself I looked up and the hole through which I had fallen looked so small I concluded I must have fallen fully 150 feet. My first thought was to call for aid, but I instantly recalled the fact that I was at least a mile from Gen. Davis' house, and that there was not the remotest possibility that any one had seen my descent into the earth.

"It was then early in the morning, and as I had brought out my dinner with me, no one would miss me before nightfall. While going over these facts in my own mind, I heard the rush of water near at hand, and it occurred to me that I must have fallen upon the bed of Sinking creek, which, as you know falls into the earth above Frankfort, and does not come out but once till it reaches the banks of the Sweetbrier river. To say where I was, or to attempt to follow the subterranean passage, was the next question. I sometimes took the team to my own tenant stables, and therefore might not be missed for days; so I determined to follow the stream. I waded in it, and, judging of its depth of from one to three feet, I concluded it must be the identical Sinking creek spoken of. Leaving my dead companions behind me, I followed the stream. For the most part I had pretty easy work of it, but sometimes I came to a deep place, where I was forced to swim for a considerable distance; again was often precipitated headlong into the deep water by the precipitous nature of the rocky bed of the stream.

"Talk about darkness of the grave!—The grave itself could not have been more impalpably dark than the passage I was following. The occasional rippling of the waters was an inexpressibly dear sound to my ears. Day and night were the same to me. At last, wearied with my effort, I laid down on a comparatively dry rock to rest, and must have slept for hours. When I awoke again I took to the water, carefully ascertaining which way it ran, so as not to lose labor by retracing my steps. It seemed to me that the further I went the more difficult my progress became. When I had gone perhaps a mile, I came to a place where the archway narrowed so much that I had to crawl on my hands and knees in the water.

"Here was a dilemma I had not looked for. I tried either bank of the river, but found no passage. I could swim under water for a considerable distance, but the distance before me was unknown, and I halted long before making the dangerous venture. At last I concluded that my fate was equally doubtful in returning as in proceeding, and plunged boldly into the current, and soon found that it was so swift in its confined passage that I only needed to hold my breath to go through. In the course of twenty or thirty feet, I again got my head above water, and took a long breathing spell. Again the archway above seemed to enlarge and the bed of the stream became more even.—I sped along comparatively rapidly, keeping my hands outstretched to prevent my running against the jagged rocks. Wearied out, I again laid down and slept soundly in my wet clothes.

"On awakening, I pursued my course down the subterranean stream, and at last in the long distance ahead saw a glimmer that looked very bright in the darkness I was then shut in. Nearing this, I found that it did not increase in brightness; and when I had gone perhaps a mile, I came to another place where my path narrowed to the very tunnel filled by the water. My case was now become more desperate. I could not possibly re-

trace my steps, so I submitted myself to the current, and was immeasurably overjoyed to find myself rapidly swept into daylight. Exhausted and half-drowned, I crept out upon the land, and was not long in recognizing the objects around me. I had come into the Greenbrier river, as I knew from the familiar look of Gen. Davis' mill on the bank. On reaching home I found I had been over forty-eight hours in making my perilous journey of six miles underground. The hole where this man went through is now fenced round. On listening one can plainly hear the rush of water below, and a stone thrown down will sometimes be heard to splash in the stream."—*Western Paper.*

A Bridal Episode.

Although the first recorded miracle in the New Testament was the converting of water into wine at a marriage ceremony, it is nevertheless not always safe to imbibe, even at a wedding, unless you know something of the vintage. Mistakes will happen, as was the case not long since with the Rev. Dr. —, of Newburyport, who was called down from his chamber to marry a couple. The hour was late, and the minister's wife, who had retired for the night, did not rise to witness the ceremony, but gave her husband particular directions for the entertainment of the wedding guests. "Don't forget and pass the cake and wine, doctor," said she. "The cake is in the corner cupboard, and you'll find the wine on the third right-hand shelf in the sideboard."

The doctor promised obedience, and putting on his garments, went down to perform the ceremony. When he returned to his chamber, half an hour later, he found his wife sitting up in bed, with an anxious expression on her face.

"Doctor," she cried, "did you give them any wine?"

"Certainly, my dear, just as you told me."

"Not from the decanter on the third shelf of the sideboard?"

"That is exactly where you directed me to find it, wife."

"Dear! dear! Did they drink much of it?"

"Why, yes, they emptied their glasses."

