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DECEMBER.

BY WILLIAM MOHRER.

Dead, lonely night, and all streets quiet now—
Thin o'er the moon the hindmost cloud
swims past
Of that great rack that brought us up the
snow;
On earth strange shadows o'er the snow are
cast;
Pale stars, bright moon, swift cloud, make
heaven so vast,
That earth left silent by the wind of night
Seems shrunken 'neath the gray unnamed light.

Ah! through the hush the looked-for midnight
clangs
And then, 'er' while its last stroke's solemn
dum
In the cold air by unlit windows hangs,
Out break the bells above the year foredone,
Change, kindness lost, love left, unloved,
alone;
Till their despairing sweetest makes thee
deem
Thou once wert loved, if but amidst a
dream.

O thou, who clingest still to life and love,
Thou' art not of God, no God, thou
mayest discern
Though ought that is, thine utmost woe can
move,
Though no soul knows wherewith thine
heart doth yearn
Yet, since thy weary lips no curse can learn,
Hast no least thing thou lovest to once away,
Since yet perchance thine eyes shall see the
day.

—Old and New.

A TERRIBLE NIGHT.

It was four o'clock on an afternoon in the month of December, 18—, and business for the day being over, the porter for the bank was closing the doors of that establishment. As I was accountant at the bank, I was busily engaged in verifying the posting of the ledgers, while the tellers were hard at work counting the cash in the tills, and the clerks at the various books and letters. When I had finished an abstract I was making from some of the ledgers, I took it into the manager's room. As I entered, the manager was just buttoning his coat to depart.

"I have done the abstract of profit and loss on bills for the last month," said I, placing the paper on his table, "and I find the result more satisfactory than you expected."

"I am very glad of it; the directors are particularly anxious to improve this branch of the business. I will take this abstract with me, and look it over this evening," said he, putting it in his breast pocket. If there is nothing very urgent to do in the office, I should like you to come up and dine with me this evening; in fact, I have some news for you, which you will find as acceptable as, I think, it will be unexpected."

As I had no pressing reason for doing any more work that afternoon, I accepted the manager's invitation; the more so as he was a very genial man, and much of my advancement in the bank was due to his kindly exertions on my behalf. We both walked forth into the main street. It was a miserable night; the rain and sleet came down at a sharp angle, borne on a piercing wind, and under foot was a half-frozen mixture of mud and snow, which struck a cold chill through one's feet. We soon found a cab, and a few minutes saw us in the porch of Mr. Wilmot's house, and once more in his cosy snugery. As soon as we were seated, Mr. Wilmot commenced to communicate to me the news of which he had spoken. It is unnecessary to detail our conversation, the sum of which was, that he had very good reason to believe that I was on the point of being promoted to a managership. To make this comprehensible to the reader, it is necessary to explain something of the organization of the bank in which I held the post of accountant. The particular office in which I was employed was a branch bank, forming part of a great joint-stock bank, having its head office in London, and branches in various provincial towns. The manager of one of our branches was about to retire on a pension, and the board had that day communicated to Mr. Wilmot their intention—on certain conditions—of appointing me to the post at their disposal. Of course, this was joyful news to me, yet it seemed rather to spoil my appetite for my dinner than to improve it, and when we went into the dining-room Mrs. Wilmot rallied me on my seeming rather absent.

"Oh!" said her husband, "I have just been telling him some news that may considerably affect his career in the bank, and I suppose he is ruminating over it."

"But I thought Mr. Danby was always in the good graces of the directors. I hope no change has taken place?" said Mrs. Wilmot.

"None whatever," said Mr. Wilmot. "Come, Danby, you ought to look more cheerful than ever; but I can well understand that the prospect of attaining the goal of your ambition is too overpowering to induce sprightliness."

"I can assure you," said I, "that the prospect is very gratifying, and I cannot tell why I should look so dull, for I feel so joyful that I am, in fact, quite confused. To-morrow I shall feel all right, no doubt."

"But," said Mrs. Wilmot, "is there some great secret about Mr. Danby's prospects?"

