THE CONSUL'S STORY

Mrs. Helen Burns was quite unknown | a purveyor of bodies to the dissecting to me, but I was not sorry to see her come in. She was one of the radiant brunettes whose cheeks get a lovely red when the thermometer runs near zero, and who can light the gas with her fingers when frost is about. She was in widow's garb of the most aggressive sort, and she looked as happy as a prisoner just escaped from a jail-She tripped me a sliding courtesy and swam into a chair. There was positively not an angle about her.

'I haf come on a sad business," she said. The hardening of the final "f" showed the Frenchwoman, but there was no other evidence of it.

I howed and tooked up with sympathy and inquiry.

'My dear husbant, he is det.' I mutely expressed my commisera-

"He has died very suddainly and I haf decided that I cannot leave his body in this cold Englant, where is not'ing sympatica. I will take him back to New York on the steamer."

Her long lashes fell like a velvet pall as she said this, and then slowly came upward. Beneath them I could see a pair of dark brown eyes shining through a film of tears. It was like a rainbow in the mist.

"My dear husbant, he was so goot to me. He lies in a leaden coffin at the cemetery house, and we must take him away tomorrow. It will be for you to do someting for me. You shall say that he is inside. If not this, dey open Burns, him at the custom house.'

But I cannot give you the usual certificate without actually seeing him in the coffin.

They will not let me open de coffin no more. I did not know yesterday or I would have sent for you. You must

She leaned over in pleading entreaty and murmured: "My poor husbant, he un, and I 'ave un I did, and two pound is not here to protect the and help me for un I got, and no mistake. I thought like he used to do, It my consul does to get more, but he was no better fed not belts me, who can help me, and where shall I go?

I felt as though it was positively eriminal to terture this poor lady any longer with suggestions of strict compliance with the law, I said I would do all I could to smooth the hard path of widow-head, and asked for the death certificate. It was only handed me, and was correct in all particulars. A big splash of ink covered the place of demise, but that was obviously an acci-dent. Then I intimated that I was quite satisfied the husband was in the coffin, but that I felt I must at least go and see the outside of the receptacle.

"You shall come with me," she said, and together we drove over to the cemetery. It was a pleasant afternoon and I enjoyed the drive immensely, Mrs. Burns also seemed to find the air exhilarating, and laughed several deed, she remembered Samuel Burns times in so hearty a way that I was well. She told me all about it. moved to express my satisfaction at the way she was bearing up under her great bereavement.

Ah, yes," she said, with a sigh, sometimes I do forget that I shall not see my husbant any more. "Was he long III."

"His healt' was what you call pre-pre-carious, Is dat how you call it?"

and de romance. We had had many ro

"Ah, tell me one, for instance." 'No; dose t'ings are sacred in his tomb. He was a very large man, long, but not what you call fat. His coffin seems very large."

And have all your romances been with your husband?" "I do not tell you dat, Mr. Consul,

and she smiled as though she could

whole volumes unfold. At the cemetery I found in themor tuary chapel an immense leaden coffin which looked large and grewsome enough to contain the remains of two husbands instead of one, and I felt that the widow had completely made out her case. Upon my return I therefore gave her the following certificate, surmounted by a large American eagle; "Consulate of the U. S. A., -

"I, the undersigned consul of the United States of America for hereby certify and make known to all whom it may concern that on Monday, She told me how happy they were at the —— day of ——, A. D., 18—, at the consulate aforesaid, the leaden by degrees, and how she bore with him by degrees, and how she bore with him Samuel Burns was soldered down in my presence; said Samuel Burns having been temporarily abroad, and having died on the --- day of -D., 18-, aged forty-one years. The said leaden coffin contains inside a polished oaken casket, and the said coffin was securely packed in a deal packing case This side up-per steamer Umbria.' (B.) I further certify that the said Samuel Burns died from no infectious disease, and that said case so marked centains nothing but said remains inclosed as above stated. This certificate is granted to serve at the custom house at New York, in the

United States of America. "In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and the consular seal this --- day of ---, in the year of

"You see," I said to the widow, "I certify here that I have actually seen the coffin soldered down; but, as it was done before, I hardly think it necessary to have it broken open, and I am sure it is all right. You will now have no trouble in getting the precious package unopened through the custom house at New York."