"What shall we do? Doctor, I made a mistake—it was the peccac wine you gave them. Oh, how sick they must be! Do, dear, put on your cloak and go right after them—they can't have gone far."

The minister found his bridal party at the corner of the next street. What made you drink the wine?" he asked. "Couldn't you tell by the taste that there was something wrong about it?"

The bridegroom answered, between his qualms, "She whispered to me that it tasted dreadful queer, but I told her 'twas because we was gotten married."

An Acquaintance he did not Have.

AMONG the people who attended the Philadelphia market the other afternoon, was a citizen of West Jersey.—He brought a stock of eggs and butter. In a big coop in the rear-most part of his wagon he had a splendid peacock, whose tail spread out, beautiful even to gorgeousness, like the tail of a lady's dress. An Irishman passing he observed the splendid plumage of the bird, and asked its price.

"Thee can have it for fifteen dollars," was the reply of the owner, whose garb indicated him as a member of the Society of Friends.

"That's a good price," was the interrogative remark of the Celt, as he smoothed the ample tail of the feathered biped.

"There are plenty of people who will give that for him," was the placid and very true rejoinder.

The Celt surveyed the bird, admired his proportions, but still endeavored to cheapen him.

"Mister," said he, at last, to the grave gentlemen who held the bird for sale, "Mister people say that these birds have a very bad voice."

"I have nothing to say about their voices," was the quiet reply. "If thee wants the fowl thee can take it; if thee does not, its voice does not make any matter to thee."

"But," says the Celt, "don't them birds holler like the devil?"

"Friend," was the placid reply, "thee probably in that respect has an advantage over me. Thee evidently has acquaintances that I have not. If thee thinks that the scream of this bird is like to that of thy friend, whom thee has named, I, in my ignorance, will not presume to contradict thee."

The Mysterious Joker.

NOT LONG since the writer was sitting, one evening, in a country store not far from Chicago. There was the usual crowd of town and country folks loafing around, sitting on nail kegs, and on the counter, smoking villainous tobacco, and expectorating in every direction.

And then there entered a sedate individual, with a countenance ministerial in its gravity, and with a short coat in which were side pockets. He leaned over the counter, called for some article, and gave his whole soul to its examination.

Then entered another person* also a stranger. He was young sprightly and jolly. His countenance was brimming with humor. He greeted the crowd with a jolly "How are you, hosses?" in a way that, at once prepossessed every haw-buck in his favor.

He was restless as a monkey. First he begged a quid. Then he took the plug and jack-knife and tossed them over and under, catching and throwing them with one hand. Then he made a smutty remark or two; and, by this time, he was the observed of all the crowd.

Except one. The ministerial gentleman who was leaning over the counter gave no sign. He never once looked around.

The jolly youth caught sight of the grave man, and gazed at him with a quizzical expression. Then he picked up a piece of paper, in a pantomime, pinned it on the tail of the grave man's coat. Whereat, there was much expressed horse-laughing in the crowd.

And now the young joker spied a little piece of white string hanging from the pocket of the other. Approaching him on tip-toe, with many a wink to the rustics, he took hold of the string and carefully drew it forth. With the same little parcel wrapped in twine.

Swiftly the joker unwound the twine and a covering of white paper. Inside was a common business card folded together through the middle. Within it laid a three-cent stamp. This the joker with a grin, handed to a by-stander, then quickly refolded the little parcel, and replaced it in the other's pocket.

And now the joke was getting so broad and funny that many of the hilarious spectators were tickled nigh into convulsions. Finally attracted by the laughter the grave man looked around. He was confused. He found himself the centre of all eyes. He thrust his hands behind him. He glanced over his person.—Then he put his hands in his pockets, and in withdrawing them, there came out—quite accidentally of course—the little parcel. It fell to the floor. He stooped and picked it up.

"What you got done up so well?" inquired the joker with a smile at his grinning auditory.

"O, nothing," answered Gravity, confusedly.

"Nothing? A heap of pains you take to wrap up nothing?"

"Well, then, if you must know, I have got a three-cent silver piece in there, which I wrapped up for my little boy."

"A three-cent piece! Haw! haw! haw!" said the joker, and "Haw! haw! haw!" said the crowd.

"Yes, sir, a three-cent piece, upon my honor," and he was about to put it back in his pocket.