"Well, I will tell you all that I know about it, but that is not much, as the whole transaction was very mysterious, and it has never yet been cleared up. The robbery, for such it undoubtedly was, took place some three years and a half ago, and therefore about six months before you came to this branch. It happened in this way: We had a dinner party one evening, and my wife, when dressing, took some jewelry out of her case, which I brought from my private safe for that purpose. This case she left on her dressing-table, and when we went out to our bed-room, after our guests had gone, it was nowhere to be found. We had a servant who was to leave the next day, the cause of her dismissal being her habit of going out without permission and keeping late hours. On inquiry, I found that this girl had been away from the house for about two hours during the time we were with our guests. This circumstance, coupled with others, excited my suspicions so far that I sent for the superintendent of police, but after a long and tedious inquiry, it was impossible to obtain any tangible evidence against her. Among our guests on the evening in question, was a gentleman named Garstang, who filed the post of accountant in the bank here, but who was on the eve of his departure to take the managership at N—. My wife was always firmly impressed with the idea that Garstang was connected with the disappearance of her jewels, but of course I looked upon such a suspicion as simply preposterous; in fact, I never thought of it until some time after he had departed before the rest of the company upon what she thought an insufficient plea."

"Whether I wrong him or not I cannot tell, and may never know," said Mrs. Wilmot, "but I have always felt an irresistible conviction that my impression was right. You know, Stephen, that I expressed a dislike to him when first I saw him. There was something about the expression of his features that was very unpleasant."

"That is my strongest reason for distrusting your conviction, my dear. I consider that it was the result of the bad impression he made upon you at first, indefinite at starting, but suddenly reduced to shape by the circumstances of the robbery. If, however, you will consider Mr. Garstang's prospects at that very time, you must see that it would be absurd to suppose for a moment that he could be guilty of such an egregious act of folly—an act the discovery of which would have hurled him from a most enviable position to a felon's cell. Such a suspicion is unjust and dangerous, and I should tremble if I thought any one could get an inkling of it. I need not impress upon you the necessity of silence upon so delicate a subject, and, in case of your asking me, turning to me, 'you fully understand that what you have heard is under the seal of friendship, and must never be even whispered to your own ears.'"

I signified my firm intention of never breathing a word on this dangerous subject and turned the conversation to more ordinary matters.

We had just commenced dessert, when a telegram was brought in by one of the servants, and handed to Mr. Wilmot, who quickly read it, and with a look of surprise, passed it to me. Now, in the course of our extensive banking business, it was continually necessary to communicate by wire from one branch to another, on important matters, and for the sake of the needful secrecy, a cipher code was adopted. This code was only known to the chief officials at each branch, and hence none of the telegraph clerks could understand our dispatches. The telegram was in this code and was from N—, a town about forty miles off, where there were two banks—viz., our branch, and a private bank. The telegram stated that this private bank had closed its doors finally that afternoon at four; that Mr. Dane, our manager at M—, had just got this information, and that he expected a severe run upon our bank in the morning. He urged us to send him immediate relief, and suggested that we should telegraph to our branch at O— for gold for our use, so as to send him as much as possible. The case was a most urgent one, and Mrs. Wilmot quickly decided what to do. I started in a cab to fetch the cashier, who had one of the three keys of the bank strong room, the others being in the respective keeping of myself and the manager. While I went on this errand, Mr. Wilmot sent off a telegram, giving a copy of Mr. Dane's, with some further hints to the manager at O—. Mr. Wilmot was at the bank when I returned with the cashier. We found the bank premises at home, and we were not long in packing up, in suitable cases, a sum of seven thousand pounds in gold, and about two thousand in Bank of England paper. For the conveyance of this to the railway station, we summoned two cars from an adjoining stand. As these cars drove up, I ran somewhat quickly out of the bank, and, in so doing, came against a tall man who was passing along the foot-path. He had a portly, portly muffed about his throat, and his coat buttoned up to his chin, in addition to which he held a red silk handkerchief to his nose and mouth. The inclemency of the night sufficiently accounted for these precautions, but as I jostled him, his hand was for an instant cast aside, and I saw his face. It was one not easily forgotten. It was handsome and yet repugnant. However, I was busy. He passed on, and I thought no more about it. The manager and myself got into one car, and the cashier and the porter occupied the other, and we drove as rapidly as we could through the town to the railway station. When we arrived there, the mail train for M— was just about to start. The station-master was on the platform, and a few words from Mr. Wilmot explained what we required.