The widow was grateful for this. "It would be an awful t'ing if dey were to make trouble dere," she murmered plaintively. "Oh, my dear, dear

I consoled her as well as I could and encouraged her to talk about Samuel. He was the tenderest, best of husbands, I learned. He had never given her a cross word, and had sacrificed everything to her wishes, "He was not w'at you call a handsome man, but he had his good points," she confided. And she got brighter as she recounted his virtues. At last the widow left me, profuse of thanks. The consulate

seemed dreary after she left. I thought of her at times and had no doubt the bones of Samuel Burns were duly mixing with Mother Earth somewhere in the states.

Nearly a year passed. I had not forgotten the widow precisely, but it needed a special effort to bring back all sulate was also night porter at one of the hospitals. He called himself night porter, that is, but I found by judi- Mrs. Burns with rapture.

oom at the institution in question.

"I gets 'em from the work'us and everywheres," he told when when a confidential footing had been established, "but I seldom gets as good 'un, for instance, as you would make." This was his pleasant joke. Such

jokes all men must be prepared to receive who make friends with those who tread strange paths in life. "Two pounds is what I gets for most

of 'em if they beain't too starved. Them doctors don't like what they calls enamic subjects, but they has to take 'em. Why? Because the men what's had their grub regular in life beain't to be had when they's dead, that's

I probed the purveyor of the dead one night as to whether he had had any experiences of a nature so peculiar and striking as to stick in his memory.

"Aye, plenty of them." he answered. "What would 'ee think now of a rich lady what would sell me the corpse of her husband?"

"Impossible!"I said "Aye, do 'ee think so? What will 'ee think, then, of a rich lady what would give me her husband to save the trouble of buryin' him?"

"Impossible! "Naw 'twas done." "No!

"Ave. She were one o' them foreigners, and I thought she was one o' them Frenchwomen, but her name was

Perhaps, reader, you don't think I was listening hard now. "Burns?" ! said. "Was that her

"Aye, and a smart women she were too. She told me to come to her house, and I went, and she says: "Ere's my husband, do 'ee know, and he ain't never been good to me, and you shall 'ave than the rest, and the funny thing he ere drest in the work's clothes."

"Ave; he were.

I queried further. Dates and all greed. It must have been my Mrs. Burns; I was sure of it. Who, then, was in the coffin? What crime had I

I started the next day on a quiet detective search. I went to all the differthe list of death. Finally I found the

record I sought: "Samuel Burns, died ---, aged forty-

one years. I interrogated the master of the There was a funny story onnected with the death of Burns, he believed; the matron would know all about it. I saw the matron. Yes, in-

There was a lady, she said, who use ! to come to the workhouse a good deal and read to the old people and do good and give them a few pennies and amuse them in various ways. She used to be in the infirmary mostly, said the matron, and one day, after she had been coming to the house for two or three weeks, she was slipping about from bed to bed, talking to the old pau-Burns, "He was dying, I told her," said the matron, "and nobody knows inything about him and he has only today come to the house, with just

strength enough to tell his name." "What is his name?" the lady asked me, unconcerned like," continued the matron. "'I think,' I says, 'it's Samael Burns.' No sooner had I said his came than she flops down by the side of his bed and cries out: 'My God! What is the matter, madam? says I, and Burns himself sort of pulled up to the cry and opened his eyes. 'Ah, you know me, then, dear Sam,' says she, and clasps his hand and kisses it. The old folks in the ward was looking on with eyes as big as tencups, and I standing by, dazed like. All of a sudden Burns gave a gasp and died, and the lady stood up and turns to me and says, with great solemn eyes, Mat-

ron, he was my husband. I have been

searching for him for two years." "I looked from her to him for times I can tell you, and then I caught her hand and led her down to my room. for a long time, and then came the separation, and he went from bad to worse, and then she didn't see no more of him for a long time. She had come then into a bit of money, she said, and she had heard of her husband leading a tramp's life and going from work house to workhouse, and she spent all her time hoping to find him, and now, she says, 'I am too late, and I can only take the body.'

