

THE FREE LANCE.

*"His good blade carves the casques of men, for the Free Lance
thrusteth sure."*

Vol. XIV.

APRIL, 1900.

No. 1.

SILENT JAKE.

(Founded on Facts.)

The work for the day was finished and, supper over, I started out for my accustomed evening walk. It was late in Indian summer and already the chilly winds of Fall were becoming uncomfortable. Finding no interest in the busy thoroughfare downtown or on the chilly benches in the park facing the lake, I wandered away and after awhile found myself in the neighborhood of one of the big railroad yards of the city.

A maze of tracks and a sea of cars stretched back into the level country. It seemed like the "quiet hour" and for awhile all was still, the silence being finally broken by the silver notes from a bell in the distance. The gates at my elbow clanged noisily down across the street and a moment later a big express engine backed slowly out from the smoky round house, glided majestically by, and paused a short distance down the tracks.

As the engine slowly passed me, I recognized the engineer with whom I had become acquainted under peculiar circumstances, on account of which we had been staunch friends ever since. He was going out on the "Fast Mail"