"I see, sir, Mr. Danby wants a compartment to himself. I think all the carriages are more or less occupied. I will put on another carriage; but we are already past time, and the mail guard will not allow delay, so that I cannot break the train. I shall be compelled to put on the carriage behind the guard's van."

"To this we raised no objection, as the one important question was to get to M— with the required relief. The extra carriage was quickly hooked on and duly screwed up, and the lamps put upon it. The cases of gold were put upon one of the seats, and I took my place opposite them, wishing my friends good night. The train began to move rather slowly, when I caught sight of two men of about equal height, who hurried from a waiting room across the platform toward the train. "This way, gentlemen," said the guard, opening the door of a compartment behind that which I occupied, but in the same carriage. Where were we, the station was somewhat dark, but just as we were getting in, the light of the guard's lamp fell upon them, and I was struck with the fact that, not only were they of the same height and build, but they were dressed just in the same way, and that way was precisely that of the man against whom I jostled outside the bank. I could not tell why, but I felt uneasy, and had it not been too late, as we were already out of the station and going rapidly through a tunnel, I should have got the porter to go with me to M—. I reasoned with myself that, after all, I was quite safe. I was locked in on each side, and the motion of the train would as effectually prevent any one from reaching me as it would hinder me from reaching any one. Reason as I would, however, I felt more and more uncomfortable, and I determined that, at the first stoppage, I would get some alteration made. A little knock where my first stoppage was to be; little did I think of the nature of those who rode behind me, or of the doom that hung over me. Suddenly I thought the thunder of the train became fainter, and the motion of the carriage less rapid. While I was trying to solve this matter, the carriage seemed to stop, and then to move again. I looked out. Good heavens! the train was a considerable distance ahead, and I was being rapidly carried back toward W—. Faster and faster sped the carriage on its return, and mortified did I become. The motion of the carriage became as swift as it had been behind the mail—nay, even swifter—and my heart sank within me, my very knees shook under me and my hair seemed to bristle with the terrible suspense of those moments, while big drops of cold sweat fell from my face. On, on we sped, and then the motion began to slacken. Good God! what should I do? The carriage stopped; a click as if a key in the door near which I stood, a moment, and the light of the carriage lamp fell upon the face I saw outside the bank. The man or fiend pointed a pistol at me. I did back a step, and as I did so, behind my assistant had entered from the opposite door. The one with the pistol advanced across the floor of the carriage; I made one frantic grasp at him, saw him raise the butt-end of his weapon, and then I felt dizzy, and in attempting to grasp his arm fainting away.

When I came to myself, I was lying on the floor of the carriage, too weak to move; the doors were open, and the bitter storm beat in upon me in all its winter fury. I could not quite realize my situation, all seemed confused and added. I only remembered that I ought to have been at M—, but that some terrible violence had prostrated me. Presently I heard the whistle of an engine, as if coming from M—, and, confused as I was, I knew the fate which awaited me if in the storm the advancing train should be upon me ere the driver noticed my carriage. I made a desperate attempt to rise, but in vain. The shrill whistle sounded again, still nearer, and this time it was answered by another deeper tone from the opposite site direction, and I caught, in a lull of the storm, the sound of wheels of the approaching engines. I became sick with horror, and I closed my eyes in dread. Then the advancing engines whistled again and again, and O joy! I could tell that they went slower, and then stopped. Then I lost all consciousness once more. When I again became sensible, I felt myself sitting up, and some one holding me. I felt too, that the carriage was in motion. I opened my eyes, and found myself with Mr. Wilmot and the cashier. The porter of the bank and the station master of W— were also there. I tried to speak but could not. I made a motion with my hand, to try to make them comprehend that I could not speak.