"Hold on, mister," said the other, "you can't play that, you know! I'll just bet my life, you haint got any three-cent piece in that parcel."

"Young man, you're a fool, and I'll just teach you a lesson. I don't bet as a general thing, but I'll bet you \$100 that there is a three-cent piece in that paper."

"I'm your man," said the joker. He pulled out his wallet and counted out \$15. "See here," said he, "I've only got \$15; I'll just bet you that."

"An hundred dollars, or nothing," said the other, as he laid out five \$20 bills on the counter.

The joker was nonplussed. Then a bright idea struck him. He turned to the crowd. "Say, boys, let's pool in and make up a hundred, and then divide.—Serve him right to beat him."

The boys pulled their pocket books.—A five here and a ten there soon swelled the \$15 to \$100. The joker held the stakes. And then the serious man undid the parcel. He opened the folded card. One corner of it was split, and within the split was a three-cent piece.

The joker handed over the stakes, and left in disgust. A moment later, the others followed him.

And a solemnity like unto that of a

sad funeral fell upon the faces of the assembly.

For several days after, two gentlemen from Chicago enjoyed themselves. They belonged to the order of confidence men, and they were in funds. They had just returned from a six hour's trip into the country.

A Sharp Trade.

A CONNECTICUT broom-peddler—a shrewd chap, from over among the steady habits, wooden-clocks, school-masters and other fixins—drove through the streets of Providence, heavily laden with corn brooms. He called at several stores and offered his load, or ever so small a portion of it; but when he wanted the cash and nothing else in payment they had uniformly given him to understand that they had brooms enough and that he might go further. At length he drove up to a wholesale store on the west side and offered his wares.

"Well, I want the brooms badly enough," said the merchant, "but what will you take in pay?"

This was a poser. The peddler was aching to get rid of his brooms; but he would sooner sell a single broom for cash than the whole load for any other article—especially that he could not dispose of as readily as he could of brooms. After a moments hesitation, however, he screwed up his courage to the sticking point—it required some courage, and after having lost his chance of selling his load half a dozen times by a similar answer—and frankly told the merchant he must have the cash. Of course the merchant protested that cash was scarce, and that he must purchase, if purchase at all, with what he had in his store to pay with.—He really wanted the brooms, and he did not hesitate to say so; but the times were hard, and he had notes to pay, and had goods that he must dispose of.

Finally he said he would put the goods at the cost price, for the sake of trading, and would take the whole load of brooms which the pedlar had labored so unsuccessfully at the other stores to dispose of.

"So unload the brooms," said he to the man from Connecticut, "and select any article from my store, and you shall have them at cost price."

The peddler scratched his head. There was an idea there, as the sequel will show.

"I tell what it is," he answered at last, "just say them terms for half the load and cash for t'other half, and I'm your man. Blowed if I don't sell out, if Connecticut sinks, with all her broom stuff, the next minute."

The merchant hesitated a moment but finally concluded the chance a good one. He would be getting half the brooms for something that would sell as readily; as for the cost price, it was an easy gammon in regard to it. The bargain was struck, the brooms were brought in, and the cash for half of them paid over.

"Now, what will you have for the remainder of your bill?" asked the merchant.

The peddler scratched his head again, and this time more vigorously. He walked the floor, whistled and drummed with his fingers on the head of a barrel. By-and-by this reply came—slowly, deliberately and emphatically:

"You Providence fellers are cute; you sell at cost, pretty much all of you, and make much money. I don't see how it's done. Now I don't know about your goods, barin' one article, and ef I take anything else I may be cheated. So, seein' as 'twont make any odds with you, I guess I'll take brooms. I know them like a book, and can swear to just what you paid for them."

And so saying, the peddler commenced reloading his brooms, and having deposited half of his former load, jumped on his cart with a regular Connecticut grin, and, leaving the merchant cursing his imprudence and his own stupidity, drove off in search of another customer.

Once upon a time, during a debate in the United States House of Representatives, on a bill for increasing the number of hospitals, one of the Western members arose and observed:

"Mr. Speaker—My opinion is that the generality of mankind—in general, are disposed to take advantage of the generality of mankind—in general."

"Sit down, sit down," whispered the Colonel, who sat near him, "you are coming out at the same hole you went in at."

Very rich gold and silver discoveries have been made on the Place river, Vancouver's Island, and the people are all leaving the lower part of the country for the new El Dorado.