"And take the body she did that afernoon to a pretty house she had near here. She was going to take her husband to America, she said, to bury him in the family vault: and that's what I

believe she did do.' "This was very pathetic, matron" ! said. "You do not often see such things,

The matron laughed scornfully and said: "We never had such a thing hefore nor since, Poor lady! She was beautiful and no mistake, and spent It was worth doing, don't you think? her money like a queen. She felt it very much, coming in like that-not even in time to get a word from her The New Budget. husband. 'One word.one kiss,' she says, that would have made it so much

I left the matron in a state of bewilderment. It was I that was bewildered. not the matron. I could not make it out. At noon Mrs. Burns was weeping over Burns at the workhouse, and at 4 she was giving away his body like old junk. An idea came, and I laughed. could not help it. I saw the whole thing now. She had made a mistake in the man and had discovered the little error after she got the corpse to her house. But no! If that were so, why had she come to me the next day? Think you there are no ready tears to fall Why had she carried the coffin to New

I stopped speculating and went on uquiring. I found that she had taken the house that the matron had told me of, furnished, for a month; that a gentleman whom she called her brother was with her; that they had had no servant, but only a charwoman; that they were quiet, liberal people, and that the lady had had a great and unthe circumstances. One day I discovered that the care-taker of the contime. The charwoman was extremely dull, but remembered the largesse of

a packing box big as a 'ouse, and like-***** her when she come. I see 'em in her

"It never struck you as odd, I suppose." I queried, "that Mrs. Burns should come here with a coffin in her luggage and a lot of black clothes, found a husband to die and then have found a husband to die in the nick of time?"

"Lor', sir, you don't mean she mur-dered him? And yet here be a tidy few of them sorts about now," and the woman looked about as if she expected to descry a murderer strolling along the payement.

The undertaker who carried the coffin from the house to the cemetery and thence the next day forwarded it to Liverpool had little to tell. When his men got to the house they found the coffin already sealed up and placed in its outer casing, and all they did was to move it as above described. All papers were legeally in order. The undertaker said he would like more

such profitable and easy jobs, My inquiries on this side of the water were over, but I determined to find out the contents of that coffin. I therefore wrote a friend in New York, a physician of influence, asking him quietly to trace the destination of the mysterious box, giving him full par-ticulars as to steamer, date, etc. In due time came his answer. I print it

"Your letter in regard to coffin has had attention. Records of health bureau show permit to land body of Samuer Burns, and move same to Brooklyn. Records of latter place showed interment at Greenwood next day. With trifling difficulty, owing to inability to give adequate reason, received permission to disinter. Found therein body of a man, but no further particulars noted. Yours fathfully, -

Who was the man in the coffin? I thought the whole matter over and ame to the conclusion that I would not put the matter before the authorities. The porter might have been in error as to buying a body from Mrs. Eurns, or some painful family mystery, innocent in itself, might be wrapped the leaden casket. I remembered the widow's beauty, her tearful eyes, her thrilling voice, her silvery laugh, and made up my mind that I would not be the one to unveil her. idmitted to myself that an empty coffin one's house and a death certificate in one's pocket are a horrible combination of temptation toward putting an enemy out of the way, but I sertion that if lovely Mrs. Burns had an enemy he certainly deserved his fate merely because he was her

Thus did I juggle with my duty and patter with the straight path,

Two years passed by. I still wonlered at times what unhappy corpse it was that was masquerading in the nt unions in the vicinity and examined | Brooklyn cemetery under the tombstone of Samuel Burns, but new problems had risen to give zest to life, and I was no longer restless about it. In act, at the particular time I am now writing of I was amusing myself in Paris, and had no leisure for dead removies of either dead or live meonle One night I was dining at the Bris ol, when whom should I see at the next table but Mrs. Burns. She had fropped the widow's weeds and looked as full of energy as an electric motor and as beautiful as Cleopatra. Her companion, I assumed, was her husband, as he paid more attention to the dinner than his lady. I went and sat

Who is in that coffin at Brooklyn?" asked, as graciously as I could. "I am curious.

Mrs. Burns started of course; so did er companion. Then they both laughed 'Let us tell M. le Consul, Marie," said "there is something funny in the

"It is not exactly a nice story, after all," said madam, in French, "But I see monsieur knows something, and he shall hear all. My husband, over there"-pointing across the table-"is Dr. Fernand, once of New York, I have been known as Mme. Clementine and I have had a large business a Chicago as a costumer, and so on." "Ah!" I said, "I begin to understand But whose body?"

"I bought it at New York," said the octor; "it was easy for a doctor t Why have any put in?"

"It gave a finish to the plot. You e, I discern by your questions that you have already been investigating. You found everything all right, no doubt," The doctor smiled.