"He wants something to drink," said Mr. Wilmot. "Has any one got some brandy?"

"No one had, but in a few minutes Mr. W— was at W—, and I was taken into the refreshment room and placed under the care of a surgeon. Under the effects of warmth and stimulents I soon revived sufficiently to give an account of what had happened, so far as I understood it. The station-master stated it as beyond doubt that the men who attacked me were prepared with a carefully considered plan, which they had but too well succeeded in carrying out. They had evidently got along the foot-board of the carriage, and, when ascending a steep incline, they had undone the couplings, so that the carriage ran back on to the level. Their place had been well chosen, as it was in a very lonely part of the country, and far from any station. The fact that the turnpike road approached the line at a point some three hundred yards from where the carriage stopped, had possibly facilitated their escape. I was unable to account for the arrival of the two engines, which evidently came to search for the missing carriage. This was soon explained. As regards the engine from M—, that was sent back as soon as over the train reached the station, because the carriage was immediately mislaid. The engine from W—, with Mr. Wilmot and the others, started on account of a discovery made by Mr. Wilmot, which caused the utmost consternation. This discovery was nothing

less than that the telegram from M— was a forgery. Mr. Wilmot had telegraphed to Mr. Dane to say that the relief asked had been sent. To this announcement Mr. Dane replied that he could not understand it, that something was wrong, and that he should await Mr. Wilmot's explanation at the station at M—.

The false telegram had been craftily conceived and, unfortunately for me, was in the private code of our bank. When it was telegraphed from M— that the train had arrived minus my carriage, the case against me looked doubly strong, and the two men who entered at W— were set down as confederates who were to help me to carry off the booty. When, however, I was found in the carriage, a new light broke upon the minds of my rescuers, and it was seen that I was the victim, not the chief criminal.

It remained now to try to discover the daring scoundrels who had planned and executed this nefarious deed, and if possible, retake the booty. This seemed a very hopeless task. Men of proved skill had been taken to the scene of the outrage from both W— and M— with the special engines which came to the rescue, but it was very doubtful whether they would find any clue. A second time was the special engine sent from W—, and it ere long returned with one of the detectives. This man had found a gold watch on the ballast near where the carriage had stopped on the level. Now this watch did not belong to me—mine being still in my pocket—nor indeed to any among our party. It was therefore very evident that it had been dropped by one of the thieves in the scuffle, or in getting the cases off. The detective handed the watch to Mr. Wilmot and Mr. Dane, but they could not make anything of it. By this time news of the robbery had spread into the town, though everything was done to keep it quiet, and many people had come to the station to satisfy their curiosity. Among others, a watchmaker who worked for Mr. Wilmot came on the platform. The detective at once asked that Mr. Wilson, the watchmaker in question, should make an examination of the watch, and that a report of such examination should be drawn up. Mr. Wilson was accordingly called into the room, and the watch handed to him. He opened it and took off the case, while the detective prepared to note down the result. No sooner had Mr. Wilson removed the case, than an exclamation of surprise fell from him.

"Why, Mr. Wilmot?" said he, "this watch is one that used to belong to Mrs. Wilmot, and which was stolen some three years ago."

"What?" said Mr. Wilmot. "Mrs. Wilmot's watch. Are you sure?"

"Yes, sir, quite sure, I remember many peculiarities about it; and here I can identify some special repairs that I made myself."

"This is very strange," said our manager. "The thieves who stole this watch must be closely connected with the present outrage. The watchmaker, can we have a special to N— at once?" said our manager, addressing the station master.

"I will order one immediately, sir; and also telegraph to see if the line is clear."

