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THE ICE KING.

Since the days of old a gent bold Has reigned in the frigid North; His steed so high he reaches the sky, And shakes the clouds in his wrath; His body is broad as broad may be, And he strides alike over land and sea. When he sallies forth from his throne in the North...

NINON'S PRINCE.

It was the siege of Paris. The Empress Eugenie had fled from the Tuilleries, the provisional government had been organized under Trochu, Paris was in a state of wild alarm and the Prussian armies were steadily making their way toward the city, investing one point after another and rapidly cutting off all communication between the besieged city and the surrounding country. Water was coming on; food and fuel becoming scarce; business was at a standstill; the boulevards were filled with idle, aimless loungers, gazing with sad and hungry eyes upon the long files of troops that marched before them.

She wore out her days in wailing over the dullness and dreariness of the gay capital. The high prices demanded for all the necessities of life began to exhaust even the princely De Valcour revenues. The establishment must be reduced, and Baroness Ninon awoke out of her long dream of luxury and laziness to face life for the first time seriously. One among Ninon's friends was missing. The boyish form of the young officer, with his untarnished uniform and unused sword, appeared no more among her guests. At first she smiled at his absence, then insensibly she began to watch for his coming, and as the days passed one after another, Ninon grew anxious. It was the evening of the 24th of November. Ninon was sitting alone, when a quick, hurried tread sounded behind the chair and the clanking of a sword startled her. "Armand!" she exclaimed, as she turned and encountered the excited glance of the young officer. "Yes, Ninon! At last Paris is aroused. To-morrow will be a grand sortie. With 100,000 men we shall leave Paris, march upon Champigny—on to Villers. Duroc has sworn to re-enter Paris only victorious or dead. I have come to say good-bye. Before to-morrow night Prussian ball or bayonet may have quieted forever the heart that loves you so passionately. Kiss me, Ninon, and God bless you!"

whispers, gently and pityingly, "Madame, he will be blind." "Armand, my love! God help you!" Then she lifts her tear-stained face, lit up with its wonderful light of love and pity, and, looking at the sympathetic countenance of the poor sister, whispers, "He shall see with my eyes." The sister looks into the depth of the lovely eyes raised to hers, and thinks, "He is not much to be pitied, the brave man." Through long nights of fever and days of weary restlessness Ninon watched by her lover's side. Strength returns to the crippled body, but the sorrowful eyes always wear that helpless, vacant expression peculiar to the blind, and the strong right arm is represented only by an empty sleeve. He is not forbidden to speak now; and one day as he hears Ninon's footsteps by his bedside, and the soft rustle of her dress as she bends over him, he says: "You are always with me, Ninon, are you not? or do I dream it?" "I am always with you, Armand." "What bring you here?" "Because I love you, dear." "Love me? But I am a cripple and blind." "Yes, Armand. Your right arm and your eyes you gave to France. Will you give the rest to me?" "Ninon!" and the left arm, the only one he has, draws her quickly and passionately to his side. Her soft breath plays against his cheek, and as his lips meet hers she whispers: "Armand, my prince, I love you."—From the French.

FACTS AND COMMENTS.