"But you-"I turned to madam-"you cted by the side of the dying pauper? You did not know him?"

She shrugged her shoulders, "It was not nice-but the reward was great. We must have a body, so that our leath certificate would be all right. It was my husband's idea."

"You see," smiled the husband, "there free trade in the United States only in dead bodies. We had not been pros erous; so we decided on a coup, It trieved our fortunes; and here we re in Paris for good and all-or else should not be telling you this story o frankly. We do not intend to re turn to New York."

"But tell me what was the profit that iduced you to try so ghastly a-a-"
"Call it fraud, if you like," said the octor. "I hold that a fraud on the customs is no fraud."

'But the profit?" "Figure for yourself," said madam; three hundred pounds weight of lace packed tight in the casket, say thirty ards to the pound, nine thousand yards, worth, including the handkerchiefs and similar trifles. £20,000 Duty, sixty per cent.; £12,000 all saved. "I call it very hard earned money, I said, as I bowed and left the table .-

Courage.

Because I hold it sinful to despond, And will not let the bitterness of life Blind me with burning tears, but look by Its tumult and its strife; Because I lift my head above the mist.

breezes blow, By every ray and every raindrop kissed That God's love doth bestow. Think you I find no bitterness at all;

Because I keep them back? Why should I hug life's ills with cold

A thousand times more good tenn I de

And in each one of those rebellious tears Kept bravely back he makes a rain-bow shine; Grateful I take his slightset gift; no fears Nor any doubts are mine.

God gives me every day.

Dark skies must clear, and when the clouds are past.
One golden day redeems a wesry year
Patient Pilsten, sure that sweet at law
Will sound this value of cheet.

Embroideries

5,000 yards of cambric edges, cut out ready for use. Full assortment of patterns; always 6c 3c yard. To go at......

Jonas Long's Sons.

Men's Shirts

Unlaundered all size necks. 98c a pair.

Curtains

Ruffled Swiss

Stationery

3,000 boxes of

Laces Fine Machine-White Shirt, rein- Curtains, three fine Linen Finish- Made Torchon Story Books, with fine perfume, all forced over shoul- yards in length; ed Paper and En- Laces, that will colored pictures odors, put up in ders and down plain Swiss ruffle, velopes—quire of wash and wear, big and flexible cov-sides; cut full size, very stylish; were each in box. Never variety to choose ers. Were 15c, sold under 10c. from. Always 10c 20c and 29c. Great value 25c Very special at..... 79c Very special at..... 6c vard. Very special at.... 5c Very special at..... 5c

Play Books

250 Children's

Perfume

Embroideries

10,000 yards of fine cam-

bric edges, 1 to 5 inches wide—cut out ready for use; always 10c yd. 5c

To go at.....

150 bottles of Very special

Bargains Are Swinging Into Line for the January Trade Sale

Stupendous money-saving chances—the event of a lifetime. Every day finds big bargains and big crowds. Are you numbered among the lucky ones?

Hosiery and Underwear===fast and furious selling

Prices have been pared to the core—and the core removed. Wonderful are the values that confront you today. Immense purchases are here that make dimes do dollar duty.



Pants; the 25c kind. 17c derwear, never sold 22c very special at....... 17c Misses' Fine Jersey Rib-Wool Jersey Ribbed Vests Hose, double soles and and Pants, Oxford cut, al- high spliced heels, always Knee Fast Black Hose, never

Jersey Ribbed 121/2c and Drawers, always Vests. Very special at 17c Boys' Fleece Lined Un- Fast Black Hose, double soles and high spliced heels, always 15c. Now...... 10c

Women's Fine Australian Women's Fine Cashmere

Women's Fleece Lined | Boys' Natural Grey Shirts | Women's Fine Seamless

Women's Fine Gauze Fast Children's Fine Ribbed Black Hose, also with Maco

Children's Seamless Double

Prices melt on Snowy-white Undergarments

You may cross country from San Francisco to Deweyville, and you'll find no bargains in Muslin Wear to beat those here. Especially during this Trade Sale do we stretch a point in your favor.

Women's Muslin Gowns with high neck and tucks; very special of 33c

Women's Muslin Gowns with four rows of lace inserting and six clusters of tucks. Special at...... 45c

Women's Fine Gowns with square neck, lawn ruffles edged with torchon lace and baby ribbon; also Em-

pire style; very special at.....