While this was being done, Mr. Wilmot asked the doctor if I could be safely moved, as he wished to take me to N—, to be ready to identify my assailants, should they be captured. The doctor gave it as his opinion that I might be taken; and he expressed his willingness to accompany us, to be ready in case of need. We were soon on our way to N—, and in the morning we arrived there. Mr. Wilmot and two detectives at once proceeded to the bank; and in about half an hour Mr. Wilmot returned to the inn, where I remained with the rest of the party. He said that Mr. Garstang was not there, he having gone away early in the morning; but the detectives had been stationed where they would watch all who approached the bank. Wilson, the watchmaker, had gone round to several of his fellow tradesmen in N—, and at last he had found a person who recognized the watch as one which he had cleaned on several occasions, for Garstang! Thus, then, we had got another link in our chain—stronger than any of the others. The station master, had ascertained that Garstang often drove out of N—in a dog cart, and mostly in one direction. On arriving at this town, we succeeded in ascertaining where Garstang's dog cart invariably went. This was to a house in the suburbs, standing in grounds of its own, and inhabited by an old woman and her daughter. When we reached this house, part of our force approached it by the front and part by the back, the doctor remaining with me in the carriage at the corner of the lane. While we waited in suspense for the result of the raid upon the house, we heard the sound of wheels, and we were looking out, saw a carriage, the horses of which, said, seemed hard driven, coming a rapid pace down the lane leading to the house. Where our carriage stood, it could not be seen by the driver of the other. To run in by the back way of the house was but the work of a moment with the now thoroughly excited doctor; and he succeeded in warning our party just in time for them to connect themselves. As we expected, the carriage turned into the grounds of the house. It was instantly surrounded. The occupants, it is needless to say, were the two who had attacked and robbed me. They at first showed an inclination to use their fire-arms; but seeing the hopelessness of resistance, they desisted, and gave themselves up. When they were confronted with me, I at once identified the man whose face I had seen; and though they had changed their dress, the station-master was convinced they were the men who got into my carriage at W—. The one who passed the bank was Garstang, his object it so doing being to see how the plot was working. The whole mystery was now clear. It was easy to see that Garstang, being acquainted with the code, had caused the forged telegram to be sent from M— by some accomplice. Inquiries instituted among the clerks at

the M— telegraph office elicited the fact that a female had sent the spurious dispatch, which the receiving clerk well remembered on account of its length and peculiarity. Finding this to be the case, the younger of the two women was taken into custody on her return home. She proved to be none other than the female servant who was discharged from Mr. Wilmot's at the time of the jewel robbery. This girl was admitted a witness against Garstang, as also was the driver of the carriage in which he and his fellow-robber reached the house where they were captured.

The mystery about the jewel-case was cleared up by the evidence of the servant-girl. On the night of the robbery, she stated that she was in her mistress's room, and then attempted to steal it. She alleged that she was attracted rather by the beauty of the jewels than by their value, and that no idea of selling them ever entered her head; her only idea being to become possessed of such splendid finery. She took up the box, and was coming out of the room with it, when Garstang confronted her and threatened to give the alarm. She became very frightened, and attempted to put the case back. This Garstang would not let her do, but led her down the back stairs and out into the garden, and thence to the street. He then frightened her to go with him to a disreputable public house, where he robbed her of the jewelry, and threatened her with the consequences of divulging what had taken place; at the same time he told her he would marry her if she kept all quiet. This he had never done; but he had threatened to do so, and he was now here and there placed his victim with an old hag, whom he had made designate a sabbath mother. He had, she stated, always treated her with a sort of kindness; but he never relaxed his hold upon her, and she felt very frightened of him. Thus, then, was this villain at last fairly netted, and, with his fellow-criminal—who turned out as we expected, to be his brother—committed for trial. While he was awaiting trial at the assizes, some bills of his brother's were discovered, and this led to the discovery of an extensive system of fraud which these two wretches had carried on for many years. At the trial, the robbery in the train was clearly proved against the two Garstangs; and justice was at last vindicated by their receiving a sentence of penal servitude for life, with the addition of an ample preliminary administration of the cat.