The population of Manila was being decimated by cholera, says a colonial paper, when a tremendous hurricane swept over the island and acted as a meteorological antiseptic, for on the following day not a single additional case of cholera broke out, and none have been reported since. Beyond the Mississippi river there are 1,200,000 square miles not settled by white men, and of this area 240,000 square miles, embracing much of the best land, are included within Indian reservations, while much of the remainder consists of mountainous tracts, lands inaccessible or sterile, and arid regions which cannot be irrigated. Lumber is now being manufactured from straw, the standard size being thirty-two inches in width, twelve feet in length, and the thickness the same as the average of surfaced boards. One ton of any kind of straw will yield 1,000 feet of boards that may be handled as ordinary ones. This lumber can be produced and sold in competition with wide walnut at about one-half the price of the latter. The New Yorker of forethought now goes downtown attended by an ambulance and a nurse, and his wife keeps a room prepared after the fashion of a hospital ward to receive him when he is brought home to her as a victim of the gas company, or the elevated railway, or the steam-heating corporations, or prostrated by an unexpected shock of electricity, crushed by a falling telegraph pole, or burned in a fire trap of some kind. How unhappy is the provincial! It is estimated that there are 200,000 vagabonds and beggars in the German empire, including thieves, pickpockets and other swindlers, and the authorities estimate the annual loss to honest people by their operations at the enormous sum of \$25,000,000. Many of these evildoers are brought before the magistrates from time to time, but both judges and juries are accused of administering too mildly even the mild laws of Germany against vagabondage. The evil has become so great that the government is understood to be preparing a severe law for bringing scoundrels of the vagabond class to justice. Mme. Nilsson, the Swedish nightingale, tells a reporter that she will probably make her home in New York. "I have really nothing to bind me to the other side of the water," she said. "I, as you know, come from a peasant family. I am proud of it. My father and mother, who were Swedish peasants, are both dead. I am the youngest of a family of seven children. Well, my brothers and sisters are still alive. They are yet peasants, fond of their free life and will never change. I can understand them, but with the change that has taken place in me by education, musically and otherwise, and by my association in the world, they cannot understand me." Some of the Southern railroad companies have gone into the business of raising forests, and the results are likely to be advantageous. It has been discovered that the moisture of the soil in many parts of the South is very destructive to the ties, and the crocheting process to protect the wood has proven so expensive that the companies have determined to use the wood of the catalpa and alantus trees. These woods are said to be more durable in a moist soil than any others now used, and to secure a supply large plantations have been seeded for both varieties in equal proportion. Upon the Iron Mountain real catalpa ties have lasted nearly fifteen years. Both trees are rapid in growth and easy of propagation, and flourish in the moist soils of Missouri, Arkansas and Texas. They, however, are not likely to turn the prairies into sweet-smelling forests. The Journal des Mines gives an account of a most wonderful and valuable process just discovered at Brunon's works on the Loire, France. The Journal says a lump of African ore, weighing thirty-two pounds, was broken up into small fragments and placed in a crucible, and as soon as the ore was at red heat a reacting substance was added, when, in three minutes, the liquefaction of the ore was complete. The product obtained is iron. All those employed in the establishment, engineers and workmen, were stupefied at the result. The acting substance above mentioned cost twenty-five cents per ton. By means of this process a blast furnace, instead of producing twenty-two tons of cast iron every twelve hours, would turn out twenty-two tons every fourteen minutes, besides which the furnace would be self-cleaned at each operation. These facts are making quite a stir in the manufacturing district of the Loire. E. A. Denison, son of Lord Londesborough, died in Denver, Colorado, a short time ago. The career of this young gentleman was romantic and checkered. His father was a member of the Cunningham family, but changed his name to Denison on re-

ceiving a legacy. When Lord Londesborough died young Denison's mother married Lord Fitzgerald; between him and his step-father much ill feeling existed. At eighteen years of age the young man was required by his step-father to enter the army, but this he refused to do, and ran away to Belgium. Here he was reduced to such straits that he was compelled to dispose of all his personal property, and, as a last resort, he shipped on a vessel to Philadelphia as a cabin boy. He landed in this country penniless, and accepted employment at picking strawberries, making from ten to twenty-five cents a day. This means of livelihood could not last long, of course, and he was compelled to write to his step-father for assistance, and was granted an annuity of £100 until he became of age. In 1881, having reached his majority, he returned to England and obtained some of the private fortune that belonged to him. While on this visit he received a document from a Welsh lady recommending him to all patriotic Welshmen, which afterward proved of great value to him. Shortly after his return to this country his means again became exhausted, and in "roughing it" in the West he contracted a pulmonary disease that eventually took him off. Arriving at Denver, he secured a situation as an express driver, but afterward worked on a sheep ranch. About a year ago, being taken suddenly ill, he went to board with a Welshman named Jones, who cared for him until his death. A Bank of England Story. A London correspondent of the Boston Journal writes: The first person I met on entering the Bank of England was a venerable porter in a quaint uniform, which dates back, I think, a hundred years or more; it left a green-and-buff impression upon me, but I cannot accurately describe its details. The porter led me to a room where the executive officer of the bank was to be found. This officer, Mr. Gray, is entitled "chief accountant," and his position corresponds very much to that of cashier of one of our banks. Mr. Gray, who sat at his desk surrounded by a corps of busy clerks, and who is a gentleman of the most courteous and unassuming manners, gave me a cordial welcome, and under his guidance I visited every department of the bank, and had everything which I did not understand at a glance explained to me. The capital of the bank is fourteen and one-half millions sterling; its circulation in the hands of the public about twenty-five millions sterling; its deposits, on no portion of which is interest paid, average in these days about thirty-two millions sterling. It circulates no smaller note than five pounds, but this seems to be the only limit to denominations; in a frame in the building is a canceled note of the Bank of England for a million pounds sterling, and, if I remember rightly, the banker post Rogers had hanging in his library a canceled note of the same institution for £30,000. I have heard that a note for £10,000 once had a singular history. It was paid out to one of the directors of the bank who soon afterward lost it under such circumstances that he was satisfied, and succeeded in satisfying the bank, that it had fallen into his fireplace and been destroyed. He was given a new note, for which he returned a proper receipt and guarantee. Many years afterward the original note was presented for payment; the bank endeavored to disown it, but could not, for it was genuine and in the hands of an innocent person, and the bank had to pay it. Its history was then looked into, and it was ascertained that, instead of being burned, it had been carried up the chimney by a draught, and had found a safe lodgment in some cranny in the flue. Here it had remained until alterations in the house necessitated the removal of the chimney; then it was discovered by a workman, who regarded it as a legitimate find, and who presented it for payment. Right here I may as well relate another story of the bank, of which there are many, both in print and as legends, but of which I will let these two serve as specimens. A sewer workman, while poking under ground, found that by raising a flagstone he could penetrate into the ballion room of the bank. Amazed at the discovery, he pondered over it, and finally concluded that he would utilize it to his pecuniary benefit without stealing. He therefore wrote to the directors, asking what reward he would receive if he should meet them at any appointed hour of the night in the ballion room, and thus reveal to them a mode of ingress of which they were entirely ignorant. They named a sum which would make him independent for life, and to their overwhelming surprise he kept his promise by popping up through the sewer, for which he received ten thousand pounds or so. This is supposed to have happened long ago. The meaneast slight a girl can put upon an admirer is to use a postal card in refusing an offer of marriage. It proves that she doesn't actually care two cents for him.—Philadelphia Chronicle. The use of instrumental music in church worship is increasing in England.