Women's Fine Gowns, Women's Fine Chemise with full ruffles of embroid- with tucked yoke and 7 rows

Women's Good Cotton Corset Covers; spec-Drawers, with tucks. Special at... 121/2c | Corset Covers; special at...

Women's Umbrella Draw- Two styles of Corset Covers with ruffle edged with ers, with both high and square lace, others trimmed with necks, very handsomely trimembroidery; very special at...... 12½c

The Same Thaw Struck Linens and Bed Coverings

And you'll profit by the freshet. Sold enough out of the lots Monday and yesterday to supply a regiment-still there are thousands of good things yet to go before this sale

Good quality and full size 2,000 yards extra heavy

Another lot of Comforts, Extra heavy 10-4 Grey well worth \$1.00; very 79c Blankets, worth 69c 39c

All our Down Comforts at All wool 11-4 White cost, and less, to close. Bar- Blankets, were \$6

Bed Comforts; very special 59c white Shaker Flannel 10c

Silkoline Comforts, filled Extra heavy 11-4 soft with good cotton, 98c finish Blankets, were 2.48 \$3.25 pair, now..... 2.48

pair, now...... 4.50

Full Bleached Hemmed Sheets, 2x2½ yards; very special at........... 33c

Pillow Cases, 45x36 in. Special at..... 10c All Linen Bleached Napkins

Fine Utica Muslin Hemmed

in 5/8 and 34 size; 1.98 great value, dozen..... Fine quality Fringed Table Cloths, 2½ yards long; 89c

Silks and Dress Goods

Don't know whether you realize it or not-but these prices are less than the bare cost of weaving the materials.

4850 yards of Dress Goods in widths from 37 46 inches, all wool black cashmere, black jacquards, worsted crepons, storm serge, etc. worth 39c to 59c yard; very special at 25c Very superb quality all pure silk Black

Satin Duchesse, positively worth 79c yd., at 49c Double width novelty and fancy Plaids, also armure effects, positively worth 15c yd 50-in. extra heavy Meltonettes in black and colors, also novelty waist sitks-pure

Finest quality of best Novelty Silks in an extensive variety of beautiful patterns. 98c 3,700 yards of Fine Dress Materials, including basket plaids, caracule weaves, camel's hair stripe, etc., value from 16c to 25c.; very spec-

A superb assortment of stylish Spring Dress Fabrics, in all newest colorings, plain bayadere, poplins, armorette and other weaves; worth \$1.00 and \$1.25, now....

Notions

Belding Sewing Silk, spool...6c Basting Cotton, doz. spools...5c Adamantine Pins, 12 papers..90 Bound Tape Measure, each ... 4c Hair Pins-dozen papers for . . 4c

Fine silk frilled English Gar-OTIONC ter Elastic, red, white or blue, yard 85/2c Waist Belting in all colors, best quality, yard......7c Horn Bone, extra heavy, all sizes, per doz.7c

Side Combs, good horn, Pair.7c Trimmings

black and colors, new patterns,

Women's Coats and Suits

Weather prophets say two months yet to sell winter garments. Rather sell ours in January—hence these prices:

Women's Jackets in black beaver and black heviot. Some half-silk faced. Formerly \$7.75. Very special, to close, at...... 1.39 Misses' Jackets of fancy mixed boucle in red,

reen, blue and brown. Lined throughut. Sizes 12, 14, 16. Were \$7.95. To close at 4.77 Women's Tailor-Made Suits in plain and fancy mixtures; jackets silk lined; skirts are new bell

shape, lined in extra quality percaline; were \$15.00 to \$17.00. Now...... 10.97 Cashmere Waists, body and sleeves lined. Pointed yoke, plaited back; detachable stock colar; brown, green or black; were \$2.37.

Women's Jackets in tans, modes and black, Some half-faced; others lined throughout. Mohair Braid, Silk Braid, Che- Dart sleeve and dove back; were \$12.75.

Women's Jackets-beaver, kersey, cheviot and fresh, clean stock-none dam- English melton-all the leading colors; 69c aged, worth up to 25c yard... 8c were \$17.50 to \$20. Now....... 10.97

Coffee Pots 2, 3 and 4-quart Tea and Cof-

Bread Raisers

to and 12-quart Tin Bread Raisers that were 390