The wretched girl who had, in a warring moment, when a word of good counsel might have saved her, unfortunately fallen into the clutches of a heartless, calculating scoundrel, was sent to a distant part of the country; but she soon drooped and died of consumption, induced or hastened by exposure to the bitter weather when she went to M—, to send the telegram which so nearly led to such dire results. As for myself, I recovered, and took up my abode at N—as manager, and when Mr. Wilmot and I visit each other's houses—which we often do—we seldom fail to think of the forged telegram and my terrible ride.

"A Few More Left."

The most renowned street-vender in New York, or in the world, is Henry Smith, the "Razor-Strop Man" of Nassau street. Born in England, six months after Waterloo, his youth was roving and dissipated, and his devotion to drink drained him the sabbath of "Old Soaker" before he was twenty-one. Signing the abstinence pledge for a month, and then for a life, he became a good husband, an industrious man, and an ardent temperance advocate. In 1842 he sailed in the Ontario for America. Landing in New York, he soon began to sell razor-strops, and his street speeches were such droll, witty, and sensible mixtures of prose and poetry, that in three months he made himself the prince of peddlers. His sayings were chronicled in the papers, his portrait was published in the Sunday Atlas, and he even appeared for seven nights at the Olympic Theatre in Mitchell's play of the "Razor Strop Man." His fame rapidly spread, and he made the tour of the Union, teaching temperance and selling his strops, until his characteristic saying, "A few more left of the same sort," became a household word. He achieved a fortune in a few years; but the spirit of speculation seized him, and the crisis of 1857 swept away his last dollar. With unsparing courage and a fresh basket of strops he began life anew, visited his native England, and won much reputation as a "genuine Yankee peddler." Returning to America, he was found in Rochester, where he enlisted in a still regiment. In his left leg he still retains a Gyssburg musket-ball. When told that it might be necessary to amputate the limb, he replied, "Well, I suppose I can afford to lose it, as I shall still have one more left of the same sort!" The leg was saved, but the wound died, and he was compelled to return to Rochester, where he served till after the close of the war as recruiting-sergeant, and in the soldiers' hospital. With a purse from the city, a letter of thanks from the Mayor, and a Zouave uniform from his regiment, the veteran vendor returned again to New York, and became once more the "Razor-Strop Man" of Nassau street. Age has whitened his close-cut hair and mustache, and the short growth on his bronzed cheek and chin; and his witty old-time speeches no longer gather crowds of laughing buyers. But his eye still twinkles with kindly shrewdness behind his gold-rimmed spectacles, and his softly spoken, "Here you are young man!" is often the prelude to a sensible and genial proachment of the strops, razors, knives, many virtues of the strops, razors, knives, and other wares that overflow his red, white, and blue striped, "first national basket."—"From 'The Street-Venders of New York,' by E. E. Sterna, in Scribner's Monthly for December.

A youth respectably connected at Chicago, and not yet seventeen years of age, recently died from the effects of excessive drinking.

Legend of a Baggage-Smasher.
I knew him. It was years ago. His name was—well, call it Bumps. If you ever get into a railroad struggle where one struggles to get another off the track, you will know more about Bumps, or your friends will. This Bumps was a nice young man. His hair always combed low down; his wore brass buttons; and there was a mysterious report current that he had been known to cut on the sherry for horse, on the Fourth of July, and had actually paid for it—paid for it, sir! We held him in awe—we boys did. He could talk about lever watches, pointer dogs, steam barges, and he could relate incidents of difficulties in prize rings so beautifully that I used to wish to knock some one in the stomach, and break some ambitious Englishman's jawbone. If Bumps said anything, the whole town swore that it was so. If he didn't say anything, we stood back and waited for developments.