STRIVE, WAIT AND PRAY.

Strive, yet I do not promise The prize you dream of to-day Will not fade when you think to grasp it, And melt in your hand away; Sit another and holier treasure You would not purchase dished, Will come when your toil is over And pay you for all your pain. Wait; yet I do not tell you The hour you long for now Will not come with its radiance vanished, And a shroud upon its brow; Yet far through the misty future, With a crown of starry light, An hour of joy you know not Is winging her silent flight. Pray; though the gift you ask for May never comfort your fears, May never repay your pleading, Yet pray, and with hopeful tears As answer, not that you long for, But divine, will come one day; Your eyes are too dim to see it, Yet strive, and wait, and pray.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

The best butter—A goat. The children's kingdom—Lapland. A man's mind is like his bed—it must be made up occasionally. A three-year-old boy in admiring his baby brother exclaimed: "He's got a boiled head like papa." A man never loses much time in interviewing a bee. He generally comes right down to the point.—Statesman. There are in France 28,000 people who never remark, "I will see you later." They are blind.—New York Commercial. Pies date back to the time of the Romans and came originally from Picardy. Some of the original pies are still on sale at railroad restaurants. The man who believes in a place for everything and everything in its place never has a postage stamp when he wants to post a letter.—Puck. Since the recent hotel fires, the landlords find themselves like the feeble-minded class, a little empty in the upper stories.—Boston Transcript. A Pittsburgh firm has brought out a new masculine hat which they have christened the "Jersey Lily." It wouldn't be economy to invest in such a hat. It is too easily "mashed"—Norristown Herald. "Look at you!" shrieked Mrs. Ecomi, as the nurse led the baby tumbler. "Two inches nearer the wall and that child would have smashed a fifty-dollar statuette and the hall lamp. And then they picked up the baby.—Hawkeye. Never despise small things. The mosquito that sings sweetly by your bedside becomes a power when it gets its work in. The little tack that lies so meekly on the floor may turn in an unguarded moment and make you howl with pain. Pittsburgh has a new steam hammer which can strike a blow of 44,000 pounds. It is consoling to a man to know that there is something in the world that can go down as hard as he does when his feet get on a coal-hole cover.—Boston Post. An Englishman shooting small game in Germany said to his host that there was a spice of danger in shooting in America. "Ah!" said the host, "you like danger in your sport. Then you go out shooting mit me. The last time I shoot nine bruder-in-law in the septomack." A German statistician estimates that 6,000,000 rats were drowned by the late floods in that country. "Over here," remarks the Detroit Free Press, "if a man works for two weeks with a \$1 trap and a pound of cheese to catch one poor old rodent, he brags over it as if he had won a horse race." PHILOPENA. We walked adown the spring-cold lane— The winds were vague and veal; We split the almond-shell in twain, And ate its double kernel. She crushed within her hand the sweet pungent perfume of verbena— "Who first says 'Yes,' when next we meet," Quoth she, "says Philopena." The fall had dropped its frosty dews; The leaves of gold and crimson Were taking on such sober hues As skies the sunset dimes on. We walked the lane, now bleak and bare, I and my Augustina; And she said "Yes," and, then and there, She paid her Philopena.—Puck. Healing Breath of the Pines. The air of the pine forests is always grateful to the senses and soothing to the lungs, and is not difficult to believe that it may exert some direct curative influence. The idea of pine trees exercising a balmy influence is a very ancient one. Pliny considered that the air of pine forests was more useful in asthmatic difficulties than the voyage to Egypt, recommended in such cases, in those days. But beside merely inhaling the air of pine forests, people have made use of the pine in baths—vapor baths and inhalations. Even this is not entirely modern, for the ancients recommended the internal use of decoctions of strobil and pine-tops, and thought pine-nuts very useful in diseases of the chest; and at a modern time, beside the use of internal drinks made from the spruce and the tar-water so long in vogue, we had inhalations of tar and of various resins.