At last he went away. His uncle used his influence to get him a position as baggage-master. I never heard of him for years, but I was called one day to see him die. I went with great pleasure. Bumps was a mere skeleton; his eyes were like saucers; his hair was all worn off from tearing round so in bed. He told me about it. He drove everybody out of the room, bade me bring up my nerves to hear a mournful tale, and then he commenced. He went on the railroad a pure young man; he took charge of trunks and boxes, and commenced by lifting them by the handles, and setting them down carefully. He had not served a month when the president of the road called him into the office, cut down his salary, and told him if there were any more complaints from the conductor, his services would be dispensed of a berth. Then the young man grew cold and stern. He was bound to suit the railroad corporation or die. He began by walking up to a poor old chest belonging to an orphan, and putting his foot through the corner. The conductor saw the act; the two shook hands, and they went for hours on each other's breasts. Bumps had not made two trips before he could sling a satchel eleven yards, retaining both handles in his grasp. Innocent owners of such things threatened him, and commenced suit against him, and swore they would never ride on that road again; but Bumps was firm. He was dignified; he was solemn; he was working for a higher sphere; he was treading in the path of duty.

When gentle females would hang up their tender little baskets and satchels, Bumps would pick up a wooden handle, and get in a corner and jump on the articles and toss them up and kick them, and fling them through ethereal space. And when the train stopped he would throw out a waterfall and toothbrush in answer to call for check "22." Husbands would strike at him, and dared him out of his den, and called him a base-fellow; but Bumps was solemn. He knew his line of business. When he got out of a nice trunk he would carry a countenance like a strawberry of joyal then another, then kick in the ends, then take an axe and smash the lock, and then let the shirts and things rattle out on the track. It got so at last that people actually paid high prices for the privilege of living along the line of that road, as they got their shirts for nothing. All that was needed was to have the children follow up Bump's train.

But there came a black day. A miserable, contemptible, sneaking wretch, who owned a saw-mill, went travelling. He ran his factories two weeks on nothing but trunk stuff, and he swore out the wickedest trunk that ever went into a car. It was seven feet thick all round, and there were sixteen nails driven in one on top of the other, until the thing was clear proof. Then he gave it into Bump's hands, charging him to be "very careful if he pleased." The train started. Bumps got the axe as usual and struck at the lid, but the axe bounded back. He struck once more; the axe flew into pieces. Then he got a snowball and a can of powder, but he couldn't burst a rail. He swore and jumped up and down, and wanted to die, and wished he'd never been born. He got all the train men in; they all pounded, but the trunk held firm. It went through all right. It was handed down without a jar, and the owner was there to say, "Thank you, sir," and he pretended he was going back again, and held the chest up on board once more. Bumps grew pale. He was sick. His legs shook. He had chills all over him. The trunk went back, a witness of "man's inhumanity to man." Bumps grew worse. He felt that he was forever disgraced, and went to bed with the brain fever. They tried to console him, and said that they could have trusted the chest if they had only thought to have a collision. I was there when he died. I never want to weep as I wept then. He just shrunk right away, murmuring, "Guss that trunk."

Not the least of the benefits consequent upon the construction of the railway to the Pacific is the impetus it has given to the cultivation of what has been heretofore esteemed only a barren desert. Experiments made at a number of localities show that the whole of the Western plains can be irrigated and rendered fruitful; and lately even this statement has been shown not to be absolutely indispensable. Mr. R. S. Ellis, the industrial agent of the Kansas Pacific Railway, has just made a report of his success in planting wheat, rye, barley, timothy, and lucern at various points on that railway, from which he infers that these grains can be profitably cultivated along the whole line. He has also planted the seeds of burr oak, pecan, chestnut, peach, and althaus trees, which, if not destroyed by burrowing animals, will, he thinks, germinate in due time. This tree-planting is an exceedingly important work for if any considerable extent of forests can be once established, there is no doubt that the rainfall of the whole region will be vastly increased, and its fertility assured.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

Church deacons are expelled at Elmira for saying "by telegraph."

Base ball has killed twenty-five persons during the past season.

The Steamship China, just arrived at San Francisco, brought over 12,000 packages of tea.

Miss Vinnie Beam's statue of Lincoln is finished, and will be sent to Washington this winter.

There are on file on the docket of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts nearly 1,500 bills for divorce.

The "one flesh" that an Indiana couple were recently made, weighed one thousand pounds avoirdupois.

A lady reporter goes to church and writes up "Style in the Sanctuary" for one of the Chicago papers.

Mr. Perry of Michigan, quotes wives at \$5 plus an old shod gun. He sold one of his recently at that figure.

Sets of mathematical instruments and a library, are to be given to Gen. Grant, Gen. Sherman, and Gen. McClellan.

Mark Twain has issued a new work, entitled "Innocents at Home" Or in other words his wife has got a baby.

The Kansas Tribune states that a legion of pretty girls are worrying the members of the new Legislature out of their seven senses, by applications for assistance in obtaining clerkships and other official positions.

The Toledo, Wabash and Western Railroad is used for \$400,000 damages, because its trains do not stop at Jackson, Ind., "twenty minutes for refreshments," as was the understanding when the depot and hotel were built.

In Indianapolis, a charming young lady physician was called to administer to a gentleman down with a fever. "You need good nursing," said the lady. "Nurse me for life," replied the patient. "I will" was the soft answer.

Miss Kitty Underwood has been decided by a vote of the citizens of Fort Dodge, Iowa, to be the handsomest girl in the city. She is about eighteen years of age, a school-teacher, and dependent on her own resources for a livelihood.

A letter from Paris says: "It is strange and painful to see groups of well-dressed women looking in the windows of 'pork butchers' and trips shops with the same eager curiosity with which they used to gaze at ribbons and bonnets."

Steel ear-rings are now the fashion. They are fastened to the ear by a spring, and have the appearance of a small gold dot inserted into the flesh. They are popular among young ladies, inasmuch as it is not necessary to pierce the ears.

Five ladies, not long since, left Northampton, Mass., for California, going by the Pacific Railroad. They went unattended, and all but one, whose husband is a resident of California, are out on a pleasure trip. They will remain in California until spring.

The Spanish Minister has paid over to the government nineteen thousand seven hundred dollars in gold, which was awarded in a recent arbitration for damages in the seizure of the Lloyd Ayrault. This subject, it will be remembered, was alluded to in the President's Message. Its settlement is a cause for congratulation, as it threatened at one time to affect the relations between Spain and the United States.

A committee of the Maryland Academy of Science, having spent several weeks prospecting in the coal and iron regions of West Virginia, have reported their observations to the Institute at Baltimore. The committee reports that the amount of the minerals there exceeds all anticipations. There is a large amount of splint of coal great value for manufacturing purposes. The committee expresses the opinion that the best quality of iron can be manufactured there cheaply by several dollars a ton than in Pennsylvania.

A dealer in agricultural tools out in Iowa, and a German by birth, went to Fetherland, last spring, taking along a reaper and mower of the most approved pattern, and put it to practical use at once. The old and the young gathered by hundreds to see it work, for they have only the old-fashioned clumsy scythe, and the old wood mold-board plow. But when they saw twenty acres of grass cut in seven or eight hours, they were completely astonished, and confessed such a machine run with a little oil was completely ahead of their tools backed by unlimited supplies of labor.

The report of the United States Department of Agriculture comes to the startling conclusion that such is the wholesale destruction of American forests, there will be an actual famine for fuel in the country within thirty years, unless immediate measures are taken to supply their places by new plantations. It is estimated that from 1850 to 1860, 200,000,000 acres of timber land were brought under cultivation, and that in the present decade no less than a hundred millions will be so reclaimed. We see but one remedy for this: Let the Government offer large premiums for the cultivation of forests.

The thieves who travel on the rail for a living at the expense of honest people, have invented a new device for the purpose of facilitating their plundering operations. The device consists of a dragged cigar, the smoking of which produces a gradual but almost deadly effect upon the victim. The game consists of the operator making himself respectfully present in the smoking car of a train, and at the right time engaging in conversation with a stranger, and then in due time offering him a cigar, which he takes from his pocket with a handful of others. The operator, unnoticed, then smokes a cigar taken from another pocket, and soon awakes to find himself vomiting freely in a state of copious perspiration. After his sickness is over, or upon arriving at the end of his journey, he discovers that he has been robbed of his pocket-book. Travellers will do well to decline the proffered cigars at